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Extracting the Eagle's Talons:
The Soviet Union in Cold War Latin America

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Extracting the Eagle's Talons:
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by

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. Without their love and support, I'd never have been able to make it this far.

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It would be impossible to name all the people who have helped me in this journey. Nevertheless, I hope that the thanks I can proffer here will be the first step toward repaying the many debts (intellectual, financial, and otherwise) that I have incurred over the years. This dissertation would not have been possible without the generous financial support of the U.T. History Department, the American Councils for International Education, and the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. I owe a significant intellectual debt to Tom Devine and Tom Maddux, who mentored me through the M.A. program at California State University Northridge. Archivists in New York, Washington, D.C., and Moscow made my research trips more pleasant and productive.

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Extracting the Eagle's Talons:
The Soviet Union in Cold War Latin America

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While the Cold War in Latin America has been examined from a variety of angles, the scholarship on Soviet-Latin American relations is thin, outdated, and based almost totally on published sources. Moreover, much of the literature is replete with misconceptions about the nature of the Soviet approach to the Western Hemisphere and the relationship between Moscow and its regional allies. Using a case study approach, and based on substantial research in the archives of the former Soviet Union, this dissertation argues that Moscow's approach to Latin America was more cautious and pragmatic than ideological and messianic. Rather than attempting to extend their control over the region, the Soviets instead sought to pry Latin American regimes away from dependence on the United States and to encourage the region to adopt a non-aligned foreign policy. To a degree heretofore not sufficiently appreciated, this approach involved the clever use of international organizations, particularly the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement. Moreover, Latin American communists and Soviet sympathizers were hugely influential in shaping Moscow's perceptions of the region and its relationship to the United States, and in pressuring Soviet leaders to provide more support to their regional allies.

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Introduction: The Cold War in Latin America

America's sphere of influence, "our own backyard," "empire's workshop," "beneath the United States" – all refer to Latin America and in doing so emphasize the hegemonic – indeed, imperial – role of the United States in hemispheric relations. Since the days of the Monroe Doctrine, the United States has assumed the mantle of guarantor of order and stability in the Western Hemisphere, and has engaged in political and military interventionism that has frequently proved counterproductive to the maintenance of such order and stability. Nevertheless, this nomenclature is indicative of an approach to the study of U.S.-Latin American relations that inadequately accounts for the motivations and decisions of actors other than U.S. policymakers.

Analyses that focus exclusively on U.S. foreign policy do not always do justice to internal and regional developments in Latin America, nor do they assign sufficient agency to actors other than the *Norteamericanos*. Ironically, historians on the political left, who often claim to recover the voices of victimized Latin Americans, tend to be more guilty of this tendency than those on the right, who more often seek to absolve the United States of its sins by assigning responsibility for the violence that rocked the Western Hemisphere during the Cold War to the Latin Americans and the Soviets. With the clarity of hindsight, we now know that the Soviet threat was in fact far less menacing than it seemed at the time, when visions of a red tide washing over the Western Hemisphere spooked U.S. policymakers and led to heavy-handed politico-military interventionism. This contemporary knowledge has perhaps contributed to the tendency of some scholars to deny that U.S. policymakers perceived vital national security interests to be at stake in Cold War Latin America.

The orthodox interpretation of the U.S. role in Cold War Latin America is that it has been counter-revolutionary and yet (paradoxically) highly destabilizing. The influential historian Walter LaFeber exemplifies this perspective. Portraying revolutions in Central America as "inevitable" due to institutionalized inequality and an unfortunate geographic proximity to the United States, LaFeber posits U.S. policy as the pivot upon which the history of the region hinges.[1] U.S. policy in the region failed because it sought to assure order and stability through two incompatible means: the implementation of widespread democratic reforms, and support for right-wing dictators. The idea that U.S. national security interests were at stake in Cold War Central America was a "false belief."[2]

Indeed, most prominent scholars of U.S.-Latin American relations during the Cold War seem to agree that the Soviet threat was minimal if not non-existent, and that U.S. policies were largely to blame for creating the very opportunities for the expansion of Soviet influence in the Western Hemisphere that they sought to eliminate. Peter Smith, for example, has argued that because the U.S. approach to Latin America occurred within the framework of the East-West conflict, it "managed to accomplish precisely what it sought to avoid: revolutionary entanglements with the USSR that could lead to Soviet intrusion in the Americas."[3] He has also suggested that U.S.-Soviet conflict in the region, particularly during the 1980s in Central America, was "often exaggerated or

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[1] LaFeber writes, "Revolutions in such areas as Central America were inevitable. The only choice was whether North Americans would work with those revolutionaries to achieve a more orderly and equitable society, or whether…Washington officials would try to cap the upheavals until the pressure built again to blow the societies apart with even greater force." *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1993), p. 16.

[2] Ibid., p. 365.

[3] Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle: Dynamics of U.S.-Latin American Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 197.

imaginary."[4] Gaddis Smith has similarly argued that except for in the case of the Cuban missile crisis, the Soviet threat "existed largely in the American imagination."[5]

Recently, several scholars have attempted to shift the focus away from U.S. foreign policy and to explore the myriad ways that the Cold War influenced domestic and regional political, social, and cultural dynamics, as well as the everyday experiences of Latin American people. Gilbert Joseph, for instance, has lamented the narrow scholarly concentration on the motives and consequences of U.S. policy, and has suggested that this hidebound approach has obscured myriad possible intellectual agendas.[6] In a recently published edited volume, he and several other historians seek to re-center Latin America's experience in the Cold War and to examine transnational alliances, grassroots organizations, and the clash between local populations, cultural elites, and industry. Greg Grandin has been an unapologetic advocate of the reforms championed by indigenous socialist and communist parties in Latin America and has carefully examined the ethnic and gendered aspects of land reform in Guatemala.[7] Hal Brands argues that although the Cold War in Latin America was defined by a series of violent conflicts, the origins of the chaos and instability that ravaged the continent owed less to U.S. interventionism than to the confluence of local, regional, and global dynamics that prevailed at any given time.[8] In the final analysis, the course of the Cold War in Latin America was shaped not only by the zero-sum struggle between Washington and Moscow for ideological and strategic

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[4] Ibid., p. 215.
[5] Gaddis Smith, *The Last Years of the Monroe Doctrine, 1945-1993* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), p. 6.
[6] Gilbert M. Joseph, "What We Know and Should Know: Bringing Latin America More Meaningfully into Cold War Studies," in *In From the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War*, edited by Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniela Spenser (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), p. 16.
[7] Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 2004).
[8] Hal Brands, *Latin America's Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

dominance, but by conflicts over internal political dynamics and power structures, the extent – and more importantly, the limits – of U.S. influence, and the emergence of the Third World as both a political bloc and a rhetorical device.[9] This group of literature represents an attempt to place Latin America squarely at the center of Cold War history rather than treating the region as a passive subject of U.S. interventionism.[10]

SOVIET-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS

Before the Cuban revolution, Latin America was of negligible strategic interest to the Soviet Union. Though many in Latin America were inspired by the Russian Revolution, ties between the Soviet state and the countries of the Western Hemisphere remained weak if not non-existent. In 1924, the Fifth Congress of the Communist International (Comintern) took the position that the future of socialist revolution was to a significant degree dependent on the fate of colonialism. The Mexican delegate to the congress argued that the United States was becoming the world center of imperialism, and attention was therefore directed to Latin America as the "'colonial' economic base of the new imperialism."[11] At the same time, however, the Soviets were hamstrung by an overly dogmatic theoretical approach, which held that Latin America's feudal agrarianism had to be supplanted by a capitalist economy before embarking upon the transition to socialism. Thus, the most that could be hoped for at this stage in Latin

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[9] Ibid., p. 255.

[10] See also Virginia Garrard-Burnett, Julio Moreno, and Mark Lawrence, eds. *Beyond the Eagle's Shadow: New Histories of Latin America's Cold War* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2013).

[11] Nicola Miller, *Soviet Relations with Latin America, 1959-1987* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 34. See also Edmé Domínguez, "The Latin American Communist Movement: Realities and Relations with the Soviet Union," in Eusebio Mujal-León, ed. *The USSR and Latin America: A Developing Relationship* (Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman, 1989), pp. 121-124; and Augusto Varas, "Sovet-Latin American Relations Under the U.S. Regional Hegemony," in Varas, ed. *Soviet-Latin American Relations in the 1980s* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987), pp. 14-17.

America was a "democratic-bourgeois" revolution.[12] Indeed, this is how orthodox communists viewed the Guatemalan revolution under Juan Jose Arévalo and his successor, Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán.

As historian Nicola Miller has pointed out, this ideological inflexibility took the Russian Revolution as its point of reference and utterly failed to grapple with the actual social, political, and economic conditions of Latin America.[13] With Joseph Stalin at the helm, Soviet doctrine became even more rigid, insisting that the only authentic revolutionaries were orthodox Marxist-Leninists.[14] Under Stalin's leadership, the Comintern was inherently suspicious of any revolutionary movement with indigenous roots.[15] As one scholar has observed, under Stalin "the original Leninist policy of supporting national liberation from imperialism by backing bourgeois nationalism in the colonial world had been unceremoniously dumped."[16] Indeed, Lenin's theses on the linkage between vanguard parties and revolutionary change in the colonial and "backward" areas of the world suggested that the "revolutionary nationalist" movements of a "bourgeois-democratic" flavor were the among the best candidates for alliances with the vanguard parties in these areas.[17]

The Seventh Comintern Congress in 1935 ushered in the Popular Front period, during which Latin American communist parties were urged to form broad alliances with the petit and national bourgeoisie. The strategy was originally designed for use in China,

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[12] Miller, *Soviet Relations with Latin America*, pp. 34-35.
[13] Ibid., p. 35.
[14] Ibid., p. 40.
[15] Domínguez, "The Latin American Communist Movement," p. 123.
[16] Jonathan Haslam, *Russia's Cold War: From the October Revolution to the Fall of the Wall* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011), p. 146.
[17] David E. Albright, *Vanguard Parties and Revolutionary Change in the Third World: Soviet Perspectives and their Implications* (Berkeley: University of California Institute of International Studies, 1990), p. 15.

but eventually was applied to all "colonial and semi-colonial territories," and sought to allay Western fears of "Soviet-inspired" rebellions.[18] This shift in the Comintern line was prompted by Stalin's desire to strengthen the Soviet strategic position and prevent the possibility of a Nazi invasion.[19] The people's front policy facilitated the diversification of Soviet diplomatic relations with Latin America but was abandoned by the end of the Second World War. By 1948, however, Soviet theorists had hardened their attitudes toward bourgeois nationalist movements in the colonial world.[20]

Although Latin American communist parties reached the summit of their popularity in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, and enjoyed the prestige attendant to the Soviet defeat of Nazi Germany, Stalin did not view Latin America as an area ripe for communist influence. Indeed, Stalin and Molotov frequently referred to the countries of Latin America as "U.S. satellites" or "pseudo-colonies" of the United States.[21] Francis Fukuyama has observed that Stalin adhered to "an extremely polarized view of international relations, one in which countries not firmly in the socialist camp were written off as belonging to the imperialists."[22] In 1943, Stalin dissolved the Comintern in the hopes of extending the cooperative relationship that had developed as a result of the wartime alliance with the West.[23] As that alliance began to deteriorate, the burgeoning Cold War convinced U.S. policymakers that the existence of communist parties in Latin America could not be tolerated, and the United States pressured its Latin

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[18] Domínguez, "The Latin American Communist Movement," p. 124.
[19] Varas, "Soviet-Latin American Relations," p. 15.
[20] Albright, *Vanguard Parties*, p. 22.
[21] Ilya Prizel, *Latin America Through Soviet Eyes: The Evolution of Soviet Perceptions During the Brezhnev Era, 1964-1982* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 7.
[22] Francis Fukuyama, "Soviet Strategy in the Third World," in Andrzej Korbonski and Francis Fukuyama, eds. *The Soviet Union and the Third World: The Last Three Decades* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 25.
[23] Varas, "Soviet-Latin American Relations," p. 16.

American allies to sever diplomatic ties with the USSR and to ban domestic communist parties. Most of the region's communist parties were subsequently outlawed and forced to either disband or go underground.

The Soviet approach to Latin America has always consisted of two (often conflicting) types of relations. Regional communist parties have provided Moscow with an entrée to the Western Hemisphere, but have sometimes impeded the development of state-to-state relations, particularly in countries headed by firmly anti-communist regimes. The Kremlin's support for national liberation movements, moreover, has complicated its efforts to establish and strengthen traditional diplomatic, economic, and political relations with Latin American countries.[24] Kiva Maydanik, a senior researcher at the Soviet Institute of the World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) since the 1960s, has argued that, except for during the Khrushchev years, the Soviets never had a coherent strategy toward Latin America, nor were there any "clear goals at the regional level."[25] Though Maydanik argues that there was an ideological dimension to Soviet relations with Latin America, he admits the difficulty of clearly distinguishing "ideological" from "diplomatic" concerns.[26] Soviet policy toward Latin America was "incoherent, reactive…reluctant…ignorant of realities," and "based on misperceptions."[27]

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[24] For an excellent study that examines the conflict between the maintenance of traditional diplomatic relations and Soviet meddling in the internal affairs of Latin American states, see Daniela Spenser, *The Impossible Triangle: Mexico, Soviet Russia, and the United States in the 1920s* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999).

[25] Kiva Maydanik, "The Ideological Aspects of Soviet Relations with Latin America," in Edmé Domínguez, ed. *The Soviet Union's Latin American Policy: A Retrospective Analysis* (Sweden: Göteborgs Universitet, 1995), p. 13.

[26] Ibid., p. 14.

[27] Ibid., p. 15.

Much of the literature on Soviet-Latin American relations is either outdated or highly politicized.[28] Many of these works were written during the Cold War and while some of their conclusions may yet hold true, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War warrants a retrospective on the course of Soviet-Latin American relations.[29] Although some scholars are measured in their judgments, others are downright alarmist and make unsupportable claims about the extent to which Fidel Castro and other communist-inspired Latin American leaders were mere marionettes manipulated by their Kremlin overlords.[30] Fidel Castro was far from a puppet of the Soviets; indeed, in the wake of the Cuban missile crisis, he criticized the imperialist mindset of the Soviets almost as much as he did that of the United States. Moreover, during the latter half of the 1960s, the Kremlin found itself at loggerheads with Castro over his support for revolutionary guerrilla movements in the Western Hemisphere. The Soviets feared that Castro's romantic idealism and his commitment to radical change through violent means would not only undermine Soviet claims to Third World leadership but would also threaten the pursuit of "peaceful coexistence" with the United States.[31] Just as the U.S. ideological commitment to liberal democracy was often

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[28] Even the titles of some of these works are anachronistic; for instance, *The Russians Aren't Coming: New Soviet Policy in Latin America*, edited by Wayne S. Smith (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992) and *The USSR and Latin America: A Developing Relationship*, edited by Euesebio Mujal-Leon (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989),

[29] See, for example, James D. Theberge, *The Soviet Presence in Latin America* (New York: National Strategy Information Center, Inc., 1974); Cole Blasier, *The Giant's Rival: The USSR and Latin America* (Pennsylvania: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1987); J. Gregory Oswald and Anthony J. Strover, eds. *The Soviet Union and Latin America* (New York: Praeger, 1970); Howard J. Wiarda and Mark Falcoff, eds., *The Communist Challenge in the Caribbean and Central America* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1987); Nicola Miller, *Soviet Relations with Latin America*.

[30] Timothy Ashby, *The Bear in the Back Yard: Moscow's Caribbean Strategy* (Massachusetts: Lexington Books, 1987), pp. 53-55 & 154.

[31] See James G. Blight and Philip Brenner, *Sad and Luminous Days: Cuba's Struggle with the Superpowers after the Missile Crisis* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002), and Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

subordinated to the national security imperative of containing communism, Soviet national security concerns frequently trumped the desire to support ideologically friendly revolutionary movements and regimes.

The primary debate over Soviet-Latin American relations, and, more broadly, Soviet policy toward the Third World, is whether geopolitical or ideological factors have figured most prominently. One scholar has argued that "although the Bolsheviks did not believe in reasons of state as such – because Marxism-Leninism dictated goals that stood above and beyond merely the state – they did practice realpolitik: they were realists in terms of means, though utopians in terms of ends."[32] This assessment is consistent with the work of others who have argued that "in its willingness to modify the Marxist-Leninist doctrine to suit a variety of circumstances," the Soviet leadership "has been truly opportunistic" in its approach to the Third World.[33] Although ideology was not "the source of Soviet actions," Soviet objectives were nevertheless "expressed in ideological terms."[34] Francis Fukuyama has similarly argued that ideology and political organization were tools to achieve realpolitik ends.[35] Alvin Z. Rubinstein, one of the most prolific scholars of Soviet foreign policy, has argued that Soviet leaders "respond pragmatically to events and opportunities," and that state-to-state relations "are determined primarily by strategic and political calculations; ideological and economic considerations are secondary."[36] The role of ideology in Soviet foreign policy, according to Rubinstein, is as

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[32] Haslam, *Russia's Cold War*, preface *ix*.
[33] Joseph L. Nogee and Robert H. Donaldson, *Soviet Foreign Policy Since World War II* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992), p. 170.
[34] Carol R. Saivetz and Sylvia Woodby, *Soviet-Third World Relations* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985), preface *xii*.
[35] Fukuyama, "Soviet Strategy in the Third World," in *The Soviet Union and the Third World*, p. 25.
[36] Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Soviet Foreign Policy Since World War II: Imperial and Global* (Boston, MA: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1989), pp. 14-15.

a "legitimizing function" and as a "medium for communication and conflict within the world Communist movement."[37] Another scholar has similarly argued that while "Soviet ideology over the years has increasingly become less a guide to Soviet policy than a legitimization of Soviet behavior," "ideology continues to retain its importance as a source of explanation and justification of Soviet behavior."[38]

Others have argued that ideology was a more important determinant of U.S. and Soviet Cold War policy. Odd Arne Westad has suggested that "the United States and the Soviet Union were driven to intervene in the Third World by the ideologies inherent in their politics."[39] In his view, the Cold War in the Third World was ideologically predetermined. Geoffrey Roberts, a prominent scholar of Soviet foreign policy, has characterized it as "ideology driven to an important degree," suggesting that "shifts in ideology have sometimes resulted in radical changes in foreign policy." A major contribution of Mikhail Gorbachev, in this view, was his "de-ideologization" of foreign policy, "by detaching peaceful coexistence from the revolutionary ideology and politics that had given birth to it after the Russian Revolution."[40] Indeed, most scholars agree that during the Gorbachev years, whatever role ideology had continued to play in foreign policymaking was completely subordinated to Soviet domestic and national security concerns. Roberts's analysis, however, gives short shrift to Soviet policy in the Third World, where policy shifts frequently preceded doctrinal innovations, in a pattern that suggests that ideology was not the primary driver of Soviet foreign policy. The Soviets

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[37] Ibid., p. 15.
[38] Vernon V. Aspaturian, "Gorbachev's 'New Political Thinking' and Foreign Policy," in Jiri Valenta and Frank Cibulka, eds., *Gorbachev's New Thinking and Third World Conflicts* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1990), p. 7.
[39] Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 4.
[40] Geoffrey K. Roberts, *The Soviet Union in World Politics: Coexistence, Revolution, and Cold War, 1945-1991* (New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 86-87.

implemented a series of doctrinal modifications in order to improve their approach to the Third World. Recognizing that many Third World countries lacked communist parties, Soviet analysts recommended the creation of "vanguard" parties, which could substitute for communist parties and work to facilitate continuity in domestic and foreign policy in the event of regime change.[41]

While ideology always conditioned Soviet relations with the Third World, the ideological predisposition of any given Third World regime was never a reliable indicator of Soviet support. Despite the USSR's status as a "revolutionary regime," its behavior during the Cold War was based more on the traditional concerns of great powers than it was on any sense of obligation to or solidarity with revolutionary Third World actors.[42] Thus, Moscow pursued a highly pragmatic policy toward Latin America, which aimed more at traditional power politics than idealistic objectives. In the words of two scholars of Soviet-Third World relations, "Marxist-Leninist ideology has provided the context and framework and for Soviet policy, but has not itself been a primary determinant of policy."[43] Overall, the pattern of Soviet relations with the Third World suggests that geopolitical considerations have been at the forefront of Soviet policy calculations.[44] Scholars have argued that Soviet intentions in Latin America were not aimed at extending Moscow's control over the region, but rather sought to aggravate and capitalize on

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[41] Carol R. Saivetz and Sylvia Woodby, *Soviet-Third World Relations* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985), p. 13.
[42] S. Neil MacFarlane, "Successes and Failures in Soviet Policy toward Marxist Revolutions in the Third World, 1917-1985," in Mark N. Katz, ed. *The USSR and Marxist Revolutions in the Third World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 47.
[43] W. Raymond Duncan and Carolyn McGiffert Ekedahl, *Moscow and the Third World under Gorbachev* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990), p. 15.
[44] Saivetz and Woodby, p. 175.

hemispheric opposition to the United States.[45] Moscow's approach to the Western hemisphere was cautious and was driven less by an ideological mission to spread communism and more by pragmatic calculations of how to "neutralize" Latin America as a region and capitalize on anti-U.S. sentiment.

While this dissertation will not attempt to unravel the complexities of Marxist-Leninist ideology, nor parse the arcane doctrinal debates in which Soviet theoreticians and ideologists almost constantly engaged, it will argue that Soviet policy toward Latin America during the Cold War was largely pragmatic, and was based not so much on a messianic vision of worldwide socialism, but aimed more at exploiting anti-U.S. sentiment and encouraging non-alignment. Some have argued that "postwar Soviet interest in the Third World was spurred by weaknesses and failures in dealing with the United States and Western Europe."[46] While this holds true for the early Cold War period, when Soviet and U.S. rivalry in the Third World was based on the zero-sum perception that any loss of influence was an automatic gain for the other side, in the later years of the Cold War, the ideological rivalry with the Chinese communists and the extremism of some Third World movements and regimes were more significant factors in determining Soviet policy. This is especially true in Latin America after the missile crisis, when the Soviets were less concerned about striking a blow to the United States and sought instead to maintain credibility and relevance in a region that had been radicalized by the Cuban revolution. The Soviets frequently found themselves pushed into providing more support for national liberation movements and revolutionary regimes than they

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[45] Leon Gouré and Morris Rothenberg, *Soviet Penetration of Latin America* (Florida: Center for Advanced International Studies, University of Miami, 1975), p. 5.

[46] Stephen Sestanovich, "The Third World in Soviet Foreign Policy, 1955-1985," in Korbonski and Fukuyama, *The Soviet Union and the Third World*, p. 3.

otherwise would have in the absence of the challenges posed by the more radical Chinese communists and by the extremist nature of the Cuban revolution and the Latin American *fidelista* movements that it inspired. This supports a growing body of scholarship that demonstrates the sometimes willful independence of Soviet client regimes and their determination to pursue foreign policies bolder than Moscow deemed prudent.[47]

ARBENZ'S GUATEMALA

The 1954 coup in Guatemala that deposed democratically elected leader Jacobo Arbenz has been the subject of intense scrutiny among scholars of U.S. foreign policy. These scholars have tended to focus on the combination of economic interests and national security concerns that animated U.S. officials and to argue that the Soviet threat in Guatemala was minimal or non-existent. The CIA-backed coup that overthrew Arbenz is generally understood as the opening shot of the Cold War in the Western Hemisphere, when the United States abandoned the Good Neighbor policy in favor of a repressive, anti-communist approach. When viewed from the Soviet perspective, heretofore hidden dimensions of the coup's significance emerge. Latin American communists and Soviet sympathizers were at the forefront of efforts to draw Moscow's attention to Arbenz's Guatemala, and more broadly, to the possibilities for an expansion of Soviet influence in the region.

The Soviet leadership was, however, engaged in a power struggle and unwilling to provide the Guatemalans with anything more tangible than a shipment of outdated Nazi weaponry that had been captured by the Czechs. Even this token amount of support,

[47] See, for example, Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*; Jorge I. Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution: Cuba's Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989); and Hope Harrison, *Driving the Soviets Up the Wall: Soviet-East German Relations, 1953-1961* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2005).

however, signaled a shift in Moscow's waging of the Cold War. As José Manuel Fortuny, the general secretary of the Guatemalan communist party (PGT), noted, "If Stalin had been alive, they wouldn't have sold them to us."[48] Despite the fact that the PGT's attempts to cozy up to the Soviet Communist Party elicited a cool response, Moscow wasted no time attempting to capitalize on the results of the coup. The Soviets lodged a formal protest at the United Nations, requesting that a full investigation be launched into the U.S. role in Arbenz's overthrow.[49]

Thus, although the Soviets were unwilling to provide meaningful support to Arbenz in order to prop up his government in the face of U.S. aggression, they clearly recognized that the anti-U.S. nationalism that swept Latin America in the wake of the coup could be a boon to the communist bloc, and they were quick to use the United Nations as a forum for appealing to the sympathies of underdeveloped nations and to strike a blow at U.S. conceptions of "hemispheric solidarity." The case of Arbenz's Guatemala shows that Latin American communists and Soviet sympathizers were hugely influential in shaping Moscow's perceptions of the region and its relationship to the United States. Moreover, the coup occurred during a period in which Soviet foreign policy was in flux and the Cold War was becoming globalized; Moscow soon began laying the groundwork for an expansion of Soviet influence in the Western Hemisphere. This involved efforts to establish and expand trade ties with Latin American countries (also known as the Soviet Economic Offensive) and the strengthening of Moscow's propaganda apparatus in the region.

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[48] Quoted in Piero Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 188.
[49] LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions*, p. 126.

CASTRO'S CUBA

The impact of the Cuban revolution on U.S. foreign policy, Latin American politics and society, and the Cold War in general has been examined extensively by numerous scholars. Historians have also debated the factors most salient in the development of the Soviet-Cuban alliance. Although some myths about Castro still find an audience – particularly the canard that he was a puppet of the Soviet Union – for the most part, historians have done an excellent job uncovering the extent of Soviet support for Castro's regime and the nature of their alliance. Cuba convinced many in the Kremlin of the revolutionary potential of Latin America while exemplifying the difficulties involved in sustaining a client regime in the heart of the U.S. sphere of influence. The Cuban revolution and the establishment of an alliance with the Soviet Union fundamentally altered the strategic balance in the Cold War and shattered the myth of "geographical fatalism," which had dominated the Soviet view of Latin America and held that because of the region's proximity to, and economic dependence on, the United States, it was destined to be stuck in a subservient, neocolonial relationship with the hegemon of the North. That Fidel Castro had rebuffed the United States while remaining in power, despite a ferocious U.S. campaign to at first discredit and isolate his regime, and then to physically remove him from power through a covert intervention and repeated assassination attempts, put to rest the concept of geographical fatalism and sparked Soviet optimism regarding its relations with the other countries of Latin America. At the same time, Castro's promotion of the armed struggle complicated the Soviet position in Latin America by unleashing factionalism on the radical left and

jeopardizing Moscow's efforts to establish and strengthen diplomatic and political relations with Latin American states.

The decision to station nuclear missiles in Cuba, while certainly not attributable merely to Khrushchev's stated desire to protect the Cuban revolution, can neither be explained by reference to Soviet security needs alone. The timing in fact resulted from the convergence of two developments, one in U.S. Cold War policy and the other in Castro's domestic political struggles. Kennedy's decision to resume nuclear testing coincided with a lack of progress on Berlin and an escalation of the U.S. military presence in Southeast Asia, while Castro moved against the Cuban Communist Party in response to a misguided attempt on the part of its leader Aníbal Escalante to marginalize Castro's position. Castro thus seemed to be moving away from Moscow at the very time that Kennedy's increasingly belligerent stance toward the Cold War seemed to portend an imminent attack on Cuba. Khrushchev sought to demonstrate the Soviet commitment to the Cuban revolution and to elicit from Kennedy the respect he felt he deserved; the stationing of nuclear missiles in Cuba seemed to fulfill both objectives.[50] The missile crisis is the one significant exception to the general trend of Moscow's cautious approach to Latin America during the Cold War.

Despite Khrushchev's best efforts to convince the Cubans, the Chinese, the rest of the Soviet leadership, and probably himself as well, of the triumphant outcome of the missile crisis, it was in fact an unmitigated disaster. Castro became increasingly bitter and intransigent toward his patrons in the Kremlin, and Kennedy's popularity was temporarily bolstered while Khrushchev's suffered. Indeed, the coup-plotters that

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[50] Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, "*One Hell of A Gamble": Khrushchev, Castro, and Kennedy 1958-1964* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1998), p. 183.

unseated Khrushchev cited the Cuban misadventure as a sterling example of his reckless leadership. The Brezhnev years witnessed a fundamental reevaluation of Soviet security interests. Brezhnev himself was much less tolerant of Castro's support for violent revolutionary groups in the Western Hemisphere, and pursued a policy of establishing formal diplomatic relations with moderate Latin American regimes.[51] As the Cuban economy became ever more dependent on its Soviet patrons, Castro was brought to heel, and in the 1970s and early 1980s, was a loyal supporter of Moscow's foreign policy line and a consistent defender of the USSR in the Non-Aligned Movement.

ALLENDE'S CHILE

The role of the United States in subverting the regime of Chile's Salvador Allende has also attracted the attention of U.S. foreign policy specialists. Like the case of Arbenz's Guatemala, some of the literature emphasizes the culpability of U.S. covert operations while only inadequately examining Chilean social and political dynamics, Allende's relationship to Moscow, and Latin American regional developments. Allende was not a social democrat, as those on the left have argued, but a committed Marxist, who sought to transform Chilean society in a manner totally incompatible with liberal democracy. Moreover, though he himself rejected violence, he seemed hardly able to restrain the more radical elements surrounding him. Allende had alienated large segments of Chilean society with his disastrous economic policies and the military coup enjoyed the support of both the political right and the political center. And unlike Arbenz in

[51] Yuri Pavlov, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance, 1959-1991* (Florida: University of Miami North-South Center Press, 1994), p. 86.

Guatemala, who was merely vulnerable to the influence of his communist advisers, Allende himself was a committed Marxist with ties to the KGB.[52]

Nevertheless, the Soviets had learned important lessons from the alliance with Cuba and like their U.S. counterparts, sought to prevent a "second Cuba." While U.S. officials viewed this goal in terms of preventing another radical movement from coming to power in the Western Hemisphere, for the Soviets the lesson was to avoid becoming embroiled in ideological and economic commitments that would further drain Soviet resources. As in Guatemala, though the Soviets had refused to provide the level of material support necessary to keep Allende in power, they were quick to capitalize on the coup, and became active participants in the transnational solidarity campaign that emerged to pressure the military junta led by General Augusto Pinochet into ceasing its human rights violations. Soviet participation in this endeavor was not driven by a genuine concern for human rights, but sought to enhance Moscow's standing in the Third World and to appease the Chilean communists, many of whom spent years of exile in the communist bloc and pushed for a more radical approach to the struggle for socialist and progressive development in Latin America.

THE SANDINISTAS' NICARAGUA

The final case study will focus on Nicaragua. Much of the controversy over U.S. President Ronald Reagan's Latin America policy revolves around support for the counter-revolutionary forces (contras) battling the Sandinista government. The Iran-Contra fiasco has also tended to dominate the attention of observers and detract from the study of other substantive historical developments. Not surprisingly, this is a politically

[52] Andrew, *The World Was Going Our Way*, p. 69.

charged issue. Some on the left have charged the Reagan administration with intentionally aggravating the situation in Central America in order to justify an increased U.S. military presence in the region, while some on the right have argued that the administration's support for the contras was totally justified by Soviet-Cuban interventionism.

Despite the Reagan administration's bruiting of the Soviet-Cuban threat to Central America, the Soviets were in fact less interested in expanding their influence and control over the region, and merely sought to provide their Nicaraguan allies with support sufficient for guaranteeing the viability of the revolution. Moscow's support of the Sandinista government developed in direct proportion to U.S. support for the counter-revolutionary forces seeking to topple the Sandinistas from power. Moreover, as U.S.-Soviet relations improved, Moscow scaled back its support to the Sandinistas, and supported regional peace efforts. As Cold War tensions dissipated, Latin American leaders sought regional solutions to regional problems, and the Soviets were more than happy to scale back their presence in the Third World so they could redirect precious resources toward more pressing domestic concerns.

A NOTE ON SOURCES

The major archival sources contained here are from the Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation, the State Archive of the Russian Federation, and the Russian State Archive of Contemporary History. Soviet foreign policy has always operated on two tracks – party relations and more traditional state-to-state ties. The former have tended to be guided more by ideological considerations, while the latter have tended to be driven by more pragmatic calculations. One scholar has observed that the non-

ideological, pragmatic aims of Soviet foreign policy tended to have their biggest proponents in the Soviet Foreign Ministry, while the International Department of the CPSU was the "operational arm" of the pursuit of more ideological goals.[53] Christopher Andrew, in an in-depth exposé of KGB active measures in the Third World, has argued that it was the KGB, rather than the Soviet Foreign Ministry, that initiated the "global struggle" in the Third World, and that therefore exercised a much greater influence over Soviet Third World policy.[54] Due to his reliance on one particular source of documentation, Andrew's view of the KGB's influence in the Soviet foreign policymaking process may be somewhat exaggerated. Because the majority of the documents presented here are from the Soviet Foreign Ministry, there is the risk of over-emphasizing the more cautious and pragmatic nature of Soviet policy toward Latin America.

Nevertheless, there are substantial grounds for this perspective. After the Cuban revolution, the Soviets recognized that vanguard revolutionary movements in Latin America tended not to be the region's communist parties, and thus state-to-state relations became more significant than party relations. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, Soviet foreign policy in the Third World and especially in Latin America was aimed more at cultivating traditional diplomatic relations than at encouraging national liberation movements. Thus, the shift of focus here to the activities and perspectives of the Soviet Foreign Ministry and diplomatic corps is consistent with the trajectory of Soviet foreign policy. The weight of the evidence available tends to show that, with the (admittedly

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[53] Aspaturian, "Gorbachev's 'New Political Thinking' and Foreign Policy," in Valenta and Cibulka, *Gorbachev's New Thinking and Third World Conflicts*, p. 12.

[54] Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going Our Way: The KGB and the Battle for the Third World* (New York: Basic Books, 2005).

significant) exception of the early Soviet-Cuban "honeymoon" period and the missile crisis, Soviet policy toward Latin America was largely cautious, pragmatic, and aimed more at cashing in on the policy blunders of successive U.S. administrations. To this end, the Soviets actively used international organizations, particularly the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement, to cultivate Third World support for the USSR's international policy agenda and to influence world public opinion.

However, because of the inconsistency of source availability, the study of Soviet foreign policy necessarily involves a significant degree of speculation. Yet it is also true that in a top-down totalitarian society like that of the Soviet Union, the public pronouncements of high-ranking officials can often be relied upon as indicative of important shifts in foreign policy. Thus, the vast majority of published work on Soviet foreign policy relies to a great extent on public sources. It is my hope that the archival sources and the interpretation presented here will contribute to a more complete understanding of Soviet foreign policy toward Latin America during the Cold War, and that this work will serve as a springboard for further research.

Chapter One: Guatemala, the USSR, and the United Nations

On June 20, 1954, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution S/3237, calling for the "immediate termination of any action likely to cause further bloodshed" in Guatemala. The original resolution, introduced by Brazil and Colombia, would have referred Guatemala's complaint to the Organization of American States (OAS), but the Soviets vetoed it, preferring that the issue remain in the Security Council, where they had a presence and could thus stay involved.[55] In January, the International Department of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party (CPSU) had circulated a communiqué from Guatemala's president, Jacobo Arbenz, detailing the plight of his government in the face of U.S. "scaremongering, slander, and intimidation."[56] Although Latin American communists and Soviet sympathizers actively petitioned the USSR for military and political support to strengthen the Arbenz government in the face of U.S. aggression, the Soviets were cautious about interfering in the U.S. "backyard." Despite the pleas of regional communists, the Soviets were unwilling to provide material support beyond a single shipment of outdated Czech weaponry. This refusal to provide meaningful support to Arbenz did not, however, prevent Moscow from seeking to capitalize on the anti-U.S. sentiment that flooded Latin America in the wake of his overthrow, and to use the United Nations as a forum for challenging U.S. interventionism in the Western Hemisphere.

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[55] Resolution S/3237, unanimously adopted at the 275th meeting of the U.N. Security Council, June 20, 1954. Series S-1078, Box 58, File 11, United Nations Archives and Record Management Section [hereafter, UN ARMS], New York.

[56] Communique from the president of the Republic of Guatemala on U.S. intentions to overthrow the democratic government of Guatemala, January 29, 1954. Rossijskij Gosudarstvennyj Arhiv Novejshej Istorii [Russian State Archive of Contemporary History, hereafter RGANI], Fond 5, opis' 28, delo 253, p. 5.

Though the United Nations had originally been envisioned as a mechanism for the peaceful resolution of international conflicts, by the early 1950s, the United States and the Soviet Union had effectively transformed the international organization into a propaganda platform upon which the Cold War could be waged. Like no other organization that had come before, the United Nations provided a venue for national leaders to appeal to the court of world opinion. The propaganda value of the U.N., however, inhibited its efficacy as a tool for conflict resolution.[57] In the Guatemala case, this involved a protracted dispute over the sovereignty of regional bodies like the Organization of American States. During the drafting of the U.N. charter, several Latin American states had expressed anxieties about the dissolution of regional authority and had managed to insert a clause guaranteeing the sovereignty of organizations like the OAS. The joint Guatemalan/Soviet action at the United Nations represented a challenge to the U.S. conception of hemispheric solidarity, which sought to close ranks against the Soviets by uniting the countries of the Western Hemisphere around U.S. international policy goals.

Exactly one week after the passage of Resolution S/3237, Arbenz resigned his post and fled the country. Operation PBSUCCESS, the CIA's secret plot to overthrow Arbenz, had lived up to its name. Colonel Castillo Armas, who led the coup, immediately proceeded to dismantle his predecessor's progressive reforms and bring Guatemala squarely back into the U.S. orbit. The CIA operation was motivated by a powerful combination of national security concerns, economic interests, and domestic pressures.

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[57] See Ilya V. Gaiduk, *Divided Together: The United States and the Soviet Union in the United Nations, 1945-1965* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2012); and Caroline Pruden, *Conditional Partners: Eisenhower, The United Nations, and the Search for a Permanent Peace* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998).

The Arbenz regime had implemented a transformative agrarian program that threatened the power and profits of the United Fruit Company, a multinational corporation with so many arms that it was known in Central America as "*El Pulpo*" – the octopus. During a period of U.S. domestic anti-communist hysteria, Arbenz had legalized Guatemala's communist party, the *Partido Guatemalteco de Trabajadores* (PGT), and adopted an independent foreign policy that challenged the assumptions of U.S. cold warriors.

While the Guatemalan coup has been explored from several angles, to date there has been no attempt to use the archives of the former Soviet Union to examine Moscow's role. Though the Soviets were not directly involved in the events that led up to the coup, they were kept apprised of those events, and they sought to capitalize on Arbenz's overthrow to score propaganda points with the emerging Third World. The Soviets used their position on the U.N. Security Council to register sympathy with the small Central American country struggling against U.S. hegemony. Some have argued that the CIA-backed coup "served to confirm the Soviet perception" of "geographic fatalism," which emphasized the obstacles to revolution in Latin America posed by the region's geographical proximity to, and economic dependence on, the United States.[58] However, the strength of the anti-U.S. nationalism in Latin America that was unleashed by the overthrow of Arbenz had the opposite effect on the Soviet leadership. Rather than confirming the theory of "geographic fatalism," the coup in fact raised hopes that Latin America could be pried away from its dependence on the United States. Thus, in the wake of the coup, the Soviets sought to strengthen their presence in the region, not only by expanding its propaganda apparatus, but by launching an effort to develop trade

[58] Nogee and Donaldson, *Soviet Foreign Policy*, p. 216.

relations with Latin American countries so as to mitigate their economic dependence on the United States and thereby enhance their prospects for achieving political and foreign policy independence.

U.S. Foreign Policy: National Security or Economic Imperialism?

The English-language scholarship has tended to focus on U.S. foreign policy, and the debates have thus revolved around the causes and consequences of the U.S. intervention in Guatemala. Most historians agree that the Eisenhower administration exaggerated the threat posed by the Arbenz government. Some scholars argue that communist influence in Guatemala was minimal, and that the Eisenhower administration mistook Arbenz's nationalism for communism. These scholars point to the small size of the Guatemalan communist party and the strongly conservative nature of many sectors of Guatemalan society (e.g. the army and the Catholic church) as evidence that contemporary U.S. policymakers gravely overestimated the communist threat emanating from the small Central American country.[59]

Historian Piero Gleijeses, whose work draws extensively upon Guatemalan archives and in-depth interviews with previously inaccessible subjects who were close to Arbenz, has reached a different conclusion. He argues that communist influence in Guatemala was more widespread than previously acknowledged, but that Moscow did not exert control over the Guatemalan communist party. Gleijeses is among the group of scholars who argue that the Guatemalan communists exerted an influence out of all

[59] Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer, *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 59; Richard H. Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala: The Foreign Policy of Intervention* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), pp. 183-184; Stephen Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), pp. 46-47.

proportion to their negligible numerical strength.[60] Though there were not many card-carrying members of the PGT, Gleijeses asserts that, "in the last two years of his administration, [Arbenz] considered himself a communist."[61] Some of Guatemala's communists, moreover, enjoyed close personal relationships with Arbenz. His wife, though not a member of the PGT, confessed in an interview with Gleijeses that she and her husband were both convinced that socialism was the wave of the future, and that "communism was inevitable."[62] During the late 1940s, Arbenz became friends with a number of Guatemalan communists who would later become the leaders of the PGT; the future General Secretary of the party, Manuel Fortuny, was his "closest friend."[63] Arbenz had delegated to Fortuny the lead role in drafting Decree 900, the agrarian reform bill that had so antagonized the United Fruit Company.[64] Thus, even though Arbenz himself was not a member of the communist party, Gleijeses argues, he was strongly influenced by the ideas and reformist agenda of the PGT.

An issue closely connected to the degree of communist influence in Guatemala is the precise calculus of political, economic, and strategic concerns that informed the U.S. decision to intervene.[65] Scholars have traditionally emphasized either U.S. economic imperialism or Cold War strategic imperatives, depending to some degree on their appraisal of the role and influence of the United Fruit Company in the formulation of

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[60] Ronald Schneider, *Communism in Guatemala* (New York: Octagon Books, 1979), 318; Robert Alexander, *Communism in Latin America* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1957), 350-364; Piero Gleijeses observes that "in no country of Latin America had the communists ever been as influential as they were in Guatemala," in *Shattered Hope*, p. 362.

[61] Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 147.

[62] María de Arbenz, quoted in Gleijeses, p. 148.

[63] Ibid., 4, 141.

[64] Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004), footnote 37 on page 224.

[65] For a good discussion of historiography of the coup, see Stephen Streeter, "Interpreting the 1954 U.S. Intervention in Guatemala: Realist, Revisionist, and Post-revisionist Perspectives," *The History Teacher*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Nov., 2000), pp. 61-74.

U.S. foreign policy.[66] Stephen Kinzer and Stephen Schlesinger have been the most popular purveyors of the economic imperialism theory. They argue that in the case of Guatemala, "American national security considerations were never compelling."[67] Lars Schoultz has suggested that the Guatemalan coup was perhaps the clearest example of corporate influence over U.S. foreign policy, even insinuating that the United Fruit Company "fooled [John Foster Dulles]…and others into believing that Guatemala's government was communist."[68] Most scholars, however, have argued that the strategic and security imperatives of the Cold War were more significant than the role of the United Fruit Company in shaping U.S. policy.[69] Ultimately, perhaps historian Stephen Rabe is correct to suggest that because "Guatemalan leaders violated both the national security decisions and the foreign economic policies of the United States," "to emphasize either strategic *or* economic motives…is perhaps to draw distinctions without differences."[70]

More recently, scholars have advanced the debate by considering such previously under-examined factors as the domestic political interests of U.S. presidents, the lobbying efforts of prominent Latin American political actors, and anxieties about U.S. international credibility. One historian has persuasively argued that these factors underwrote the decisions of U.S. policymakers to intervene repeatedly in Latin America

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[66] For an example of the former, see James Siekmeier, *Aid, Nationalism, and Inter-American Relations: Guatemala, Bolivia, and the United States, 1945-1961* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1999). For an example of the latter, see Cole Blasier, *The Hovering Giant: U.S. Responses to Revolutionary Change in Latin America, 1910-1985* (Pennsylvania: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976).
[67] Schlesinger and Kinzer, *Bitter Fruit*, p. 107.
[68] Lars Schoultz, *Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy Toward Latin America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), p. 338.
[69] See, for instance, Cullather, *Secret History*; Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*; and Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*.
[70] Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, pp. 58-59.

during the Cold War.[71] Another scholar has assigned equal responsibility for the coup to Latin American political actors, who for years had been lobbying the U.S. government to support regime change in Guatemala, and, faced with U.S. resistance, had embarked upon their own invasion plans.[72]

Scholars of U.S. policy toward Guatemala have drawn a straight line from the coup to the vicious civil war and rightist repression that rocked the country in later decades.[73] While historians tend to agree that the consequences of the coup for U.S.-Latin American relations were disastrous, not enough scholarship has explicitly examined the issue. Stephen Streeter has thoroughly chronicled U.S. efforts to manage the politics of post-Arbenz Guatemala, and State Department historian Mark Hove has recently shown that Salvador Allende reaped tremendous political benefits from his strident opposition to U.S. meddling in the internal affairs of Latin American nations.[74] The Eisenhower administration failed to account for Latin American opposition to its actions in Guatemala and only belatedly discovered the wellspring of anti-American animosity that the coup uncovered. Ironically, in seeking to eliminate the threat of communism in the Western Hemisphere, the Eisenhower administration unintentionally contributed to the creation of a public opinion climate more receptive to it.[75] Historian Robert McMahon

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[71] Michael Grow, *U.S. Presidents and Latin American Interventions: Pursuing Regime Change in the Cold War* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008), preface, *xi*.
[72] Zachary Karabell, *Architects of Intervention: The United States, the Third World, and the Cold War, 1946-1962* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999), 98, 104, 123.
[73] See, for instance, Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre*, p. 188; and Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions*, p. 113. For a recent challenge to this view, see Hal Brands, *Latin America's Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).
[74] Stephen Streeter, *Managing the Counter-revolution: the United States and Guatemala, 1954-1961* (Ohio: Center for International Studies, Ohio University, 2000).
[75] Hove uses Chile as a case study to explore the effect of the CIA coup on Latin American public opinion and U.S.-Latin American relations. Mark T. Hove, "The Arbenz Factor: Salvador Allende, U.S.-Chilean Relations, and the 1954 U.S. Intervention in Guatemala," *Diplomatic History* Vol. 31, No. 4 (September 2007), 623-663.

has also argued that while Eisenhower was an able statesman in the European context, his administration's failure to perceive "the force of Third World nationalism" constituted "a major setback for American diplomacy." "Rather than promoting long-term stability in the Third World," McMahon concludes, "the foreign policy of the Eisenhower administration contributed to its instability, thus undermining a basic American policy goal."[76]

One of the ways that the U.S. intervention proved counter-productive to the long-term interests of the United States was by drawing the attention of the Soviet leadership to the possibilities inherent in Latin America. Although the tendency among scholars is to assume that it was the Cuban Revolution that set Moscow's sights on Latin America, in fact it was the overthrow of Arbenz that convinced the Kremlin to begin laying the groundwork for an expansion of Soviet influence in the region.[77] And while it is certainly true that the Western Hemisphere ranked lowest on Moscow's list of strategically vital areas, the aftermath of Arbenz's overthrow revealed the force of anti-U.S. nationalism in Latin America and contributed to a re-evaluation of the Kremlin's strategic priorities. Latin American communists were at the forefront of efforts to enlighten Moscow about U.S. economic imperialism in the region and actively petitioned the Soviets to provide material support for Arbenz as his regime was threatened by U.S. interventionism.

During the invasion of Guatemala, however, the Soviet leadership was unprepared to take any decisive action to stabilize the Arbenz regime. Stalin had died in 1953 and the

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[76] Robert McMahon, "Eisenhower and Third World Nationalism: A Critique of the Revisionists," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 101, No. 3 (1986), p. 457.

[77] This tendency is apparent in the periodization of studies such as Nicola Miller's *Soviet Relations with Latin America,* and assertions such as those of Christopher Andrew, that the Soviets were not interested in Latin America until the late 1950s when Fidel Castro and other charismatic revolutionaries burst onto the scene. Christopher Andrew and Vasilii Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going Our Way: The KGB and the Battle for the Third World* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 28-29.

provisional leadership was still in the throes of a post-succession power struggle. Soviet Premier Georgi Malenkov delivered a speech in March 1954, in which he partially enunciated the concept of "peaceful coexistence." He called for a "durable strengthening of peace," and a "further weakening of international tension."[78] With this tentative hope for détente with the West, the Soviet leadership was unwilling to provoke U.S. wrath by providing decisive support to Arbenz. Some of the highest-ranking Soviet leaders, moreover, were hamstrung by a dogmatic approach that viewed the communist parties as the only true revolutionaries and failed to recognize "bourgeois nationalists" as potential allies. Latin American communists, lower-level Soviet diplomatic and party personnel, and trade union activists were ahead of the curve on this issue and played a major role in facilitating greater attention to the opportunities that Latin America presented.

Regional communist parties, communist front groups, and trade unions sympathetic to Moscow provided the Soviets with ideologically tendentious analyses of events in the Western Hemisphere. These reports helped to shape the Kremlin's view of the imperialist nature of the United States and to authenticate that view by locating it in the context of Latin America, where discontent with U.S. policy ran deep and was rooted in a decades-long history of economic exploitation and big-stick diplomacy. These reports frequently exhorted Moscow to take meaningful steps to support the Arbenz government, but with the Soviet leadership embroiled in a power struggle, and most Soviet theoreticians convinced that the United States would not tolerate any foreign meddling in its "backyard," but these exhortations were mostly ignored. Although a shipment to Guatemala of Czech weapons was eventually arranged (ostensibly with the

[78] Quoted in Roberts, *The Soviet Union in World Politics*, p. 40.

assistance of the Cuban communist party), the Soviet approach to the Arbenz government remained cautious. During Operation PBSUCCESS, the Guatemalans requested Moscow's help, including the use of the United Nations Security Council to demand an end to the invasion. Guatemalan Foreign Minister Guillermo Toriello dispatched an urgent request for support to the Kremlin, which was distributed in the Presidium. The message was published and the Soviet delegation to the U.N. fiercely condemned the invasion, but no material support for the Arbenz regime was proffered.[79]

The Soviets were, however, conscious of the propaganda potential of international forums and instinctively understood the value the Eisenhower administration accorded to achieving a hemispheric consensus around its international policy objectives. During the Guatemalan crisis, despite the Kremlin's refusal to come to the material aid of the Arbenz government, the Soviet delegation to the United Nations availed itself of the opportunity to land a propaganda triumph against the forces of "American imperialism." The United Nations, as a forum for both appealing to international opinion and pursuing an international policy agenda, provided the USSR with a powerful tool to challenge their Cold War competitors.

Through the employment of anti-imperialist rhetoric, moreover, the Soviets sought to cultivate the goodwill of the emerging Third World and to deepen the divisions between the United States and the countries of Latin America. This rhetoric resonated with the deeply held convictions of many Latin Americans regarding the inherently exploitative nature of U.S. economic policies – a set of assumptions that would later be codified as "dependency theory." As historian Michael Grow has pointed out, Latin

[79] Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War: The Inside Story of an American Adversary* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2006), 62.

American leftists ranging "across a remarkably diverse spectrum" shared "a common perception that the *cause* of Latin America's underdevelopment was…an exploitative transnational alliance between their traditional neo-feudal elites and U.S. imperialism."[80] This perception was grounded in the U.S. tendency to support the extant power structure while turning a blind eye to the impoverishment of Latin America's workers and peasants. The U.S. Achilles' heel in the region was the fundamental disconnect between the security objectives of the United States and the economic demands of the Latin American countries. The Soviets recognized that this divergence of interests represented a major liability for the United States, and they sought to capitalize on the deeply rooted grievances of Guatemalans without incurring the risks involved in directly supporting Arbenz.

THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM AND "HEMISPHERIC SOLIDARITY"

Though the inter-American system had been in operation since the nineteenth century and was the brainchild of Simon Bolivar, it underwent a transformation in the postwar period.[81] The Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty) of 1947 and the charter of the Organization of American States, concluded the following year, provided the framework for coordinating collective action to repel external aggression and a consultative mechanism for resolving intra-American disputes. The drafting of the U.N. charter, which occurred alongside the reconfiguration of the inter-American system, raised thorny questions about the appropriate balance between national

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[80] Grow, *U.S. Presidents and Latin American Interventions*, 3 (emphasis in the original).

[81] On the history of the inter-American system, see J. Lloyd Mecham, *The United States and Inter-American Security, 1889-1960* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961); M. Margaret Ball, *The OAS in Transition* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1969); Jerome Slater, *The OAS and United States Foreign Policy* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1967); John C. Dreier, *The Organization of American States and the Hemisphere Crisis* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1962).

sovereignty and collective defense. The language of the charter ultimately reflected the concerns of Latin American states to keep the inter-American system intact and elevate the principle of regionalism over the universalism represented by the United Nations.[82] At the San Francisco conference in 1945, the Latin American delegations had determined to prevent the intervention of extra-hemispheric powers in the maintenance of peace and security in the region.[83] The inter-American system was thus strengthened largely at the behest of Latin American leaders who desired to preserve the Monroe Doctrine and protect the Western Hemisphere from Soviet-bloc meddling.[84]

The Tenth Inter-American Conference was a turning point, both in terms of U.S. efforts to cultivate hemispheric support for anti-communism and the way that it revealed the fault line separating U.S. interests from those of the Latin American nations. While the paramount U.S. goal at the conference was to achieve a strongly worded anti-communist resolution, the countries of Latin America were far more interested in economic issues, especially the negotiation of better trade terms. This disconnect between the security imperatives of the United States and the economic concerns of Latin America has been a running theme in hemispheric relations and a deep wellspring of anti-U.S. sentiment.

Key U.S. objectives at the conference were to raise awareness of the communist menace in the Western Hemisphere, to obtain Latin American support for U.S. anti-communist policies, and to convince the Latin American countries to isolate Guatemala,

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[82] On the tensions between universalism and regionalism, see Aida Luisa Levin, *The Organization of American States and the United Nations: Relations in the Peace and Security Field* (New York: United Nations Institute for Training and Research, 1974).
[83] Dreier, 26.
[84] Stephen Schlesinger, *Act of Creation: The Founding of the United Nations* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003), 66, 175-192.

both politically and economically.[85] The primary obstacle to the achievement of U.S. objectives was a dispute over the definition of intervention.[86] The U.S. delegation sought to "call attention to the international character of the Communist movement and the control from Moscow of its activities everywhere" and "declare the activities of international Communism to constitute intervention in American affairs."[87] Such a declaration would invoke the consultation procedure under Article 6 of the Treaty of Rio de Janeiro, which sought to protect the hemisphere from "extra-continental" aggression.[88] Had U.S. officials acknowledged that communism in Guatemala was a home-grown affair, there would be no legitimate basis for intervention. Secretary of State Dulles acknowledged that the purpose of the anti-communist resolution was to "recognize Communism as an international conspiracy instead of regarding it merely as an indigenous movement."[89] Months earlier, the CIA and State Department had been instructed to gather and if necessary, fabricate evidence for use in the OAS that "Guatemala constitutes a menace to Hemispheric solidarity and the internal security of friendly nations through aggressive Communist subversion."[90] It was essential that the nature of the communist threat emanating from Guatemala be established as international in scope and directed by Moscow; otherwise, charges of foreign intervention would seem

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[85] Progress Report Prepared in the Department of State for the Operations Coordinating Board, May 25, 1954, "Third Progress Report on NSC 144/1, United States Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect to Latin America." *Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter, *FRUS*], *1952-1954*, The American Republics, IV: 47.

[86] Max Paul Friedman, *Rethinking Anti-Americanism: The History of an Exceptional Concept in American Foreign Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 137-138.

[87] Memorandum by Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Cabot to Acting Secretary of State, Subject: Position on Communism for the Tenth Inter-American Conference, February 10, 1954. *FRUS 1952-1954*, The American Republics, IV: 280.

[88] Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty), Article 6. The text of the treaty can be accessed at http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/treaties/b-29.html.

[89] Minutes of a cabinet meeting held at the White House, February 26, 1954, *FRUS 1952-1954*, The American Republics, IV: 301.

[90] Memorandum for the Record, September 11, 1953. *FRUS 1952-1954*, Guatemala: 106.

incredible. If, however, communist subversion "was tantamount to external aggression," then "efforts…to counter such Communist subversion could not rightfully be described as American intervention."[91]

After two weeks of preparations by the U.S. delegation, a resolution affirming that the international communist movement constituted "intervention" in the affairs of American nations was adopted. Mexico and Argentina abstained from voting on the resolution, while the Guatemalan delegation was the sole dissenter. Not only did the Guatemalan delegation vote against the resolution, but it also renounced the country's adherence to the anti-communist resolutions adopted at prior conferences (Bogota, 1948 and Washington, 1951). Although the United States succeeded in passing the resolution, many anti-communist Latin American regimes did not perceive Guatemala as a threat to hemispheric security.[92]

During a meeting of the National Security Council shortly after the conference, Secretary Dulles described the difficulties he had faced in securing the passage of the anti-communist resolution. The thorniest issue, as always, concerned U.S. "commercial and financial policies." Dulles also had to contend with "those who insisted that the anti-Communist resolution was nothing but a pretext to permit American intervention in the internal affairs of the other republics of the hemisphere." Despite "two weeks of very intensive work…to change this atmosphere," the resolution "was certainly not adopted

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[91] Memorandum of Discussion at the 189th Meeting of the National Security Council, March 18, 1954. *FRUS 1952-1954*, The American Republics, IV: 304.

[92] Progress Report Prepared in the Department of State for the Operations Coordinating Board, May 25, 1954, "Third Progress Report on NSC 144/1, United States Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect to Latin America." *FRUS 1952-1954,* The American Republics, IV: 27.

with genuine enthusiasm."[93] The Caracas conference not only demonstrated the U.S. effort to convert the OAS into an anti-communist alliance, but also revealed the utter failure of the United States to adequately address Latin American economic grievances. This was a failure on which the Soviets were keen to capitalize.

COMMUNISM IN LATIN AMERICA

Though in 1954 the Soviets maintained diplomatic relations with a mere three Latin American countries (Mexico, Argentina, and Uruguay), the USSR's embassy in Mexico was an excellent source of information for Soviet leaders. Embassy officials carefully tracked developments in neighboring countries and reported back to the Kremlin about the growing potential for revolutionary change in Latin America. Soviet diplomats evaluated the proceedings of the Second Congress of the Guatemalan Communist Party (PGT) and concluded that the PGT was at the forefront of Guatemala's struggle for national liberation. The PGT, moreover, was lauded for its leading role in opposing foreign monopolies, particularly United Fruit.[94]

The General Secretary of the PGT, Manuel Fortuny, was a fierce critic of U.S. policy and an outspoken advocate of a pro-Stalinist foreign policy. His scathing polemics at the second congress of the PGT in December 1952 lambasted the United States for exploiting the Guatemalan people and pursuing an aggressive policy designed to expand its military presence in the country.[95] In a report he prepared for the congress, Fortuny accused the United States of waging a propaganda campaign "under the same flag of

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[93] Memorandum of Discussion at the 189th Meeting of the National Security Council, March 18, 1954. *FRUS 1952-1954*, The American Republics, IV: 305.
[94] Soviet embassy in Mexico, March 18, 1953, Second Congress of the Guatemalan Communist Party, report sent to Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [hereafter, CC CPSU]. RGANI, fond 5, opis' 28, delo 48, p. 29.
[95] Ibid., pp. 15-17.

'anti-communism' that was used by Hitler in his day."[96] Characterizing the United States as a fascist police state, and accusing the "American imperialists" of carrying out "terrorist acts" against the workers and "democratic movements" of several different countries, Fortuny anticipated no end to U.S. meddling in the internal affairs of Latin American nations.[97] The fundamental goal of aggressive U.S. policies, according to Fortuny, was to halt economic development in these countries and to thwart the struggle for national liberation. "Pan-Americanism," "anti-communism," and "continental security" were merely empty slogans used as a pretext for overthrowing progressive leaders and replacing them with obedient and repressive dictators.[98] Fortuny exhorted party members to spread the truth about the superiority of the socialist economy and the "new society" being built in the Soviet Union.[99] This professed loyalty to Soviet policy and to the Stalinist system is what distinguished the communists from the nationalists in the Latin American context.

Perhaps most damaging to the U.S. vision of hemispheric solidarity was the PGT's call for Guatemala to conduct a more independent foreign policy. Fortuny sought to "unmask" the "provocative" nature of the Organization of Central American States (ODECA) and to show that the Salvadoran delegation's introduction of a resolution to combat the "subversive actions of International Communism in Central America" was designed to serve the interests of the "Yankee imperialists."[100] In Fortuny's view, Guatemala should not only sever its dependence on the United States, but should establish ties with national liberation movements and identify itself with the aspirations

[96] Ibid., p. 18.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid., p. 19.
[100] Ibid., p. 20.

of newly decolonizing states.[101] Arbenz's attempts to dissociate his country from the regional pacts and policies of the Truman and Eisenhower administrations suggest that he was strongly influenced by the PGT's stance. In February 1953, U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala Rudolf Schoenfeld warned that the ultimate objective of the PGT was the "neutralizing of Guatemala as a Western nation" and that communist infiltration of key government positions was not an accurate indicator of communist influence in the country.[102] Two months later, Guatemala withdrew from ODECA.[103]

The Soviet embassies in Latin America were not the only source of intelligence at the Kremlin's disposal. The communist trade unions were an active presence in Latin America, and provided Moscow with continuous updates and policy recommendations. These labor groups were on the front lines of the struggle to win the hearts and minds of Latin America's workers and peasants and played a major role in directing the attention of the Soviet leadership to the Third World in general and Latin America in particular. Although an in-depth examination of the Cold War politicization of labor is beyond the scope of this article, some brief background information is necessary to understand how these organizations functioned.

The major communist-dominated labor confederation active in Guatemala was the Confederacion General de Trabajadores de Guatemala (CGTG), which had affiliated with the Confederacion de Trabajadores de America Latina (CTAL) and the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).[104] The Confederacion Nacional Campesina de Guatemala

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[101] Ibid.
[102] Letter from the Ambassador to Guatemala (Schoenfeld) to the Secretary of State's Special Assistant for Intelligence (Armstrong), February 13, 1953, *FRUS 1952-1954*, Guatemala: 68-69.
[103] Schneider, *Communism in Guatemala*, 295; Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 225.
[104] Jon V. Kofas, *The Struggle for Legitimacy: Latin American Labor and the United States, 1930-1960* (Tempe: Arizona State University Center for Latin American Studies, 1992), 179, 189.

(CNCG), a peasant organization formed in May 1950 under the leadership of non-communists, allegedly "spouted pro-Soviet rhetoric" in a bid to secure financial support from Arbenz's government.[105] The CNCG also became affiliated with the World Federation of Trade Unions, which functioned essentially as an instrument of Soviet policy, if not always a perfectly reliable one.[106] Under the leadership of Vicente Lombardo Toledano, one of Mexico's most influential Marxists, the CTAL was folded into the WFTU in 1945, and together, they were among the most reliable sources of information for Soviet leaders and propagandists.[107]

The WFTU was created in 1945 and from the outset, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) refused to have anything to do with it, understanding that it was dominated by communists and would be subservient to the Soviet Union.[108] Rank factionalism plagued the WFTU almost from inception, with sympathies broadly corresponding to either the Western democracies or the Soviet camp.[109] The advent of the Marshall Plan proved fatal to the chimera of "labor unity," with the pro-Western factions supporting the plan and the pro-Soviet factions vehemently opposing it. The non-communist groups were outnumbered, and when the WFTU implemented a series of labor strikes designed to disrupt the Marshall Plan, these groups jumped ship and joined the AFL in creating the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).[110] The CTAL, being a

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[105] Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope,* 189.
[106] Ronald Radosh, *American Labor and United States Foreign Policy* (New York: Random House, 1969), 384.
[107] John P. Windmuller, *American Labor and the International Labor Movement, 1940 to 1953* (Ithaca: Cornell University Institute of International Industrial and Labor Relations, 1954), 185.
[108] Radosh, 32.
[109] Windmuller, 141.
[110] Roy Godson, *The Kremlin and Labor: A Study in National Security Policy* (New York: National Strategy Information Center, 1977), 32; Radosh, *American Labor and United States Foreign Policy*, 318-322; Windmuller, *American Labor and the International Labor Movement*, 134-150.

member of the pro-Soviet faction, remained in the WFTU, which from that point forward functioned essentially as a communist front, though it continued to be plagued by factionalism and rivalries between and among its national affiliates.

At the WFTU's second congress, convened in Milan in the summer of 1949, there was a pronounced emphasis on Latin America and the delegates sought to prevent ICFTU from dominating the trade union movement in the Western Hemisphere.[111] CTAL was declared "the organism of liaison and coordination of the World Federation of Trade Unions with the National Centres of Latin America."[112] CTAL was a vital source of intelligence – "the studies and research" that the CTAL conducted "have shown that…the regime of foreign monopolies hinders their economic development and makes their complete independence impossible."[113] CTAL also reported that the trade union movement was "meeting serious difficulties" as a result of "the economic dependence of the majority of the Latin American nations on the United States."[114] In the postwar period, "a new and intense pressure has been applied by the great American monopolies on Latin America, with the aim of controlling the latter from the economic, military, and political point of view."[115] This view of the relationship between the United States and Latin America was given particular force by the history of U.S. economic exploitation, and political and military interventionism in the Western Hemisphere. That the ultimate destination for CTAL and WFTU analyses was the CPSU Central Committee suggests that these trade unions strongly influenced Soviet propagandists. Regional communists

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[111] Kofas, *The Struggle for Legitimacy*, 337-399.
[112] Report of Activity of the World Federation of Trade Unions, 15 October 1945 – 30 April 1949, Presented to the II World Trade Union Congress, Milan, 29 June – 10 July 1949, p. 80.
[113] Ibid., p. 79.
[114] Ibid., appendix p. 73.
[115] Ibid.

and trade union representatives, who were in fairly close touch with the workers and peasants of Latin America, shaped the Soviet approach to the region.

In May 1954, the WFTU sent its representatives on a tour of Latin America, and the assistant director of the department for national centers authored a report that was sent to the International Department. The WFTU tour included a stop in Guatemala for the second national congress of the CGTG. A few months earlier, the CGTG had organized a meeting to express the "solidarity" of Guatemala's workers with the Vietnamese people and to "struggle for the termination of the colonial war in Vietnam," which the French colonialists, "with the support of the American monopolists," had for eight years been ruthlessly waging against the Vietnamese people.[116] At their congress the following spring, a platform indistinguishable from that of the PGT was expounded. The main points of discussion were the struggle against United Fruit, the necessity of supporting Arbenz, and the defense of Guatemala's national independence, which was under direct threat from the United States and its "reactionary satellites in Central America – El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua."[117] The WFTU report's author predicted an intensification of U.S. "imperial pressure" on Guatemala and recommended "intervening" to provide support to Arbenz, because even though he was not a member of the communist party, he recognized the significance of the PGT's activities in service of the country's national interests.[118]

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[116] Review of the International Day of Solidarity with Vietnamese People and the struggle for the termination of the colonial war in Vietnam, December 19, 1953. RGANI, Fond 5, opis' 28, delo 192, p. 21.
[117] Report of the deputy head of the Department of National Centers of the World Federation of Trade Unions on his visit to the countries of Latin America, May 21, 1954. RGANI, fond 5, opis' 28, delo 195, pp. 150-151.
[118] Ibid., pp. 202-203.

As early as 1953, the Soviets were receiving indications that the aggressive U.S. posture toward Guatemala could have serious implications for the future of U.S.-Latin American relations. Nikolai Leonov, a KGB officer whose later career would include multiple stints in various Latin American countries and who served as an information officer at the Soviet embassy in Mexico City in the early 1950s, provided the Foreign Ministry in Moscow with an assessment of the Pan-American Journalists Congress in December 1953. He characterized the organization as a tool of the U.S. State Department, and judged the primary goal of the congress to be the condemnation of leftist regimes in Guatemala, Bolivia, and Argentina. According to Leonov, the State Department, under the auspices of the congress, sought to accuse these regimes of liquidating freedom of the press and attempting to break hemispheric solidarity. It also hoped to achieve a declaration asserting that the Guatemalan regime was under the decisive influence of communists.[119] The results of the congress showed, however, that within Latin America, opposition to dictators was growing, and this opposition could potentially spill over into a general protest against the "imperialistic policy" of the United States.[120]

In May 1954, the General Secretary of the Soviet Committee for the Defense of Peace sent the CPSU Central Committee a report on the activities of the Latin American affiliates of the World Peace Council, the general secretary of which had toured Latin America in preparation for its upcoming international conference. He met with President Peron of Argentina, who confided that the Argentine people were exerting pressure on

[119] Soviet embassy in Mexico, December 24, 1953, to the head of the Americas department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, Nikolai Leonov's report "Pan-American Congress of Journalists." RGANI, fond 5, opis' 28, delo 48, pp. 117-119.
[120] Ibid., p. 135.

him of a "clearly anti-imperial character" in relation to the situation in Guatemala.[121] In February and March, the Argentine branch of the peace council had sent messages expressing solidarity with Guatemala to the Guatemalan and Argentine governments and to all of the delegates at the Tenth Inter-American Conference in Caracas. These groups had petitioned to hold a demonstration in Buenos Aires in support of Guatemala but had not yet received permission from the authorities. Attempts were being made to create a Society for Friends of Guatemala, as had already been done in Chile. The Chilean society had sent telegrams signed by 67 deputies of varied political loyalties to the delegates at Caracas.[122] The Costa Rican branch of the peace council claimed to have sent 10,000 letters to the U.N. to request the "defense of peace in Central America."[123] The United States Information Agency (USIA) cited these efforts as evidence of the "coordinated Communist thrust at the Americas."[124] The simultaneous creation in several different Latin American countries of "friendship societies" to express solidarity with the Guatemalan people, and the societies' synchronous votes on identically worded resolutions, revealed the "mark of the experienced agent."[125]

In January, USIA and CIA had escalated their propaganda campaign to discredit Arbenz's government as a dupe of Moscow and thereby lay the groundwork for the passage of an anti-communist resolution at the Caracas Conference scheduled for March.[126] Amidst the scare campaign, Arbenz issued an official communiqué warning of

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[121] Report of the visit of Secretary of the World Peace Council to the countries of Latin America in preparation for its international conference, May 15, 1954. RGANI, fond 5, opis' 28, delo 195, p. 98.
[122] Ibid., p. 108.
[123] Report of the national committee of the allies of peace in Costa Rica, November 30, 1954. RGANI, Fond 5, opis' 28, delo 358, p. 16.
[124] Circular Telegram from USIA to Certain Posts, June 25, 1954. *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Guatemala: 383.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 256-257.

the Eisenhower administration's intentions to overthrow his government. The communiqué, which was circulated in the International Department of the CPSU Central Committee, charged that high-ranking U.S. government personnel were lending both "moral and material" support to the invasion plans of "such powerful monopolies as United Fruit," the interests of which were threatened by Arbenz's economic policies.[127] In preparation for the invasion, the United States was waging a campaign of slander and lies, tarnishing Guatemala as a "threat to the security of the American continent" and a "bridgehead of international communism." Not that this U.S. propaganda blitz was fooling anyone – "everyone knows" that the slander was merely a pretext for "open intervention" in Guatemala's internal affairs, with the sinister ulterior motive of depriving the country of its sovereignty and independence.[128]

During the invasion period, the Agitprop Department of the CPSU prepared a lengthy report about the situation in Guatemala. The report was based on the information provided by regional communists and trade union representatives, and warned that from the first failed attempt at covert subversion of the Arbenz government, the "American imperialists" were now crossing over to the "preparation of open armed intervention."[129] Forces from Nicaragua, Honduras, and El Salvador – all ruled by fascist dictators who were mere "marionettes" manipulated by their U.S. puppet masters – were invading Guatemala at the behest of the United States.[130] All this was occurring in the midst of a raging class war that pitted the feudal land-owners and foreign monopolies against the

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[127] Communique from the President of the Republic of Guatemala on U.S. intentions to overthrow the democratic government of Guatemala, January 29, 1954. RGANI, fond 5, opis' 28, delo 253, p. 5.
[128] Ibid.
[129] On the Position of Guatemala and the Activities of the Guatemalan Labor Party, June 25, 1954. RGANI, fond 5, opis' 28, delo 194, p. 104.
[130] Ibid.

masses, who were being led by the PGT and the labor unions. The Guatemalan people were heroically struggling to implement the Arbenz regime's agrarian reforms and more broadly, a genuine anti-feudal and anti-imperial revolution.

Soviets propagandists, based on information supplied by the communist parties and trade unions, assumed that the U.S. intervention was designed to protect the monopoly status of United Fruit, and they discerned no difference between the interests of the Eisenhower administration and those of the company. So many high-ranking officials had investments in the company – former Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America John Cabot, head of the State Department section for dealing with issues of international security Thomas Cabot, presidential aide Robert Cutler, Trade Minister Sinclair Weeks, Defense Minister Charles Wilson, U.S. representative to the U.N. Henry Cabot Lodge – and to top it all off, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, former attorney for United Fruit, was one of its largest shareholders.[131] Clearly no further evidence was needed to illustrate the "predatory plunder of dependent countries by American imperialism."[132] Reactionary forces inside the country and abroad used the pretext of "anti-communism" to mask their true intentions – they called the Arbenz regime "communist," and yet there was never a single communist in his administration![133]

The report also highlighted Arbenz's attempts to assert Guatemala's independence and sovereignty. Although U.S. opposition to his government was clearly predetermined by the agrarian reform, which had so antagonized United Fruit (and by extension, the Eisenhower administration), his regime's pursuit of an independent foreign policy intensified U.S. hostility. From the very beginning, Arbenz's government had

[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid., p. 114.
[133] Ibid., p. 127.

rejected the militaristic policies of the American imperialists and had spoken out for the peaceful resolution of international problems. Guatemala had refused to send troops to Korea and to subordinate its armed forces to the U.S. military brass. The subjugation of other Latin American countries' armed forces was achieved through the "so-called 'agreement on defending the western hemisphere' [Rio Treaty]." Yet Arbenz had rebuffed U.S. militaristic designs; therefore the outcry about communism in Guatemala was raised long before he legalized the communist party.[134]

The Agitprop Department's report on Guatemala characterized inter-American organizations, specifically the Organization of American States and the Organization of Central American States, as mere tools of U.S. imperialism. Owing to the servility of Central American dictators, ODECA had become an "obedient instrument of the U.S. Department of State."[135] Guatemala, to its credit, had withdrawn from the organization, having lodged a formal protest against the creation of a military bloc designed to legitimize intervention in the internal affairs of Central American nations. At the Tenth Inter-American Conference, moreover, Guatemala had voted against the anti-communist resolution, delivering an "ideological blow" to the United States.[136]

The Arbenz regime could have been a valuable ally to the Soviet Union – it was dedicated to democratic reform and progressive ideals, it pursued an independent foreign policy and openly criticized the United States in international forums, and to top it all off, it provided safe haven for communist exiles throughout the region. The report noted specifically that Guatemala had welcomed political refugees like the General Secretary of the Paraguayan communist party, Abdulio Barte. Guatemala also provided a valuable

[134] Ibid., p. 137.
[135] Ibid., p. 138.
[136] Ibid., pp. 139-140.

service by publishing the news bulletins of the Dominican Republic's communist party.[137] The report on the situation in Guatemala tracked the proceedings of the PGT in detail, extensively quoting Fortuny and carefully describing the praiseworthy goals and actions of Guatemala's communists, particularly their attempts to throw off the "imperialist yoke" of the United States and its "predatory" companies that were "strangling" Guatemala's economy.[138] Yet the efforts of Arbenz and the PGT to establish more tangible ties to the Soviets were destined to be in vain. Although they did manage, with the help of the Cuban communist party, to negotiate the sale of a shipment of captured Nazi weapons from the Czechs, substantive Soviet aid was not forthcoming.[139] Indeed, Manuel Fortuny, who traveled to Prague at Arbenz's behest, was struck by the impression that "the Russians knew little of Guatemala…and had more pressing concerns than the plight of Jacobo Arbenz."[140] Though Latin American communists admired the Guatemalan revolution and petitioned the Soviets to aid the Arbenz government, the Soviet leadership was in no position to render meaningful support to a Central American regime tottering under the weight of a U.S.-backed invasion.

THE POST-COUP PROPAGANDA BATTLE

During the invasion of Guatemala just a few months after the Caracas conference, the Cuban communist party sent Osvaldo Sanchez Cabrera to Guatemala on an investigatory mission to confer with the leadership of the PGT. Based on these meetings, Sanchez prepared and sent a report to the Soviet embassy in Mexico. The

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[137] Ibid., p. 140.
[138] Ibid., pp. 143-156.
[139] Report on Guatemala, July 2, 1954. RGANI, Fond 5, opis' 28, delo 194, p. 164. See also Cullather, *Secret History*, 54.
[140] Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 280-281.

report was a clear delineation of what had become the communist party line on the invasion of Guatemala: the forces of imperialism, led by United Fruit and International Railways of Central America (IRCA), and their lackeys in the U.S. government were directing the intervention against Arbenz.[141] After the failed uprising at Salamá, the U.S. government hired an army of foreign mercenaries from the countries surrounding Guatemala. The Arbenz government had unmasked the dastardly plot, presenting the matter to the United Nations and thus revealing the machinations of American imperialism to the entire world. Two months later, the Guatemalan delegation's performance at the Tenth Inter-American Conference was a "brilliant victory for the Guatemalan people and a defeat for American imperialism."[142] Sanchez emphasized that an important consequence of the invasion was the heightened solidarity of the peoples of the world, and particularly the peoples of other Latin American countries, with Guatemala.[143] Moreover, the Soviet delegation's "brilliant defense" of Guatemala at the U.N. on June 20 was warmly received, and the "acts of international solidarity directed against the American imperialists" were designed to deliver the following message: "that which is happening today in Guatemala can tomorrow happen in any other country."[144]

On June 20, the Soviet delegate to the U.N., Semyon Tsarapkin, had vetoed the Brazilian and Colombian resolution to transfer Guatemala's complaint to the OAS. Instead, the French drafted a watered-down resolution appealing for the immediate cessation of hostilities and imploring the members of the United Nations to abstain from aiding such actions. When presenting the draft resolution, the French delegate stated that

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[141] Report on Guatemala, July 2, 1954. RGANI, Fond 5, opis' 28, delo 194, pp. 160-162.
[142] Ibid., p. 163.
[143] Ibid., p. 166.
[144] Ibid., pp. 192-193.

it should in no way "be construed as casting doubt on, or weakening, the competence of the Inter-American Peace Committee or the legitimacy of its action in this matter." In fact, the reverse was true – "the correctness of resort to…[the OAS]…only gains confirmation from the failure of the Security Council brought about by the Soviet veto." The Arbenz government had also lodged a complaint with the Inter-American Peace Committee (IAPC), which met on June 24 and proposed the immediate departure of a fact-finding committee for Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Arbenz subsequently withdrew the complaint, preferring instead to pursue the issue under the auspices of the United Nations.[145]

At the request of Guatemala and the Soviet Union, the Security Council convened again on June 25. During the session, the Brazilian delegate praised the OAS machinery and its "long record of achievement" as an "efficient instrument for the solution of conflicts."[146] He also noted that at the Chapultepec conference of the OAS in 1945, Guillermo Toriello had made an eloquent argument in favor of strengthening the inter-American system and maintaining "principles of collaboration and continental solidarity." Toriello's viewpoint was incorporated into Article 2 of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty), which entreated all parties to "settle any such controversy among themselves by means of the procedures in force in the Inter-American System *before referring it to the General Assembly or the Security Council of the United Nations*."[147] The Brazilian delegate thus argued against the adoption of the agenda by the U.N. Security Council.

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[145] Minutes of the 676th meeting of the U.N. Security Council, June 25, 1954, UN ARMS, Series S-1078, Box 58, File 11, p. 2.
[146] Ibid., p. 4.
[147] Ibid., p. 5, emphasis added.

The Soviet delegate, Tsarapkin, interrupted the proceedings with a point of order concerning Article 32, which stipulated that parties to a dispute be invited to participate in Security Council discussions. Tsarapkin requested that, "since the substantive discussion of the question…has already begun, the Guatemalan representative should be invited to come to the Council table."[148] The council's president noted that "it is not customary to invite non-members of the Security Council to come to the table until after the agenda has been adopted."[149] Tsarapkin then assumed a belligerent tone, chastising the president for referring to him as a "gentleman" and insisting that he be addressed as the "representative of the Soviet Union."[150] He openly challenged the president's ruling, and demanded that the council not "be prevented from dealing with the Guatemalan question by a procedural ruse."[151] He then cautioned that if the president of the council "refuses to invite the victim of aggression to participate in the discussion of this question, he will be violating [Article 32]."[152] The matter was put to a vote, with all Security Council members except Tsarapkin voting in favor of the president's ruling.[153] Denouncing the U.S. "machinations…aimed at removing the question from the agenda," Tsarapkin warned that "failure to include this question in the agenda will serve the aggressor's purpose."[154] He was thus serving notice that the refusal to adopt the agenda would constitute clear evidence that the Security Council was a mere tool in the hands of the American imperialists.

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[148] Ibid., p. 6.
[149] Ibid., p. 7.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid., p. 8.
[152] Ibid., p. 9.
[153] Ibid., p. 10.
[154] Ibid., p. 27.

Ultimately, Lebanon, Denmark, and New Zealand joined the USSR in voting to adopt the agenda, with the United States, Turkey, Brazil, Colombia, and China voting against, and Britain and France abstaining. By the time the IAPC fact-finding committee arrived in Guatemala to investigate, Arbenz had resigned his post and fled the scene. The episode provoked U.N. Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold's comment in the Ninth Annual Report that, "a policy giving full scope to the proper role of regional agencies can and should at the same time fully preserve the right of a Member nation to a hearing under the Charter."[155] It also prompted Hammarskjold to draft a memorandum concerning the proper relationship between the U.N. and regional organizations, in which he argued that "regional action within the framework of the Charter is a *complement* of universal action."[156]

The United Nations was just one venue for the post-coup propaganda battle, which involved each combatant seeking to portray the other as evil imperialists. The CIA was well aware of the need to deflect communist claims that U.S. policies were merely a smokescreen for economic imperialism. Defining imperialism as "the use of government power for the exploitation of foreign territories and people," CIA psychological warfare specialist Tracy Barnes suggested asserting the line that Soviet imperialism was "the only imperialism operating today."[157] Barnes also recommended laying emphasis on Soviet "economic exploitation" of occupied territories and "atrocities committed by Soviet

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[155] Introduction to the Ninth Annual Report, UN ARMS, Series S-1078, Box 58, File 11.
[156] Memorandum by the Secretary-General, June 30, 1954, emphasis added. UN ARMS, Series S-1078, Box 58, File 11. See also Peter B. Heller, *The United Nations Under Dag Hammarskjold, 1953-1961* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2001), pp. 70-72.
[157] Dispatch from Operation PBSUCCESS headquarters in Florida to PBSUCCESS headquarters, CIA, June 4, 1954. *FRUS 1952-1954*, Guatemala: 310.

troops" in annexed areas.[158] Propaganda materials containing these themes should be distributed to Guatemala's neighbors as well, in view of "the close interrelationship in public opinion between Guatemala and other Latin American, especially Central American, countries."[159]

With Latin American leftists popularizing the view that the U.S.-sponsored invasion of Guatemala was specifically designed to halt and reverse agrarian reforms, the CIA recommended that the U.S. delegate to the U.N. Security Council make absolutely clear that the United States favored agrarian reforms in underdeveloped countries and was "exclusively concerned with safeguarding Western Hemisphere against Communist conspiracy."[160] To prove the existence of such a conspiracy, USIA circulated a non-attributed piece citing evidence that "top-flight agents of the Kremlin are guiding all acts both in the field and on the diplomatic front" in Guatemala. Among the evidence presented was Tsarapkin's veto of the transfer to the OAS of Guatemala's complaint.[161]

USIA laid emphasis on the U.N. usurpation of the proper jurisdiction of the OAS; Article 52 of the U.N. charter specifically recognized the authority of regional organizations.[162] USIA recommended heavy circulation of an OAS resolution signed by ten members, which indicated that "member OAS states are in exactly same frame of mind as US Senate" and should be interpreted as a Soviet failure to "pin rebellion of Guatemalans on US as act of aggression." The Soviet veto on the transfer of the matter to the OAS, however, "revealed mailed fist under glove manipulating Guatemalan affairs"

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[158] Ibid., 311.
[159] Ibid., 312.
[160] Telegram from Operation PBSUCCESS headquarters in Florida to CIA, June 24, 1954. *FRUS 1952-1954,* Guatemala: 378.
[161] Circular Telegram from USIA to Certain Posts, June 25, 1954. *FRUS 1952-1954*, Guatemala: 383.
[162] Schlesinger, *Act of Creation,* 66, 180, 183.

and "rallied peoples of Western Hemisphere to repulse most sinister imperialism and most overt intervention in Western Hemisphere in recorded history."[163]

Meanwhile, the WFTU and CTAL stepped up their activities in Latin America, keeping the CPSU apprised of the growing potential for revolutionary change in the region. WFTU and CTAL sharply criticized the United States and the "Yankee monopolies" that dominated the economies of the Western Hemisphere, declaring the "North American imperialists" the common enemy, exhorting workers to the struggle for economic justice, and touting the "international solidarity" that had strengthened as a result of the "bloody terror" in Guatemala.[164] The strikes that rocked Honduras were "a clear indicator" of the "militant spirit" of Central America's plantation workers.[165] Characterizing Honduras as a colony of the United States, one CTAL affiliate crowed that the general strike of United Fruit workers had "shaken the foundations of domestic and international reactionary forces."[166] The U.S. invasion of Guatemala had "clarified" the situation of laborers throughout the region and definitively revealed United Fruit as the common enemy.[167] Amid vows to "remain faithful to the slogan of proletarian internationalism," the delegate promised to lead the workers of Honduras along the path "dictated to us by CTAL and WFTU – the sole organizations expressing the…genuine interests of the world's workers."[168]

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[163] Telegram from USIA to Certain Posts, June 26, 1954. *FRUS 1952-1954*, Guatemala: 385.
[164] Report distributed at the session of the Central Committee of the Confederation of Latin American Workers held from July 19-23, 1954. RGANI, Fond 5, opis' 28, delo 253, pp. 223 & 226.
[165] Ibid., p. 218.
[166] Report of official delegate of the "Lucha Obrera" movement on the Honduran position at the session of the Central Committee of the Confederation of Latin American workers, July 1954. RGANI, Fond 5, opis' 28, delo 194, pp. 228-229.
[167] Ibid., p. 250.
[168] Ibid., p. 255.

In July, CTAL issued a manifesto condemning Castillo Armas and the "North American imperialists."[169] Calling on the workers of the world to save the "Guatemalan patriots" from oppression, the manifesto named "imperialism" as the main enemy of the Guatemalan people.[170] Washington had acted against Arbenz not only because his agrarian program had threatened United Fruit's monopoly status, but because the success of the Guatemalan revolution had inspired "the Latin American masses" to demand similar reforms.[171] The Yankee imperialists, "thirsty for maximum profits," would use any means necessary, including "blood and fire," to exploit Latin America's land and people.[172] The manifesto expressed certainty that the workers of the world would support the demands of the Guatemalan people and facilitate a victory in the struggle with the American monopolists, whose actions in Guatemala had revealed the criminal essence of the U.S. policy of "world domination."[173]

Latin American communist parties joined WFTU and CTAL in condemning the imperialist intervention, expressing solidarity with the Guatemalan people, and calling for greater unity of purpose and action among the parties of the region. At the twelfth congress of the Mexican communist party in September, General Secretary Dionysio Encinas called for "working class unity" in the "struggle for Mexico's national sovereignty" against "American imperialism."[174] He also lauded the party for its "leading

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[169] Manifesto of the Confederation of Latin American Workers, July 1954. RGANI, Fond 5, opis' 28, delo 253, p. 253.
[170] Ibid., p. 254
[171] Ibid., p. 256.
[172] Ibid., p. 257.
[173] Ibid., p. 263.
[174] 12th Congress of the Communist Party of Mexico, September 20-25, 1954. RGANI, Fond 5, opis' 28, delo 194, p. 266.

role" in "expressing solidarity with the people of Guatemala."[175] In December 1954, the first secretary of the Soviet embassy in Mexico met with one of Venezuela's leading communists, Eduardo Machado, who emphasized that "the general direction of U.S. policy consists of the further subordination of the Latin American countries to the interests of the U.S. monopolies."[176]

The PGT leadership, in conversations with Soviet diplomats at the Mexican embassy and messages sent to the CPSU Central Committee, adopted a self-critical tone and acknowledged the grave errors they had made during the invasion. Guerra Borges admitted that the biggest mistake was in not arming the peasantry. He also noted that Arbenz's Foreign Minister, Guillermo Toriello, had become more stridently anti-American since the fall of the regime. Apparently Toriello was convinced that the Democratic Party of the United States "does not adhere to an imperialist policy," and that the intervention "would not have occurred" had the Democrats occupied the White House.[177] The PGT leadership sent a note to Khrushchev, in which, "in the spirit of self-criticism," they acknowledged the primary lesson they had learned from the Guatemalan experience: "only the consistent, continual, and universal application of Marxist-Leninist teachings guarantees the correct leadership of the revolutionary struggle to achieve success."[178]

In the period following Arbenz's resignation, the Soviet diplomatic and press corps in Latin America, partly in response to the initiatives of Latin American

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[175] Ibid., p. 267.
[176] Conversation with member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Venezuela, Eduardo Machado, December 7, 1954. RGANI, Fond 5, opis' 28, delo 321, p. 13.
[177] Conversation with representative of the Central Committee of the Guatemalan Labor Party in Mexico, Guerra Borges, June 29, 1955. RGANI, Fond 5, opis' 28, delo 321, p. 82.
[178] Letter from Jose Luis Ramos, Mario Silva Jonama, and Alfredo Guerra Borges, October 22, 1955. RGANI, Fond 5, opis' 28, delo 321, pp. 131-132.

communists, began pushing for the improvement of Soviet propaganda capabilities in the region. The paucity of good translators, media outlets, and contacts on the ground in these countries were cited as the major obstacles to improving the quality and quantity of Soviet propaganda. In the fall of 1954, the Agitprop Department of the CPSU Central Committee re-evaluated its propaganda capabilities in the Western Hemisphere. The Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS), which collected and distributed all official news, embarked on a concerted effort of reform and refinement of its information-gathering facilities in Latin America. Orlando Millas, editor of *El Siglo*, the official newspaper of the Chilean communist party, helped spur this initiative with his direct request for TASS to expedite and expand translations into Spanish of newsworthy developments in the Soviet bloc. Millas complained that because U.S. information distribution outlets were so much more effective, the majority of Latin Americans learned about the Soviet Union and its allies from news media that reflected the anti-communist and anti-Soviet biases of the United States. Although Millas's letter was directed to the Central Committee, it was quickly passed onto the head of TASS, who adopted Millas's recommendations and developed a series of measures to improve the agency's work in Latin America.[179]

The Soviet Information Bureau, tasked with developing and disseminating propaganda in foreign countries, also emphasized the necessity of enhancing its capabilities in Latin America. Sovinformburo representatives in Argentina, who began work there in the beginning of September 1954, relayed to the Agitprop Department the wide scope of the "North American propaganda apparatus" and proposed a convention of

[179] Letter from Orlando Millas, November 11, 1954. RGANI, fond 5, opis' 28, delo 193, pp. 202-203.

Sovinformburo leaders in Latin America to develop methods for increasing the quantity and veracity of information about the USSR in the "bourgeois press" in Mexico, Uruguay, and Argentina.[180] The establishment of a more robust presence in Latin America meant that TASS and Sovinformburo could also track the rise of anti-American sentiment in the region. Sovinformburo noted the hostility of Uruguay's neo-Batllists toward U.S. economic policies and the intervention in Guatemala. This opposition was especially significant considering the previously strong pro-U.S. tendencies of Jorge Batlle himself, who had refused to establish diplomatic relations with the USSR. In the 1955 electoral campaign, however, the neo-Batllists condemned U.S. foreign policy and pushed for trade relations with the USSR and other socialist bloc countries.[181]

In January 1956, Soviet Foreign Ministry analysts prepared a report for the International Department about "the U.S. economic and political enslavement of the countries of Latin America."[182] In order to bolster its "hegemonic position" in the Western Hemisphere, the United States would continue to "take all measures" to force the countries of Latin America into a state of "financial and economic dependence."[183] This was achieved through the "onerous" terms of credits and loans and the "so-called 'technical assistance'" provided through the U.S. Export-Import Bank.[184] The state of Latin American economic dependence on the United States allowed the U.S. "ruling

[180] Report of the representatives of the Sovinformburo in Argentina, September – December, 1954. RGANI, fond 5, opis' 28, delo 193, pp. 212-213 & 219-221.
[181] Report for year 1954 on the publication of the journal *USSR* – brief political survey of the situation in Uruguay, March 8, 1955. RGANI, fond 5, opis' 28, delo 193, pp. 223-225.
[182] Facts on the Economic and Political Enslavement of the Countries of Latin America by the United States, prepared by the Information Committee of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, January 7, 1956. RGANI, fond 5, opis' 28, delo 439, pp. 1-2.
[183] Ibid., p. 2.
[184] Ibid., pp. 4-5.

elite" to "exert aggressive pressure" if any of these countries showed signs of wanting to "embark upon the path of independent development."[185]

The United States also used the subservient economic position of the Latin American countries to foist its militaristic pacts and designs on the region. U.S. "politico-military expansion" proceeded under the auspices of the OAS and the Inter-American Defense Board, which had been created at the 1942 Rio de Janeiro conference as the "basic military authority" of the OAS, and through which the United States sought to "implement its military designs" in Latin America.[186] Slogans such as "the defense of the Western Hemisphere" and "pan-Americanism" functioned as a pretext for the "subjugation of the economic and military resources of Latin America to U.S. politico-military designs."[187] The hemispheric defense treaty signed at the 1947 Rio conference was based on an expansive view of "armed aggression," under which U.S. "ruling circles" implicated national liberation movements that threatened the "hegemonic imperialism" of the United States.[188] The adoption of the anti-communist resolution at the Caracas conference in March 1954 had provided the Yankee imperialists with a "legal justification" for "any form of intervention" in "the internal affairs of Latin American countries." Indeed, using the "struggle against communism" as a smokescreen, the United States had overthrown the "bourgeois-democratic" government of Arbenz, who had been a firm "advocate of national independence."[189] The goal of the U.S. intervention was not just to overthrow Arbenz, but to replace him with a "fascist military dictatorship" and to

[185] Ibid., p. 6.
[186] Ibid., p. 7.
[187] Ibid., p. 8.
[188] Ibid., p. 9.
[189] Ibid.

"liquidate all democratic reforms" in the country.[190] The irony of all this, of course, was that the inter-American system had been fortified at the request of Latin American leaders anxious to preserve regional sovereignty. The joint Guatemalan/Soviet action at the United Nations validated American fears of Soviet intrusion into hemispheric affairs.

A mere week after the Foreign Ministry's report on the U.S. economic and political enslavement of Latin America was circulated in the International Department, Soviet Premier Nikolai Bulganin announced the launch of the Soviet Economic Offensive.[191] Declaring the Soviet intention to establish trade relations with the countries of Latin America "on the basis of mutual advantage," Bulganin adumbrated a foreign policy shift that would be institutionalized at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union a month later.[192] This shift involved the expansion of trade relations with both capitalist and decolonizing countries, and in the Latin American context, envisioned economic independence from the United States as a prerequisite for political independence. Indeed, two prominent scholars of Soviet foreign policy have noted "Khrushchev's confident assertion that aid from the socialist bloc could allow the Third World countries to break away from the imperialist economic grip and launch their plans for…truly independent national economies."[193]

Bulganin's report to the 20th Congress triumphantly announced that although "the United States…practiced discriminatory measures designed to restrict, and even stop trade with the Soviet Union," trade with capitalist countries, "far from diminishing,

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[190] Ibid., p. 15.
[191] See Bevan Sewall, "A Perfect (Free-Market) World? Economics, the Eisenhower Administration, and the Soviet Economic Offensive in Latin America," *Diplomatic History* Vol. 32, No. 5 (September 2008), 841-868.
[192] Bulganin quoted in Sewall, 841.
[193] Joseph L. Nogee and Robert H. Donaldson, *Soviet Foreign Policy Since World War II* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992), p. 166.

substantially increased." Bulganin reported that the total value of foreign trade in 1955 "was nearly double that of 1950."[194] "Of special significance," Bulganin emphasized, was "the fact that we are witnessing the disintegration of the colonial system of imperialism."[195] Though it wasn't until the late 1960s and early 1970s that Moscow's power projection capabilities caught up with its Third World ambitions, the 20th Party Congress "signified the advent of the globalization of the Kremlin's outlook."[196]

U.S. POLICY IN THE POST-COUP PERIOD

The most pressing concern for the United States in the immediate post-coup period was to ensure the continued viability of the Organization of American States. Having successfully parried Soviet efforts to force the Guatemala issue onto the agenda of the U.N. Security Council, Dulles sought to keep the peace in the hemisphere, anxious that any further disorder would lead "usually cooperative states" to side with Soviet arguments that the OAS was incapable of "maintaining order in the hemisphere."[197] The State Department thus urged efforts to maintain peace in the region and recommended elimination of "controversial figures."[198] A "return to normalcy" was essential to maintaining the viability of the inter-American system, which had been thrown into doubt when the closest allies of the United States, including the United Kingdom, had come perilously close to joining the Soviet Union in pressing for U.N. jurisdiction over the investigation of Guatemala's complaint. The crisis had been narrowly averted by U.S.

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[194] Report by N.A. Bulganin to the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the directives of the sixth five-year plan, Soviet News Booklet No. 5, London: March 1956, p. 8.
[195] Ibid., p. 12.
[196] Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Moscow's Third World Strategy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1988), 24.
[197] Secretary of State Dulles to the U.S. Embassy in Venezuela, July 10, 1954. *FRUS 1952-1954*, The American Republics, IV: 373.
[198] Ibid.

diplomatic intervention, as a result of which British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden told the U.K. delegate to the United Nations to abstain from voting on the matter. If, however, tensions in Central America did not subside, U.S. allies might revert to their previous position, thereby "damaging the prestige of the United States and weakening the OAS."[199]

In this case, it was fiercely anti-communist President Somoza of Nicaragua who was threatening the peace and stability of the region and thus jeopardizing the U.S. position. U.S. officials clearly recognized the dangers posed to the inter-American system not only by progressive reformist regimes, but from anti-communist dictators as well – a fact that caused "considerable concern" in the State Department, finding itself "in a position of opposition" to such a firm American ally.[200] American Ambassador to Nicaragua Thomas Whelan and Assistant Secretary of State Henry Holland discussed the importance of pressuring Somoza into taking concrete steps to eliminate tensions with Costa Rica, citing the "serious problems" posed by the regional conflict, "particularly in the UN."[201]

According to a National Intelligence Estimate prepared in August 1954, Somoza and Perez Jimenez of Venezuela constituted the "greatest present threat to stability and order in the region" because of their "animosity" toward Costa Rica's Jose "Pepe"

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[199] Memorandum of Conversation between Secretary of State, Ambassador Thomas Whelan, and Assistant Secretary Henry F. Holland, August 18, 1954, Subject: United States Policy Toward Central American Countries. RG 59, Records of the Department of State, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Country Files, 1953-1956, Colombia to Guatemala, Box 4, Entry A1 1132.

[200] Ibid.

[201] Memorandum of Conversation between Assistant Secretary of State Holland and Ambassador Thomas Whelan, July 28, 1954, Subject: Nicaragua-Costa Rica Situation. RG 59, Records of the Department of State, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Country Files, 1953-1956, Colombia to Guatemala, Box 4, Entry A1 1132.

Figueres.[202] This animosity was due in part to Figueres's support for the Caribbean Legion, a transnational band of leftist exiles that had staged an invasion of Nicaragua in April 1954.[203] The estimate, moreover, acknowledged that social and political reform was much more important to the Caribbean republics than the communist issue, but that the United States had to tread carefully for fear of alienating the Caribbean "strong men." Communist propaganda, the estimate continued, sought to identify U.S. support for regional dictators as the primary obstacle to "social and political progress" in Central America.[204] U.S. officials realized that the only way to neutralize such propaganda was to associate the United States "with the aspirations of the peoples of Latin America."[205]

However, it was not until the last years of the Eisenhower administration that U.S. policy toward Latin America began to change course, and by then there were already indications that Latin American public opinion had hardened against the United States.[206] The Nixon trip to South America, during which the vice president was quite nearly lynched, was a dramatic sign that some sectors of the Latin American public had become radicalized.[207] That Nixon faced the most virulent anti-U.S. demonstrations in Caracas, the site of the conference at which Dulles had laid the foundations for the invasion of Guatemala, was no small coincidence. The ouster of Arbenz had unleashed a torrent of hostility to the United States and brightened the prospects of regional pro-communist

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[202] National Intelligence Estimate 80/54, The Caribbean Republics, August 24, 1954, *FRUS 1952-1954*, The American Republics, IV: 381.
[203] See Charles Ameringer, *The Democratic Left in Exile: The Antidictatorial Struggle in the Caribbean, 1945-1959* (Florida: University of Miami Press, 1974).
[204] Ibid.
[205] Progress Report by the Operations Coordinating Board to the National Security Council, January 19, 1955, "Progress Report on NSC 5432/1 United States Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect to Latin America." *FRUS 1952-1954*, The American Republics, IV: 90.
[206] On changes in U.S. policy, see Seikmeier, *Aid, Nationalism, and Inter-American Relations*, 293-324.
[207] See Alan McPherson, *Yankee No! Anti-Americanism in U.S.-Latin American Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 9-37.

politicians. Salvador Allende was one such beneficiary of the anti-U.S. backlash.[208] In his July 1954 visit to Moscow, Allende declared that as president of the Popular Action Front, he considered the restoration of diplomatic relations between Chile and the Soviet Union to be one of his "main tasks."[209] He also expressed the desire to establish trade relations with the People's Republic of China.[210] In a report prepared for the International Department of the Central Committee, it was noted that the communist members of the Chilean delegation felt that the visit to the USSR would "play a major positive role in the evolution of Allende's personal political views as well as in the activities of the Popular Front."[211]

Despite clear indications of Latin American dissatisfaction with the United States, U.S. officials positively assessed regional developments in the wake of the coup. The Operations Coordinating Board noted that Latin American governments seemed more convinced of the threat posed by international communism and that several regimes had "stepped up their efforts to control communist activity." Even Mexico, a stolid supporter of the Arbenz government, had shown a "new awareness of the dangers of communism."[212] The Soviet Economic Offensive in Latin America, moreover, was not an overly worrisome development. Noting that the Soviets used their trade missions as a Trojan horse for subversive activity and a prelude to establishing diplomatic relations, the

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[208] Hove, "The Arbenz Factor," *Diplomatic History* (31:4), 623-663.
[209] Memorandum of Conversation with Vice Deputy of the Chilean Senate Salvador Allende, July 17, 1954. RGANI, fond 5, opis' 28, delo 193, p. 146.
[210] Ibid., p. 147.
[211] Information on work with the delegation of social and cultural representatives of Chile, having visited the USSR from July 7 to August 8, 1954, at the invitation of the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. RGANI, Fond 5, opis' 28, delo 251, p. 181.
[212] Progress Report by the Operations Coordinating Board to the National Security Council, January 19, 1955, "Progress Report on NSC 5432/1 United States Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect to Latin America." *FRUS 1952-1954*, The American Republics, IV: 97.

Operations Coordinating Board coolly observed that not a single Latin American country had re-established diplomatic relations with the USSR and that Latin American leaders were more interested in using "the threat of possible increased trade with the Soviet bloc as a bargaining point" in negotiating trade relations with the "Free World."[213]

Two years after the fall of Arbenz, the American ambassador to Guatemala, Edward J. Sparks, considered the coup a propaganda victory. Assuming that the "publicity" that had surrounded the rout of the communists in Guatemala "must be a constant source of irritation to the Soviets," Sparks thought it "reasonable to believe that International Communism will be continually considering alternatives for cancelling out this loss to their general prestige."[214] Whether this represented willful self-deception or a sincerity born of naïveté, Sparks' positive evaluation reflected a threat perception that got it exactly backward. Moscow had not been probing for an opening in Latin America, nor had it provided meaningful support to Arbenz, despite the pleas of regional communists. In fact, the Soviets only provided a modicum of moral and political support to Guatemala after the Arbenz regime was already teetering under the weight of a CIA-backed invasion. Sparks' assessment, moreover, reveals an unwillingness in certain quarters of the Eisenhower administration to come to terms with the stunning propaganda defeat that accompanied the short-lived triumph of Castillo Armas.

This propaganda defeat was the result of a U.S. response to Arbenz that was disproportionate to the threat that his government posed. There was never any danger of a Soviet military presence in Guatemala, yet the United States implemented a covert action

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[213] Ibid., 98-99.

[214] Letter to Henry F. Holland, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, from Edward J. Sparks, American Ambassador to Guatemala, dated April 18, 1956. RG 59, Records of the Department of State, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Country Files, 1953-1956, Colombia to Guatemala, Box 4, Entry A1 1132.

to dislodge Arbenz through the application of armed force. The U.S. intervention ultimately lent credence to what the communists had been saying all along. It was not the Kremlin that was actively seeking a role in Latin America, but regional communists who had petitioned the Soviets for aid and whose assessments of U.S.-Latin American relations shaped the Soviet approach. It was precisely because Latin America was the least strategically vital part of the world for the USSR that leading regional communists were allowed to exercise a relatively significant degree of influence. Latin American communist parties, moreover, while never straying too far from the Soviet party line, were comparatively free to take action on their own initiative. Though regional communists pled on Arbenz's behalf, the decision to provide material aid to his government could only have been made at the highest echelon of authority in the Soviet Union. And although contemporary U.S. officials could not have been fully apprised of Soviet intentions in the Western Hemisphere, the Kremlin leadership was in no position to provide material support to a "bourgeois" revolution in the "American lake" chafing under U.S. paternalism.

The regional backlash against the intervention in Guatemala and the overthrow of Arbenz revealed the force of anti-U.S. nationalism in Latin America during a period in which the Soviet leadership was re-evaluating the parameters of the Cold War. This re-evaluation entailed a closer look at Latin America and a dawning realization of the U.N.'s utility as a forum in which to challenge the position of the United States within its own sphere of influence. Interestingly, communist trade confederations and diplomatic personnel were ahead of the curve in anticipating the significance of the Third World. Indeed, it seems that they were at the forefront of indentifying the shift in the

international balance of power, or in the Russian version of the concept, "correlation of forces" (*sootnoshenie sil*), and urging a corresponding shift of focus in the Kremlin's foreign policy orientation. As early as 1949, six years prior to the CPSU 20th Party Congress, WFTU and CTAL had already indentified the Third World as the upcoming venue of an epic battle for the hearts and minds of the world's workers.

U.S. insensitivity to the economic concerns of Latin American countries proved to be a boon to the Soviets, whose propaganda sought to aggravate and exploit anti-U.S. sentiment in the hemisphere. Though USIA attempted to counter communist propaganda by pointing to the harsh realities of Soviet imperial domination, Latin America was untouched by those realities. Even Daniel James, whose alarmist account of communism in Guatemala reinforced the Eisenhower administration's threat perceptions, acknowledged that the efficacy of communist propaganda was due largely to the underlying socioeconomic and political conditions prevailing in Central America. He observed the fundamental difference between U.S. and Guatemalan perceptions of communism:

> To a North American, a Communist is someone who has been convicted of atomic espionage, who has killed GIs in Korea, who preaches the overthrow of U.S. democracy. To a Guatemalan nationalist, a Communist was a person who supported the October Revolution, who fought the big landowners and reactionaries, who wanted the worker to earn more wages and the peasant to get some land.[215]

By the time the Eisenhower administration took steps to address the primary economic concerns of its southern neighbors, a new generation of Latin American radicals was coming of age and preparing to inaugurate what would become a turbulent new cycle of revolution and counterrevolution in the Western Hemisphere.

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[215] Daniel James, *Red Design for the Americas: Guatemalan Prelude* (New York: The John Day Company, 1954), 94.

Chapter Two: "The Arms of the Soviets":

Revolutionary Cuba and the USSR

On January 1, 1959, after almost six years of plotting in exile, Fidel Castro's 26th of July movement, named after the date of the failed attack on the Moncada Barracks in Santiago in 1953, finally toppled Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista. Castro's youth, charisma, and revolutionary zeal captivated the world, as politicians, journalists, and ordinary people waited and watched to see what shape Cuba's revolution would take. Both the United States and the USSR initially took a cautious approach to the Cuban revolution, with the Eisenhower administration sensitive to the possibility of its destabilizing effect on hemispheric relations, and the Soviets seeking evidence that Cuban nationalism could be harnessed to Moscow's advantage.

Since 1956, the Soviets had pointed to Castro's 26th of July movement as a powerful indication of anti-U.S. sentiment in Latin America. As in Guatemala, the Kremlin had approved a shipment of Czech weapons to the Cuban rebels in 1958, but had taken care to ensure that Moscow's hand remained hidden; thus, assistance was limited to weapons that were either captured from Germany or of Czech design. No Soviet-made weapons were included in the shipment.[216] Up until the overthrow of Batista, the Soviets had found the movement useful primarily as a source of anti-U.S. propaganda.[217] With the triumph of Castro's guerrilla forces, the Soviets became interested in the future of the Cuban revolution. On January 3, *Pravda* announced that the overthrow of Batista

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[216] Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *One Hell of A Gamble: The Secret History of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1997), pp. 12-13.
[217] George T. Boughton, "Soviet-Cuban Relations, 1956-1960," *Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Nov., 1974), pp. 436-453.

provided "evidence of the growing strength of the peoples of Latin America against the predominance of the Yankee imperialists."[218]

Indeed, Castro's revolutionary mystique, and the David and Goliath nature of Cuban resistance to U.S. hegemony, has led to a tendency to romanticize Castro and his revolution. Among the earliest American authors to exhibit this tendency was Herbert Matthews of the *New York Times*, who reported glowingly on the 26th of July movement until even he was forced to admit that Fidel Castro was abandoning the ideals of the revolution.[219] Richard Gott, a British journalist with decades of experience in Latin America, has also idealized Castro, claiming that he "created the Cuban nation" by "giving meaning to the struggles of the past."[220] Russian authors, particularly former Soviet officials, tend to be especially guilty of this tendency to romanticize Castro. Dmitry Yazov, who served as defense minister from 1987 to 1991, and who participated in a conference in Havana during the fortieth anniversary of the Cuban missile crisis, has written about the intense feelings that Cuba inspired in him and his colleagues. Not only did Cuba become "like a second homeland" to Yazov, but the slogans of the Cuban revolution – "Fatherland or death! We shall overcome!" – apparently still "resound in [his] heart."[221] Indeed, Yazov recounts that Cuba is known to his entire generation as "the island of freedom" because this "proud, independent country, located in such close proximity to the United States, dared to defy American domination and hegemony."[222]

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[218] Quoted in Pavlov, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance, 1959-1991*, p. 3.
[219] See Anthony DePalma, *The Man Who Invented Fidel: Cuba, Castro, and Herbert L. Matthews of the New York Times* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006).
[220] Richard Gott, *Cuba: A New History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 148.
[221] Dmitry Yazov, *Karibskij Krizis: Sorok Let Spustya* (Moscow: Megapir Publishing House, 2006), p. 11.
[222] Ibid., p. 19.

A popular view of the relationship between the Soviet Union and revolutionary Cuba is that U.S. hostility toward Castro pushed him into the arms of the Soviets. This interpretation suggests that had the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations adopted a more receptive approach to Castro, mutually acceptable terms could have been reached and Cuba would not have been "forced" to join the Soviet bloc. One historian has concluded that Castro turned to the Soviets "in the face of the U.S. economic embargo and unrelenting hostility."[223] Another has argued that Castro was "pushed towards the Soviet Union by the intransigence of Cold War U.S. administrations."[224] This scholar goes on to argue that "by pursuing the Cuban leader and seeking to topple his regime, the U.S. made it impossible for Castro to take any other course if he and his revolution were to survive."[225] Historians of Soviet-Cuban relations have made similar arguments, concluding that Soviet opportunities developed in proportion to the deterioration of U.S.-Cuban relations. Dmitry Yazov blames the "typical imperial mentality" of the Eisenhower administration for its failure to realistically evaluate the impact of the Cuban revolution and argues that "the Americans themselves pushed him in the direction of the Soviet Union."[226] Svetlana Savranskaya, in her postscript to Sergo Mikoyan's monograph on the Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis has argued that "early Soviet-Cuban relations developed almost in response to the United States' negative reaction to the Revolution."[227]

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[223] Thomas G. Paterson, *Contesting Castro: The United States and the Triumph of the Cuban Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 262.
[224] Grace Livingstone, *America's Backyard: The United States and Latin America from the Monroe Doctrine to the War on Terror* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), p. 24.
[225] Ibid., p. 32.
[226] Yazov, *Karibskij Krizis*, p. 36.
[227] Svetlana Savranskaya, ed. *The Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis: Castro, Mikoyan, Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Missiles of November* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2012), p. 263.

Other scholars have challenged the view that U.S. actions were the primary driver of the Cuban-Soviet relationship. Richard Welch has argued that although U.S. policy toward Castro's regime was ill-conceived, it was not the "primary cause" of the radicalization of the Cuban revolution.[228] Another historian has agreed that Cuba's leaders "were not 'pushed' by the United States into the Soviet orbit, but went of their own volition."[229] Louis Perez, Jr., while arguing that the Cuban-U.S. confrontation "could not but accelerate the radicalization of the revolution," acknowledges that that confrontation was determined just as much by the Cuban leadership's desire to eliminate U.S. influence in Cuba as it was by U.S. efforts to remove the Cuban leadership.[230] Another historian has argued that although Raúl Castro and Che Guevara were not subject to communist party discipline or acting under orders from Moscow, they and other radical members of the 26th of July movement "were convinced that genuine social revolutionary change in Cuba must inevitably lead to open confrontation with the United States and that if the revolution was going to survive U.S. hostility it would need the support of strong allies, including the Cuban communist party and the Soviet Union."[231] By the middle of 1959, "Fidel Castro evidently shared that view."[232]

Historian Hal Brands has argued that "the move toward Moscow began well before the breakdown of U.S.-Cuban relations in late 1959 and early 1960," and that it

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[228] Richard Welch, *Response to Revolution: The United States and the Cuban Revolution, 1959-1961* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), p. 23.
[229] Mark Eric Williams, *Understanding U.S.-Latin American Relations: Theory and History* (Hoboken: Taylor & Francis, 2011), p. 180.
[230] Louis Perez, Jr. *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), p. 244.
[231] Grow, *U.S. Presidents and Latin American Interventions*, p. 35.
[232] Ibid.

was "driven largely by ideological and political considerations."[233] Pointing to the influence on Castro of his brother Raúl and comrade-in-arms Che, both ardent communists (though notably not subject to CPSU party discipline), Brands presents evidence that the two "envisioned a partnership with the Soviet Union as a way of isolating non-Marxist members of the government and forcing them to the side."[234] In this view, the move toward the Soviets was partly a function of domestic politics and the desire to consolidate power. As early as December 1958, the CIA had suggested that Raúl and Che would likely prove more susceptible to Soviet influence than Castro.[235] The head of the Cuba section at the CIA headquarters at Langley has been quoted as saying that his staff and he "were all Fidelistas," during the early phase of the war, but that the "growing influence of Che Guevara" put a damper on CIA support for Castro.[236] This suggests that U.S. foreign policy officials were not immediately and irrevocably opposed to the Cuban revolution. It was Castro's uncompromising anti-U.S. attitude, argues Brands, that put him at loggerheads with the U.S. government. "The single dominant rhetorical trope of the Cuban revolution," he writes, "was the mixture of anti-imperialism and anti-Americanism that characterized Castro's public discourse."[237] According to this interpretation, it was not U.S. hostility toward Castro that predetermined the forging of the Soviet-Cuban alliance, but Castro's unrelenting hostility towards the United States that drove him to seek an alliance with the Soviets.

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[233] Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, p. 31.
[234] Ibid.
[235] Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, p. 122.
[236] Quoted in Simon Reid-Henry, *Fidel and Che: A Revolutionary Friendship* (New York: Walker and Company, 2009), p. 162.
[237] Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, p. 28.

Historian Stephen Rabe has noted the politicization of the historiography surrounding the rupture of U.S.-Cuban relations, observing that opponents of Castro have considered him to be an agent of the Kremlin from the beginning, while those sympathetic to Castro have argued that the breakdown in relations was precipitated largely by U.S. opposition to his regime. However, Rabe observes, "through most of 1959, the [Eisenhower] administration did not deliberately provoke Castro or try to undermine the revolution."[238] Wayne Smith, who served as a political analyst at the U.S. embassy in Havana until diplomatic ties were severed on January 3, 1961, has opined that "it is often forgotten that relations between the United States and Cuba were rather good during the first half of 1959."[239] Not until the end of 1959 did the administration conclude that it "could no longer abide Castro or Cuban nationalism,"[240] and this was after a series of tit-for-tat reprisals had soured relations and several ominous developments in Cuba had boded ill for the future of U.S. investments and influence on the small island nation. Castro had nationalized key sectors of the Cuban economy, expropriated private land and property, loudly condemned every manifestation of U.S. imperialism, and launched a purge, not only of pro-Batista "war criminals," but also of moderate members of his own revolutionary government. These purges involved show trials, lengthy imprisonments, and executions, and as one author has argued, the arrests of Castro's former fellow revolutionaries – particularly the arrest of Huber Matos in October – demonstrated that his regime was now "explicitly equating anticommunism with treason."[241]

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[238] Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, p. 126.
[239] Wayne Smith, *The Closest of Enemies: A Personal and Diplomatic Account of U.S.-Cuban Relations Since 1957* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1987), p. 43.
[240] Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, p. 127.
[241] Jim Rasenberger, *The Brilliant Disaster: JFK, Castro, and America's Doomed Invasion of Cuba's Bay of Pigs* (New York: Scribner, 2011), p. 34.

Although the debate surrounding the breakdown in U.S.-Cuban relations and the development of the Soviet-Cuban alliance is robust, the debate surrounding the calculus that informed Castro's move toward the Soviets is decidedly less so. This is partly because Castro's own motivations for pursuing an alliance with the USSR can be explored only by abandoning the over-simplified version of events that castigates the United States for "driving" Castro into the "arms of the Soviets." The primary source documents that could shed light on this question, moreover, are presumably under lock and key in Havana, and it is doubtful that they will be declassified any time soon. Nevertheless, scholars have offered compelling explanations for Castro's motivations. Wayne Smith has argued that Castro's shift toward the Soviets was a function not so much of the breakdown in U.S.-Cuban relations but of Castro's foreign policy goals and international ambitions. Castro's "messianic vision" was always aimed at liberating all of Latin America, and his "charismatic style" played well in the Third World.[242] Alan McPherson drawn attention to the ways in which unique political and social circumstances conditioned the expression of anti-Americanism and the caution with which Castro proceeded due to the fact that the Cuban people shared certain American values and aspirations.[243] Almost from the beginning, Castro was probing for opportunities to enlighten the overwhelmingly anticommunist Cuban population about the benefits to be gained from an alliance with the Soviets. U.S. attempts to undermine Castro's regime only helped him to convince the Cuban people of a proposition that he himself was already convinced of – that Soviet protection would be the best safeguard of

[242] Smith, *The Closest of Enemies*, p. 49.
[243] Alan McPherson, *Yankee No! Anti-Americanism in U.S.-Latin American Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 76.

the revolution, and more importantly, his own position as *el jefe maximo*.[244] Hal Brands has shown that the more radical leaders of the 26th of July movement had compelling domestic political reasons for solidifying ties with the USSR; thus it seems that both domestic and foreign policy considerations prompted the turn toward the Soviet bloc.

Another source of debate is the political calculus that underwrote the Soviet decision to take revolutionary Cuba under its wing, through the provision of ever-increasing amounts of economic and military aid. Some have argued that the Soviet leadership was motivated solely by altruistic concerns for the fate of the revolution. Although Cuba's turn toward socialism was frequently used by Soviet theorists and ideologists to prove the veracity of the Marxist-Leninist worldview, and there was clearly an ideological component to the Cuban-Soviet alliance, most scholars have acknowledged that Soviet actions were to a significant degree driven by geopolitical and strategic considerations. As one scholar has argued, "Cuba's possible role in reducing U.S. superiority over the USSR in nuclear strike capability was also present in the minds of Soviet policy makers and military planners."[245] Nikolai Leonov suggests that strategic ambitions were at the forefront of the Soviet leadership's interest in Cuba from the very beginning. The victory of the Cuban revolution, Leonov writes, created the opportunity for "a major military counter-weight to the United States in the Western Hemisphere itself."[246] The emergence of anti-U.S. nationalism in Latin America was seen as a potential "strategic gain" for the USSR, and Soviet support for Cuba was seen as "paying back the United States in its own coin," as the Soviet Union had, "since the creation of NATO, been surrounded by U.S. allies and military bases." Of course, in the early days

[244] Welch, *Response to Revolution*, p. 26.
[245] Pavlov, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance*, p. 25.
[246] Nikolai Leonov, *Likholet'e: Sekretnye Missii* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye Otnoshenii, 1994), p. 57.

of the revolution, the Soviet leadership was not yet discussing the stationing of Soviet military bases on Cuban soil. Khrushchev, according to Leonov, merely sought to render military support to the Cuban army so that it could "independently withstand any attempts at aggression" from the United States.[247] The provision of aid to revolutionary Cuba, moreover, was sincerely believed to be a selfless act of solidarity and the fulfillment of the USSR's "internationalist duty."[248] It is clear, however, that Soviet support for Cuba was at least partly based on pragmatic strategic calculations of how best to neutralize U.S. influence in the Western Hemisphere.

One of the main reasons that the burgeoning Soviet-Cuban alliance was pursued cautiously and with little fanfare is that both Castro and Khrushchev were far-sighted enough to know that the revolution needed to be consolidated before providing the United States with a convenient pretext to intervene. Both Castro and the Soviet press referred to the lessons of Guatemala. One of those lessons was that the United States would not abide an ideologically suspect regime in its "backyard," and another was that the loyalty of the armed forces was a prerequisite for regime survival. Castro courted the Soviets cautiously, not wishing to goad the United States into invoking the Caracas declaration in an attempt to legitimize armed intervention.[249] During Che's 1959 summer trip abroad, he informed the Soviet ambassador to Japan that Cuba's "rapprochement with socialist countries" had to be pursued cautiously and gradually, because "the enemies of the revolution will try to use every sign to obstruct domestic affairs on the pretext of a communist threat in Cuba."[250] As one prominent scholar of Cuban foreign

[247] Ibid., pp. 48 & 56.
[248] Ibid., p. 26.
[249] Fursenko and Naftali, *One Hell of A Gamble*, p, 9.
[250] Ibid., p. 21.

policy has argued, "the revolution was achieved, in part, because Castro successfully deceived his enemies, many of his supporters, and the U.S. government with regard to the intensity of his radicalism at home and his hostility to the United States."[251] The Soviets, moreover, were initially circumspect about providing full-throated support to a revolutionary regime that was headed not by the communist party, but by a charismatic leader with uncertain ideological proclivities.

As the Cuban-Soviet relationship developed, it was the Cubans who led the way. Mere months after his triumph over Batista, Castro sent emissaries to inform the Soviets of the Cuban interest in establishing economic, political, and diplomatic relations. Though Moscow remained cautious in its approach to Havana, the Soviets availed themselves of the opportunities presented by the deterioration of the U.S.-Cuban relationship. Thus, those who have argued that U.S. hostility toward Castro drove him into an alliance with the Soviets have gotten the situation exactly backward: it was not the Cubans who were "pushed into the arms of the Soviets" by U.S. intransigence, but the Russians who were pushed into the arms of the Cubans by repeated U.S. policy blunders. Philip Bonsal, former U.S. ambassador to Cuba from the revolution until diplomatic ties were severed, has argued that rather than driving the Cubans into the arms of the Soviets, U.S. intransigence "forced" the "cautious Russians…into the Revolution's own warmly welcoming arms."[252] It was in fact the Cubans who played the role of suitor in the relationship, and, with the important exception of the missile crisis, who frequently pushed Moscow into making commitments that it was hesitant to make.

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[251] Jorge I. Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution: Cuba's Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), p. 32.
[252] Philip W. Bonsal, *Cuba, Castro, and the United States* (Pennsylvania: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1971), p. 156.

APPEASING WASHINGTON, WOOING MOSCOW: THE EARLY DAYS OF THE REVOLUTION

While it is certainly true that Castro himself was no communist, and that the revolution succeeded largely absent the support of the Cuban communist party – indeed, despite the party's occasional active opposition to the 26th of July movement – evidence indicates that he intended to move toward the Soviet bloc from the earliest days of the revolution. On January 12, the Cuban communist party, the *Partido Socialista Popular* (PSP) was legalized and the following day, Castro delivered a speech in which he declared his lack of faith in the Organization of American States and his intention to steer a middle course between the two Cold War superpowers.[253] The USSR formally recognized Castro's government on January 10. On January 30, *Revolución*, the official newspaper of the 26th of July movement, published two editorials in which calls were made to re-establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet bloc. Then, in a speech on February 20, Castro explicitly advocated the establishment of relations with the Soviets.[254] Relations between the 26th of July movement and the PSP were, however, quite tense. Che Guevara often disparaged the communists as bureaucrats and paper-pushers, who hid under their bunks while the revolution was underway, only to emerge and lay claim to leadership status after the smoke had cleared. While PSP leaders like Blas Roca and Lazaro Peña adhered to the Soviet party line, which held that the existence of a large urban proletariat was prerequisite to socialist revolution, Che and Fidel were more influenced by Mao and the Chinese communists, who had proven that a rural-based peasant insurgency could work. Such a model was clearly more applicable to a Third

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[253] Lars Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic: The United States and the Cuban Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), p. 91.
[254] Boughton, "Soviet-Cuban Relations," p. 444.

World setting. Despite the inherent mistrust that plagued relations between the 26th of July movement and the PSP, the latter was likely authorized to liaise with Moscow, and in March, a PSP representative met with Marshal Sokolovsky, the chief of the Soviet armed forces, to discuss military-to-military relations between Cuba and the USSR. A month later, PSP leader Lazaro Peña passed along a message from Blas Roca, the party's general secretary, expressing the Cuban desire to open trade relations and develop economic cooperation between the two countries.[255] Thus, in the earliest days of the revolution, Castro already seemed to be moving toward a closer relationship with Moscow.

The Soviets, however, did not immediately embrace Castro. Though they had correctly identified the "anti-American character" of the revolutionary movement, Castro was not a member of the communist party, and he was therefore an unknown quantity. The Soviets adopted a wait-and-see approach. On January 9, 1959, the third secretary of the Soviet embassy in Washington, V. Andreev, sent a report about events in Cuba to the Soviet Foreign Ministry.[256] He characterized the appointment of Manuel Urrutia to temporary president as a compromise in order to hold the various political factions together in solidarity until the revolution could be consolidated; Urrutia represented the interests of the petty bourgeoisie and was known to have a "pro-American orientation" and to be "strictly anti-communist."[257] Castro himself, moreover, had repeatedly assured the Americans that he would protect the interests of U.S. monopolies in Cuba and respect all international treaties and agreements that former Cuban leaders had signed with the

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[255] Fursenko and Naftali, *One Hell of a Gamble*, pp. 13-14.
[256] Soviet embassy in the USA, January 9, 1959, On Events in Cuba (summary), Arhiv Vneshnej Politiki Rossijskoj Federacij (Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation; hereafter, AVPRF), Fond 104, opis' 14, papka 5, delo 1, pp. 10-11.
[257] Ibid., p. 11.

United States. Castro had also assured the Eisenhower administration that his movement "has nothing in common with communism."[258]

Andreev accurately identified U.S. interests in Cuba, noting that "ruling circles" in the United States were particularly worried about the future of capital investment in Cuba and the lease on the naval base at Guantanamo.[259] The Eisenhower administration was not, however, sitting back and twiddling its thumbs; active measures were being taken to preserve U.S. interests in the event of a "Fidelista victory." Administration officials had started secret negotiations with Castro's representatives and the State Department had made a series of announcements that the United States would adhere to a policy of "strict non-interference" in the internal affairs of Cuba. Despite promises not to render any aid to Batista's forces, the Eisenhower administration had "clearly not lost hope" of "regulating" the situation on the island, with Batista's help.[260] To this end, the administration was funneling weapons to Batista's partisans through Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic.[261] From the earliest days of the Cuban revolution, long before the Soviet leadership had even met with Castro, the Soviets suspected that the United States was preparing to launch an armed intervention.

Well before the Eisenhower administration had given clear indication of its opposition to the Cuban revolution, Castro had sent emissaries to sound out the Soviets and inform them of the regime's desire to re-establish diplomatic relations. In March 1959, the wife of Salvador Massip, the Cuban ambassador to Mexico, met with the Soviet ambassador to Mexico, Vladimir Bazykin. She informed Bazykin that the revolution

[258] Ibid., p. 12.
[259] Ibid., p. 15.
[260] Ibid., p. 16.
[261] Ibid., p. 17.

occurring in Cuba was "a real people's revolution," in which "the masses of working people are taking part." Though the tasks facing the revolution were many and difficult, Massip expressed confidence that they would be accomplished. "That which is being done in the USSR," she told Bazykin, "is what Cuba should strive for." She informed the Soviet ambassador that the "gaze of the Cubans participating in the revolution is cast upon the USSR." She also assured him that the restoration of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries was "only a matter of time."[262]

In April, 1959, four months after Batista's ignominious flight from Cuba, Fidel Castro visited the United States. By this time, U.S. public opinion of Castro was beginning to sour due to his refusal to set a date for elections. The regime's show trials and executions of former Batista officials for war crimes also made a strong impression. Castro had already given indications of moving toward the Soviet bloc, and during his U.S. trip he was almost constantly plagued by questions about communist influence in the Cuban revolution. The Soviets, however, were still unsure of his intentions. This is due at least in part to the fact that Castro had internalized what for him and his comrades-in-arms was among the most important lessons of the Guatemalan coup: to not give the United States a convenient pretext for mobilizing the Organization of American States in order to legitimize intervention.[263] Castro was shrewd enough to know that he needed to deny or downplay evidence of communist influence in his regime if he wished to consolidate power in Cuba. Thus, in a speech to the National Press Club, he claimed to be "against communism," and in a speech at the United Nations, he assured listeners that

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[262] Soviet embassy in Mexico, March 25, 1959, Record of conversation with the wife of Cuban ambassador Salvador Massip, from the diary of Soviet ambassador V.I. Bazykin. AVPRF, Fond 110, opis' 9, papka 43, delo 5, p. 55.

[263] Jon Lee Anderson, *Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life* (New York: Grove Press, 1997), pp. 178-179.

there were "no communists" in his government. During an appearance on NBC's *Meet the Press* he even denied that his brother Raúl was a communist.[264]

Meanwhile, back in Havana, Raúl Castro was using the Cuban communist party, of which he was a clandestine member, to petition the Soviets for military assistance and training. The Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU approved the request on April 23. Precautions were taken to camouflage the origins of the assistance; the International Department of the Central Committee, the KGB, and the Ministry of Defense arranged to send members of the Spanish communist party, and later a small detachment of Soviet officers of Spanish ancestry. The Soviet role in providing military training was hidden from the Cuban treasury, the leadership of which was composed largely of anticommunists.[265] Other high-ranking PSP leaders had been sent to Moscow to request economic aid and even to exhort the Soviets to propagandize more heavily in favor of the Cuban revolution. These requests were not honored, however, as the Soviets were still wary about Castro's political loyalties, and none of the PSP representatives could credibly claim to speak on his behalf.[266]

On April 20, Castro gave a press conference in Washington, D.C. Andreev attended and commented on the event in his personal diary. Noting that the press conference was heavily attended by Castro's Cuban opposition, he described a question from one hostile reporter, about whether Castro believed that the Soviet Union was a dictatorship. Dismissing the question as a "provocation," Castro drew a distinction between a "personal dictatorship" and a "class dictatorship," and argued that in the Soviet Union, the "dictatorship of the proletariat" expressed the interests of the "entire Soviet

[264] Fursenko and Naftali, *One Hell of a Gamble*, p. 10.
[265] Ibid., p. 12.
[266] Ibid., p. 13.

people."[267] In a private conversation with a cohort of pro-Castro Cuban correspondents, Andreev was invited to visit Cuba, in order to see "with [his] own eyes" what was happening there, and to make his own judgments. The Cuban correspondents told Andreev that in their country, the "doors are open to everyone."[268]

On July 17, Cuban President Manuel Urrutia was forced to resign his post due to ill-judged comments he had made four days earlier during a television appearance in which he expressed his concern about the growing influence of communists in the Cuban revolution. For U.S. officials, Urrutia's forced resignation constituted incontrovertible evidence that the Cuban revolution had taken an ominous turn.[269] On July 22, Massip's wife again met with Bazykin, both to report on the nature of the Cuban revolution and to warn of the potential threats to it. Because the Cuban revolution was more "profound" than other Latin American revolutions, the United States was engaged in a "furious propaganda campaign" against the Cuban government and against Castro in particular.[270] Labeling former president Manuel Urrutia a "traitor," she assured Bazykin that his replacement, Osvaldo Dorticós, who had been a member of the PSP since 1953, was "loyal to Fidel Castro." She also pledged the "great sympathy" of the Cuban people for the USSR, and reassured Bazykin that although the regime's survival of "these dramatic times" necessitated a cautious approach so as not to give impetus to "global reactionary

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[267] From the diary of 3rd Secretary V.I. Andreev. Report on Prime Minister of Cuba Fidel Castro's press conference at the Washington Press Club, April 20, 1959. AVPRF, Fond 104, opis' 14, papka 5, delo 1, p. 19.
[268] Ibid., p. 21.
[269] Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic*, p. 101.
[270] Soviet embassy in Mexico, July 22, 1959, Record of conversation with the wife of Cuban ambassador Salvador Massip, from the diary of Soviet ambassador V.I. Bazykin. AVPRF, Fond 110, opis' 9, papka 43, delo 5, p. 61.

forces," the revolutionary government stood for the "renewal of relations with the USSR."[271]

By August 1959, the Soviet embassy in Washington was becoming increasingly aware that the situation in the Caribbean, created by the Cuban revolution, was "fraught with more serious consequences than the well-known events in Guatemala."[272] The Soviets believed that the Cuban revolution could potentially be far more consequential than the Guatemalan revolution had been. The second secretary of the Soviet embassy in Washington, Polyakov, noted that the mainstream news media implicated Castro in the "destruction of democracy" and charged that the overthrow of Batista was "part of a plot" to "expel all anticommunists from Cuba." The press, moreover, was "leading an extensive campaign of slander" against Castro himself.[273] U.S. propaganda asserted that Castro was preparing to "export the revolution to other countries of Latin America," that he was "instinctively opposed" to Americans and prejudiced against their "friendly advice," and finally, that he was working to "turn the Cuban people against the U.S.A."[274] Polyakov warned that the Eisenhower administration was "actively preparing" for an upcoming OAS conference in Santiago de Chile, which the Americans were "intent on using" in order to prepare for "interference in Cuba's internal affairs." The U.S. press was emphasizing the "haste" with which the OAS conference was being convened, and observed that "never before" had the OAS reacted so expeditiously to events in the Western Hemisphere as it was now reacting to events in the Caribbean.[275] In

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[271] Ibid., pp. 61-62.
[272] Soviet embassy in the U.S.A., August 12, 1959, On the U.S. Reaction to Events in Cuba (press review), AVPRF, Fond 104, opis' 14, papka 5, delo 1, p. 26.
[273] Ibid., p. 27.
[274] Ibid., p. 28.
[275] Ibid., p. 31.

essence, Polyakov was warning that U.S. hostility toward Castro would likely manifest at the upcoming OAS conference as intense pressure on the Latin American delegates to isolate Cuba.

At the same time, the Soviets worried that Cuba's Latin American neighbors were adopting a more oppositional stance toward the revolutionary government. The hostility of the Caribbean dictatorships, compliant U.S. pawns in regional affairs and repressors of their own people, was to be expected. But the Soviets did not want Castro's revolutionary adventurism in the Caribbean to alienate countries like Mexico, which conducted an independent foreign policy and maintained diplomatic ties with Moscow. On August 18, Bazykin met with Mexico's Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Gorostiza, to express displeasure with the Mexican press's treatment of Castro. He complained that some press accounts "present Fidel Castro as practically a dictator." Gorostiza responded that the official position of his government was "that what the Cuban government does inside the country is the domestic business of Cuba and is justified." "However," Gorostiza continued, "the Mexican government cannot allow attempts to send Cuban expeditions to other countries to overthrow dictatorial regimes." Bazykin countered that he had just been to Panama, and although he had read many announcements about the "landing of Cubans in Panama," his visit to the country had convinced him that "this type of announcement is being exaggerated by U.S. circles with the goal of discrediting Castro's government." Gorostiza informed Bazykin that the Mexican government had "credible evidence of the existence of fanatic bands of young Cubans sent for the purpose of fomenting coups against other governments."[276] In fact, the Mexican government had

[276] Soviet embassy in Mexico, record of conversation with acting MFA Mexico Jose Gorostiza, Aug. 18, 1959, from Bazykin's diary. AVPRF, Fond 110, opis' 9, papka 43, delo 5, p. 107.

detained and deported "three groups of such Cubans" who had been found in Mexican territorial waters. To Bazykin's pointed question about the role of the Cuban government in sending the young insurrectionists, Gorostiza admitted that "they were on their own initiative, possibly even in defiance of Castro's wishes."[277] Regardless of whether Castro had sent them, the incident suggests that regional tensions during this period were fueled by Cuban revolutionary adventurism and that the Soviets worried about the impact of such adventurism on Moscow's relations with other Latin American countries.

That same day, Bazykin met with Cuban ambassador Salvador Massip, who informed him that former president Manuel Urrutia, who had occupied a "negative position toward the USSR," had ordered the Cuban embassy in Mexico to "withhold from issuing visas to Soviet representatives." Urrutia had been replaced by Osvaldo Dorticós, who had been a member of the Cuban communist party since 1953. Massip apprised Bazykin of the fact that he was authorized to issue visas to Soviet representatives, and that if the USSR would send some to his country, they could discuss the establishment of "not just trade and consular relations, but also diplomatic relations." "When your people go to Cuba," Massip promised, "they will meet with Raúl Castro and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Raúl Roa, who have much sympathy with the USSR."[278]

That September, while Khrushchev toured the United States at Eisenhower's invitation, expressing awe at Iowa's infinite rows of neatly cultivated corn and dismay at the sexualized performances of Hollywood starlets, the Presidium struggled to reach a decision about Cuba's request for Polish weapons. Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, among others, opposed the provision of arms to Castro's regime, arguing that

[277] Ibid., p. 108.
[278] Soviet embassy in Mexico, record of conversation with Cuban ambassador Massip, Aug. 18, 1959, from Bazykin's diary. AVPRF, Fond 110, opis' 9, papka 43, delo 5, p. 111.

"the supply of arms to Cuba will drive the Americans toward active interference in the internal affairs" of Latin America.[279] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Foreign Economic Relations of the Central Committee worried that to honor Cuba's request would have damaging consequences for U.S.-Soviet relations, with Khrushchev's U.S. visit underscoring just how important improving superpower relations was to him. On September 23, the Presidium determined that it was "inexpedient at the present time to provide weapons to Cuba."[280] Yet when Khrushchev returned to Moscow a few days later, he overturned the Presidium's decision and approved the sale of Polish weapons to Cuba, thereby signaling his willingness to "take risks to pursue Soviet aims in Latin America."[281] The incident is revealing of the impact of Khrushchev's personality and initiative on the development of the Soviet-Cuban alliance.

On October 1, KGB agent Aleksandr Alekseev arrived in Havana. Though he had requested in January to go, the Cuban government had refused to issue him a visa. When he arrived in October, he did so as the first Russian citizen to be granted a visa to Cuba. As part of the Kremlin's post-Arbenz propaganda offensive, Alekseev had been sent to Latin America in 1954, tasked with recruiting agents and cultivating pro-Soviet politicians in the region. Though he had been based in Buenos Aires, his activities were not limited to Argentina, but encompassed the entire hemisphere. In 1958, Alekseev had been recalled to Moscow to help the Central Committee improve its knowledge of Latin America, and thereby increase the effectiveness of Soviet propaganda in the region. Finally granted permission to enter Cuba, Alekseev was assigned by the KGB to establish

[279] Quoted in Fursenko and Naftali, *One Hell of a Gamble*, p. 23.
[280] Quoted in ibid., p. 24.
[281] Ibid.

contacts with the highest ranking Cuban leaders.[282] In the early days of the revolution, Moscow wanted mainly to confirm Castro's anti-U.S. attitude and proclivities; whether he was a communist was not as important as whether he planned to adopt and maintain a confrontational attitude toward the hegemon of the north.[283]

Alekseev's first meeting with Prime Minister Castro revealed the latter to be a rather cynical manipulator of public opinion. "You suggest a slogan to the masses," Castro confided, "and the masses should become possessed of it." Now, Castro continued, "we will spread the slogan 'Friendship with the Soviet Union!' and when the public begins to feel that this is necessary, we will reestablish relations."[284] In an indication of which direction the revolution was headed, the following day Castro announced that his brother Raúl would henceforth head the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, which replaced the Ministry of National Defense. Raúl Castro, a committed communist, was now in charge of the entire armed forces and the intelligence and security services.[285] The increasing communist control of Cuba's army led the military chief of Camaguey province, Huber Matos, to resign his post in protest. Castro sought to make an example of him and sentenced him to twenty years in prison.[286]

During the fall of 1959, it seems as though the Soviets were prepared to take further steps to deepen cooperation with revolutionary Cuba, but Castro's struggle to consolidate his domestic position resulted in a more cautious approach.[287] On November 17, the Soviet ambassador to Switzerland, Koryukin, discussed the situation in the

[282] Ibid., p. 26.
[283] Ibid., p. 27.
[284] Quoted in ibid., p. 29.
[285] Ibid., p. 31.
[286] Ibid., p. 32.
[287] Ibid., p. 34.

Caribbean with his Cuban counterpart, Salazar Sanchez. Having warned that the United States was now "activating its subversive activity" against Castro, Sanchez emphasized that the Cuban revolution was entering a "decisive period" and that the revolutionary forces were not yet "sufficiently strengthened." Therefore, it "might be more advantageous to not force a confrontation with the United States," but instead to embark along a "path of compromise" in order to "gain time to strengthen the situation" in the country. Sanchez even told Koryukin that he had studied the Russian Revolution, which had taught him that "a frontal attack is not always expedient."[288] The Cubans repeatedly indicated that though they admired and sought to emulate the Soviet Union, the consolidation of the revolutionary regime's domestic legitimacy required prudence and caution. The religious fervor of many Cubans made them suspicious of communism, and the United States had proven that it would not hesitate to use armed force to overthrow an ideologically suspect government in its "backyard."

MIKOYAN IN HAVANA

In November 1959, the Soviet exhibition in Mexico City drew the attention of the Cuban leadership. The exhibition, which was scheduled for late November, was the subject of an editorial in *Revolución*, which recommended that Anastas Mikoyan be invited to visit Cuba.[289] Apparently, Castro sent an emissary, Hector Rodríguez Llompart, to liaise with the Soviets, convince them to bring the exhibition to Havana, and extend a personal invitation to Mikoyan. Thus commenced the first high-level contacts between

[288] From the diary of N.I. Koryukin, November 23, 1959. Memorandum of conversation with Cuban ambassador Salazar Sanchez, November 17, 1959. AVPRF, Fond 104, opis' 14, papka 5, delo 1, p. 41.
[289] Boughton, "Soviet-Cuban Relations," p. 449.

Moscow and Havana.[290] On January 30, 1960, the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS) announced that Mikoyan would travel to Cuba in February to open the Soviet cultural and technical exhibition.[291] The visit was seen as a "pretext" for establishing relations with Cuba and an opportunity to "identify the character and path" of the Cuban Revolution and of Cuban-Soviet relations.[292] On February 4, Anastas Mikoyan arrived in Havana. The visit was heralded as an event both deeply symbolic and highly substantive – not only was Mikoyan the highest ranking Soviet official to visit any Latin American country, but he was tasked with achieving concrete results in the form of mutual aid and trade agreements. Khrushchev, moreover, sought to use the prospect of cooperative Soviet-Cuban relations to advertise Soviet benevolence toward the Third World, display solidarity with Latin America's proletariat, and to coordinate joint action with the Cubans at the United Nations. From the beginning, the Kremlin sought Cuban support for its policy agenda in the international forum.

During his stay in Cuba, Mikoyan met with delegates of the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC). The delegates assured him that although recent events had shown the Cuban people that the situation in their country would remain acute, the workers "now know that they are not alone in their struggle." Not only did they have on their side the socialist countries, "headed by the mighty USSR," but they also enjoyed the support and sympathy of "all honest people in the world." Mikoyan "affirmed the correctness" of this assessment, adding that the Cuban people would be strengthened not only because they "are receiving and will continue to receive support in their righteous struggle," but also because they had "rallied together to defend the revolutionary gains of the…leader

[290] Leonov, *Likholet'e,* pp. 48-49.
[291] Boughton, p. 450.
[292] Leonov, *Likholet'e*, p. 52.

of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro." Mikoyan added that, in contrast to previous eras, these days it was "not so easy for imperialist circles to unleash aggressive action, let alone to implement their aggressive plans."[293] The USSR undoubtedly deserved the lion's share of the credit for foiling the designs of the predatory imperialists.

CTC representative De la Campa accused the imperialists "and their agents" of "brandishing the flag of anti-communism" and using Catholicism as a "smokescreen." Fortunately, "to deceive" the Cuban people "is now impossible," because they know "who their enemies are and who their friends are." "The Cuban people are united," continued De la Campa, and "will achieve the ultimate victory of the revolution." Mikoyan confidently declared that the United States was afraid of the Cuban revolution, not because it "posed an actual threat," but because it would "give a boost to the liberation movement in other countries of Latin America." The triumph of the Cuban revolution, moreover, would signify the loss of the "tremendous profits" of the American imperialists in these countries. Mikoyan hailed Cuba as the "focus of the Latin American people's struggle for independence," and De la Campa agreed that the people of Latin America had "raised its voice in defense of Cuba." The cry of "Cuba – yes! Yankee – no!" was heard all around.[294]

De la Campa also expressed his disappointment with the United Nations Security Council, which had recently transferred Cuba's complaint about violations of Cuban airspace by counterrevolutionary exiles to the OAS. The council's action was considered evidence that the United States was gearing up to commit "new atrocities against Cuba."

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[293] Record of conversation between First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR A.I. Mikoyan and the delegation of the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC). AVPRF, Fond 104, opis' 15, papka 6, delo 10, p. 9.
[294] Ibid., p. 10.

Fidel Castro had already announced his intention to use the upcoming OAS meeting as a platform to "defend the Cuban Revolution" and to "unmask U.S. imperialism." Mikoyan observed that because of the enthusiasm of Latin American peoples for the Cuban revolution, it was impossible for their leaders to directly oppose Cuba. "However," warned Mikoyan, "this does not exclude the possibility that these governments might launch covert actions and intrigues against Cuba behind the backs of their own people."[295]

During Mikoyan's visit, in a meeting with both Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, an informal agreement was reached to pursue "active joint efforts" in the U.N. Both sides agreed that "unequal economic development" was the "source of the instability and unrest prevailing today." Because of this, it was deemed imperative that the two sides work together through the United Nations and its "regional and specialized organs" to formulate an "extensive plan of economic cooperation and technical aid providing for the systematic development of under-developed regions." As a preliminary step toward this goal, the Soviets agreed to purchase 425,000 tons of sugar from Cuba, and to provide one hundred million dollars worth of credit for the purchase of Soviet-bloc goods.[296] Nikolai Leonov has argued that if the Cubans had not found in Mikoyan such an "authoritative and influential patron," the path of Soviet-Cuban relations "would have been different."[297]

Just days after Mikoyan's departure from Cuba, the Subcommittee on American Republics Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate

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[295] Ibid., p. 11.
[296] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba, "Russia-Cuba 1902-2002: Documents and Materials," (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnie Otnoshenii, 2004), Document 97, p. 94.
[297] Leonov, *Likholet'e*, p. 55.

released a report on Soviet-bloc activities in Latin America. The study had been commissioned and authorized in the summer of 1958 but researched and written during the summer and fall of 1959. The report provided a fairly accurate assessment of Soviet intentions and capabilities in the Western Hemisphere. Rather than aiming for socialist revolution, the USSR in fact desired "the political neutralization of this region in the worldwide ideological power struggle." Once the U.S. position had been undermined, the USSR would be able to "enhance its own position and prestige through the development and extension of political, trade, financial, and cultural relations with the countries of Latin America."[298]

The report was certainly clear-eyed about the fundamental nature of the continent's difficulties. "The widespread poverty, the discontent, restlessness, aspirations, and frustrations, the political and social changes, the drive for economic development, and the touchy nationalism combine to create an environment with tensions which the Communists attempt to exploit."[299] Nationalism could be a particularly virile force in the Latin American context; "the Communists assiduously exploit this Latin American nationalism in order to intensify the anti-U.S. feeling and further the Soviet cold war objectives."[300] Through such "appeals to nationalism," the Soviets sought to "drive a wedge into Western Hemisphere solidarity."[301] The report also highlighted a phenomenon to which administration officials ought to have paid closer attention. "To a certain extent," the report noted, "the Communist parties in Latin America benefit from

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[298] U.S. Senate, 86th Congress, 2nd Session. *Soviet Bloc Latin American Activities and Their Implications for United States Foreign Policy*, A Study Prepared at the Request of the Subcommittee on American Republics Affairs of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations by the Corporation for Economic and Industrial Research, February 28, 1960, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1960, p. 4.
[299] Ibid., p. 20.
[300] Ibid., p. 14.
[301] Ibid., p. 52

U.S. opposition to Communist machinations in the hemisphere." This was because "the sensitivity about U.S. dominance is so strong that in some cases Latin Americans are prone to tolerate Communist activity just because the United States is opposed to it."[302] The committee recommended that "each of the Latin American governments…decide for itself" whether to establish diplomatic relations with the USSR.[303] Neither the Eisenhower nor the Kennedy administrations would take this advice.

THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES VS. THE UNITED NATIONS

Both Castro and Khrushchev displayed an eagerness to use the United Nations as a platform upon which to flaunt their camaraderie and cultivate the support of the Third World. To a great extent, this showmanship on the international stage was a function of their own charisma as leaders. The shift in Soviet policy toward the United Nations was in large part the result of a dramatic change in leadership style from Stalin to Khrushchev. Stalin had viewed the U.N. as a mere tool of the West, and had openly criticized the countries of Latin America for constituting an "obedient army" of the United States. Khrushchev, while still somewhat suspicious about Western influence in the organization, nevertheless recognized the United Nations as a powerful weapon to shape international opinion and to cultivate the sympathies of decolonizing states, including the countries of Latin America, which were considered victims of U.S. "neo-imperialism."

An influx of members from the newly independent states of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East were admitted to the U.N. in the late 1950s and early 1960s, irrevocably

[302] Ibid., p. 36.
[303] Ibid., p. 8.

altering the composition and functioning of the international body. As these states sought to redirect the energies of the organization toward easing the transition to independence, the Soviets amplified their efforts to use the U.N. as a platform to cultivate and strengthen relations with the Third World. In 1958, suspicious of U.N. Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold's loyalties, the Soviet delegation had put forward a proposal to create three separate Secretaries-General – one representing the interests of the Western powers, one representing the socialist camp, and another representing the interests of the Third World. Hammarskjold opposed the so-called "troika" proposal, recognizing that it would taint the U.N. Secretariat with the politics and rivalries of the Cold War.[304] During the Congo crisis, the Soviets had subjected Hammarskjold and the U.N. to fierce criticism, and had repeatedly questioned the Secretary General's motives, asserting time and again that "there are no neutral men."[305] After the death of Hammarskjold in a plane crash in 1961, the Soviets agreed to drop the troika proposal on the condition that the next Secretary-General be from a non-Western country.[306] The tenure of Secretary-General U Thant witnessed the further transformation of the United Nations. Until the early 1960s, the United States and its Latin American allies had enjoyed a majority status in the General Assembly, but as the decade progressed, that majority power shifted to the non-aligned countries.[307]

The Cubans proved adept at using the United Nations as a forum for cultivating Third World support. At first, this entailed an effort to position Cuba as non-aligned. At

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[304] Thant Myint-U and Amy Scott, *The UN Secretariat: A Brief History, 1945-2006* (New York: International Peace Academy, 2007), p. 33.
[305] Bernard J. Firestone, *The United Nations under U Thant, 1961-1971* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2001), p. *xiii*.
[306] Thant Myint-U, *The UN Secretariat*, p. 38.
[307] Ibid., p. 48.

the fourteenth session of the U.N. General Assembly in September 1959, Cuban Foreign Minister Raúl Roa delivered a speech indicating that Cuba would henceforth follow an independent foreign policy that rejected the necessity of identifying as either communist or capitalist. He chastised both the Soviet Union and the United States for their great power interventions in the internal affairs of smaller states, and criticized both communism and capitalism, the former for withholding liberty and the latter for withholding bread.[308] He condemned the Soviet intervention in Hungary alongside the U.S. intervention in Guatemala, and held up the Cuban revolution as a model for the peoples of Latin America, Africa, and Asia.[309] However, for U.S. officials, the bottom line was not Cuba's claim to neutrality, but its voting record. Of the fifty-four votes taken during the fourteenth session, the Cuban delegation had voted in opposition to the United States thirty-nine times, and had abstained from voting on "Washington's litmus test" – whether the People's Republic of China should be seated.[310]

By the next year, the Cuban-Soviet relationship had deepened, with the establishment of formal diplomatic relations and the conclusion of aid, trade, and military agreements. On July 6, 1960, Khrushchev delivered a speech to the All-Russian Teachers' Congress in Moscow, in which he condemned U.S. imperialist aggression against Cuba, and swore to "do everything to support Cuba and its courageous people in the struggle for the freedom and national independence they have won under the leadership of…Fidel Castro." He then referenced the way the Cuban revolution had altered geostrategic realities, with a warning that "the United States is not so inaccessibly

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[308] Wayne S. Smith, *Castro's Cuba: Soviet Partner or Non-Aligned?* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 1984), p. 4.
[309] Ibid., p. 8.
[310] Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic*, p. 107.

distant from the Soviet Union as it used to be." Khrushchev's promise that Soviet artillerymen "can support the Cuban people with their rocket fire if the aggressive forces in the Pentagon dare to launch an intervention against Cuba" set off alarm bells in the Eisenhower administration. Eisenhower responded with a statement later that day, in which he categorized Khrushchev's statements as evidence of "the effort of an outside nation and of international communism to intervene in the affairs of the Western Hemisphere," and pledged "in the most emphatic terms that the United States will not be deterred from its responsibility by the threats Mr. Khrushchev is making."[311]

In an early indication of the resentment that Castro would later feel upon the utter failure of the Soviet leadership to consult with him regarding the removal of missiles from Cuba, U.S. ambassador to Cuba Philip Bonsal reported a rumor to the effect that "Castro was caught entirely off base by Khrushchev's…statement about what Russia would do to us if we invaded Cuba." Bonsal had apparently heard from "two or three sources" that Castro was "perfectly furious about a development which puts Cuba entirely under the Soviet wing." Though Bonsal admitted that he had no means of verifying this rumor, he was convinced that "Fidel is now more or less a pawn in the hands of Che Guevara," who had apparently prevailed upon Castro to accept Khrushchev's statements.[312]

Secretary of State Christian Herter, in a circular sent to selected U.S. embassies in Latin America, characterized Khrushchev's threats as the "most fundamental challenge to date to Inter-American system." Characterizing the latest developments in the Soviet-Cuban alliance as evidence "beyond reasonable doubt" that "danger now exists," Herter

[311] Editorial Note, FRUS, 1958-1960, Vol. VI: Cuba, Document 549, pp. 996-997.
[312] Letter from the Ambassador in Cuba (Bonsal) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Rubottom), July 13, 1960, FRUS, Vol. VI: Cuba, Document 554, pp. 1008-1009.

acknowledged that Latin American countries might not be convinced, or perhaps, due to "domestic political reasons," would prove hesitant to take collective action to dispel the threat. The United States, in its commitment to the non-intervention principle, had repudiated unilateral action; nevertheless, the "failure of Latin Americans to live up to their share of responsibility for collective solution will not be occasion for United States to renounce its basic obligation to preserve security [in] this country and hemisphere."[313]

In August, 1960, the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of American States convened in San José, Costa Rica. The resulting Declaration of San José "condemn[ed] energetically the intervention or the threat of intervention…by an extracontinental power in the affairs of the American republics," and "reject[ed]…the attempt of the Sino-Soviet powers to make use of the political, economic, or social situation of any American state, inasmuch as that attempt is capable of destroying hemispheric unity and endangering the peace and security of the hemisphere."[314] In a measure that was clearly aimed at Cuba, the declaration also "reaffirm[ed] the principle of nonintervention by any American state in internal or external affairs of the other American states," and "proclaim[ed] that all member states of the regional organization are under obligation to submit to the discipline of the inter-American system." The Mexican delegation to the conference appended a statement to the declaration, which emphasized its "general character" and denied that it was a "condemnation or a threat

[313] Circular Telegram from the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions in the American Republics, July 11, 1960, FRUS, Vol. VI: Cuba, Document 552, pp. 1006-1007.
[314] Declaration of San José, Costa Rica, adopted at the Seventh Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (General Secretariat of the Organization of American States: Washington, D.C., 1960), p. 4.

against Cuba." The delegation affirmed the Mexican government's "fullest support" for Cuba's "aspirations for economic improvement and social justice."[315]

Castro had come to power with a view of the OAS not as a hemispheric security organization, but as a mere cat's paw of the United States. Knowing that the United States would attempt to use the OAS to undermine the Cuban revolution, Castro sought to use the United Nations as a counter-weight to U.S. regional hegemony. This involved an effort to cultivate the support of Third World nations and to advertise the Soviet-Cuban alliance. The fifteenth session of the U.N. General Assembly provided an unparalleled opportunity to achieve these goals. For the Cubans, this was an opportunity to stick it to the Yankees in their own territory, and for Khrushchev, it was an occasion to publicize Soviet friendship toward the under-developed world. Complaining of ill treatment at their hotel in Manhattan, the Cuban delegates made a show of traveling to Harlem, where Khrushchev met them for a priceless photo-op. At the general assembly, Khrushchev and Castro cozied up for the cameras, fervently embracing and shouting exclamations of encouragement during the other's speeches.

On September 2, Castro delivered a speech excoriating the United States, the Organization of American States, and the Declaration of San José. Accusing the Council of Foreign Ministers of "sharpening the dagger which the criminal hand of Yankee imperialism wants to drive into the heart of the Cuban fatherland," Castro questioned the legitimacy of the declaration by clearly distinguishing between the aims of Latin American governing elites and the desires of the masses of ordinary Latin American peoples. "The validity of the Costa Rica Declaration," he proclaimed, "depends not on

[315] Ibid., p. 7.

the foreign ministers but on the peoples." In order to validate the declaration, "we respectfully ask the governments of America to call their peoples together in general assemblies and submit the Costa Rica Declaration to them." Castro insisted that for the democratic governments of Latin America to be truly democratic, such declarations and agreements had to be adopted by the masses.[316] Such statements were consistent with Vice President Richard Nixon's initial assessment of Castro, which observed that "he appears to confuse the roar of mass audiences with the rule of the majority in his concept of democracy."[317]

But this was nothing compared to the vitriol he reserved for the United States, and its "imperialist penetration…in our fatherland." U.S. imperialism was the "force which was always associated with everything negative, everything reactionary, and everything abusive in [Cuba]." Indeed, U.S. imperialism was the "main cause of [Cuba's] evils."[318] Mocking the San José declaration's charge that the Sino-Soviet bloc posed a danger to hemispheric security, Castro contended that "the Yankee imperialists are solely to blame for the fact that this revolution is taking place in Cuba." Castro posited the Cuban revolution as a model for other Latin American countries struggling against U.S. imperialism. "To our small fatherland," he announced, "has fallen the task of serving as the torch which lights the way for millions and millions of men and women like us, who are suffering in America today, just as we suffered in the past! It is our glorious destiny to serve as a light which will never go out!" He then proceeded to enunciate the terms of his own declaration, the Declaration of Havana, which "energetically condemn[ed] the open

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[316] Fidel Castro's speech to the U.N. General Assembly, September 2, 1960. Castro Speech Database, permanent URL: http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1960/19600902.html
[317] Quoted in Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic,* p. 93.
[318] Fidel Castro's speech to the U.N. General Assembly, September 2, 1960.

and criminal intervention in which the US imperialists have engaged for more than a century against all of the peoples of Latin America."

Characterizing Pan-Americanism as a smokescreen for "the domination of Yankee monopolies…and the Yankee maneuverings of governments pledged to Washington," Castro went on to laud the Soviet Union for "the aid spontaneously offered," which could "never be regarded as an act of intervention, but constitutes an obvious gesture of solidarity." In the name of the "National General Assembly of the People," Castro "accept[ed] and welcome[d] the support of the rockets of the Soviet Union in the event of a military attack on [Cuba's] territory by the military forces of the United States." Castro also lambasted the United States for opposing the entry of the People's Republic of China into the United Nations, declaring that revolutionary Cuba was ready to establish diplomatic relations with the PRC, and that "therefore, the relations which Cuba has maintained to date with the puppet regime maintained in Formosa by the ships of the Yankee Seventh Fleet no longer exist."

In a bid to align the goals and values of the Cuban revolution with the aspirations of newly decolonizing countries, Castro "condem[ed] the exploitation of the underdeveloped countries by imperialist financial capital." He reaffirmed the international outlook of the revolution by articulating the "duty of each people to stand with all the oppressed, colonized, exploited or attacked peoples, wherever in the world they may be and whatever geographical distance may separate them. All the peoples of the world are brothers!" Castro ended the spectacle by tearing up a copy of the San José

Declaration, while the crowd cheered and sung the July 26 hymn and the Cuban national anthem.[319]

A few weeks later, Castro delivered another speech at the U.N. General Assembly, in which he blamed U.S. hostility for the decision to strengthen relations with the Soviet bloc. Joking that at the time of the agrarian reform, "we were not 100 per cent communist yet," but "were just becoming slightly pink," Castro swore that before the United States launched its campaign of harassment, "we had not had the opportunity even to exchange letters with the distinguished Prime Minister of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev."[320] Because of U.S. economic aggression, however, Cuba "went in search of new markets" and "signed a trade treaty with the Soviet Union."[321] Castro claimed that Cuba's only defense was to appeal to the United Nations, the authority of which was "even above that of the OAS." But the United Nations requested that the OAS investigate the situation, and "what was to be expected? That the OAS would…condemn the political aggression against Cuba, and, above all that it would condemn the economic aggression against our country."[322] But of course that was not the outcome. "In this hemisphere," Castro proclaimed, "everyone knows that the Government of the United States has always imposed its own law – the law of the strongest."[323] The people of Cuba had learned that "their rights are not protected by either the OAS or the UN."[324]

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[319] Ibid.
[320] "Let the Philosophy of Plunder Disappear and War Will Disappear: Denunciation in the U.N.," Address by Prime Minister Fidel Castro at the 15th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, September 26, 1960 (La Habana: Editorial en Marcha, 1962), pp. 16-18.
[321] Ibid., p. 23.
[322] Ibid., p. 24.
[323] Ibid., p. 25.
[324] Ibid., p. 26.

Castro also expounded upon the international significance of the Cuban revolution. Conceding that some of his "Latin American colleagues may feel it their duty to be discreet at the United Nations," Castro argued that they should instead "welcome…the Cuban revolution," because it had "forced the monopolists to return at least a small part of what they have been extracting from the natural resources and the sweat of the Latin American peoples."[325] Arguing that "the case of Cuba is the case of all underdeveloped, colonialized [*sic*] countries," Castro declared that "the problems which we have been describing in relation to Cuba can be applied just as well to all of Latin America."[326] And "how long will Latin America wait for its development?" he pointedly inquired. "Since all imperialisms are alike," he maintained, "a country that exploits the people of Latin America…is an ally of the exploiters of the rest of the world."[327] Clearly, Castro was describing a struggle that pitted Cuba and all the under-developed countries of the world against the old-school European colonialists and the U.S. neo-imperialists.

Two weeks after Castro's speech, James Wadsworth, the U.S. representative to the U.N., sent a written rebuttal for circulation to all members of the organization. The response claimed that Castro's speech "contained many unfounded accusations, half-truths, malicious innuendoes and distortions of history," and accused the Cuban prime minister of being "anxious to destroy" the "historic friendship between Cuba and the United States."[328] Rebuffing Castro's charge that the United States was uninterested in economic development, the report argued that the U.S. government "contributes more to

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[325] Ibid., p. 29.
[326] Ibid., p. 37.
[327] Ibid., p. 40.
[328] "Facts Concerning Relations Between Cuba and the United States: A Reply to Allegations Made in the United Nations Against the United States by Prime Minister Fidel Castro of Cuba," (New York: U.S. Delegation to the General Assembly, 1960), p. 1.

economic development of other countries than any other government in the world." Regarding Castro's portrayal of the United States as the ally of "gangsters, landowners, monopolists, militarists [and] fascists," the report characterized it as "straight out of the mythology of Soviet communism."[329] The report also emphasized that "the United States regards the principle of non-intervention as one of the cornerstones of the inter-American system."[330] The report argued that the United States had traditionally paid for Cuban sugar in dollars and at prices above that of the world market, and questioned how such arrangements could be viewed as "slavery" while "barter arrangements at lower prices, agreements which tie the Cuban economy to the Sino-Soviet bloc and infringe on Cuba's right to choose the origin, cost, and quality of its imports, can somehow be portrayed as 'economic freedom.'"[331] Referring to the apparent Soviet attempt to link communism with the philosophy of José Martí, the report alleged that "Martí perceived correctly the dangers of communist imperialism under a pretense of defending and succoring the oppressed."[332]

Though much of the information in the U.S. rebuttal was factual, there was of course no mention of the covert plotting to remove Castro. As the Cuban government continued to issue complaints about repeated violations of Cuban airspace, and kept the Kremlin apprised of the latest attempts of the U.S. imperialists to overthrow the revolutionary regime, the Soviets responded with expressions of moral support and fraternal solidarity. In October, Khrushchev sent a message over Cuban airwaves, expressing the support of the Soviet people for Cuba's "struggle for political and

[329] Ibid., p. 3.
[330] Ibid., p. 5.
[331] Ibid., p. 11.
[332] Ibid., p. 26.

economic independence," and claimed that he had read in a newspaper that the American imperialists were preparing mercenary troops for "subversive actions" against Cuba.[333]

In November, Cuban representatives of various revolutionary organizations visited the Soviet Union at the invitation of the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. The head of the delegation, Mario Puente Ferro, revealed his knowledge of Russian history by drawing a parallel between the current situation in Cuba and the early days of the Russian revolution, when the country was blockaded "and surrounded by hostile imperial powers." Yet the revolutionary forces had repelled the invaders. Now Cuba found itself besieged by external enemies. Puente pointed out that, "You were alone. But we have, in addition to the heroism and courage of our people, the support and solidarity of the entire socialist camp, and especially the USSR."[334] Of course, when U.S.-backed exile forces invaded Cuba, such expressions of solidarity were not particularly useful, and the USSR came under fire for its inability to provide meaningful military support to the revolutionary regime.

THE BAY OF PIGS

Much has been written about the Bay of Pigs, and while plenty of disagreements exist, no one would deny, as historian Theodore Draper commented at the time, that it

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[333] Announcement from the head of the Soviet delegation to the 15th General Assembly of the U.N., Chairman of the Council of Ministers, N.S. Khrushchev, for Cuban radio, October 11, 1960. Ministry of Foreign Relations of the Russian Federation and Ministry of Foreign Relations of the Republic of Cuba *Russia – Cuba, 1902-2002: Documents and Materials* (Moscow: International Relations, 2004), Document 104, pp. 105-106.

[334] Record of conversation between First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR A.I. Mikoyan and members of the Delegation of Representatives of Revolutionary Organizations of Cuba, which took place in the USSR at the invitation of the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, from October 31 through November 22, 1960. AVPRF, Fond 104, opis' 15, papka 6, delo 10, p. 15.

was "one of those rare events in history – a perfect failure."[335] At the time, most of Kennedy's advisers supported the invasion; voices of dissent were few and apparently unconvincing. One such dissenter was Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., who warned Kennedy that if the U.S. hand was revealed, "Cuba will become our Hungary."[336] Schlesinger also predicted "a wave of massive protest, agitation, and sabotage throughout Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Africa" and cautioned that the operation would "dissipate all the extraordinary good will which has been rising toward the new Administration through the world."[337] Moreover, were the United States to admit involvement in the invasion plans, it would be tantamount to admitting "action taken in violation of the basic characters of the hemisphere and of the United Nations," which would place the United States "on the same moral plane as the Soviet Union."[338] Undersecretary of State Chester Bowles, in a memo that apparently never reached Kennedy, made a similar argument from principle, stressing that "the differences which distinguish us from the Russians are of vital importance," and expressing doubt "that means can be wholly divorced from ends."[339] Senator J. William Fulbright opposed the operation, opining that "the Castro regime is a thorn in the flesh; but it is not a dagger in the heart." He told Kennedy that "to give this activity even covert support is of a piece with the hypocrisy and cynicism for which the United States is constantly denouncing the Soviet Union in the United Nations and elsewhere."[340]

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[335] Quoted in *Bay of Pigs Declassified: The Secret CIA Report on the Invasion of Cuba*, edited by Peter Kornbluh (New York: The New Press, 1998), p. 2.
[336] Quoted in Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic*, p. 152.
[337] Quoted in Rasenberger, *Brilliant Disaster*, p. 129.
[338] Quoted in ibid., p. 164.
[339] Quoted in ibid., p. 149.
[340] Quoted in Schoultz, p. 153.

Indeed, the covert operation was launched the same week that the U.N. had convened to investigate allegations of U.S. aggression against Cuba. On the morning of April 15, Cuban Foreign Minister Raúl Roa demanded the floor to make an announcement about the invasion but was interrupted by the acting president of the General Assembly, Frederick Boland, on a point of order. Soviet ambassador to the U.N. Valerian Zorin immediately came to Roa's defense with an exhortation to "discuss immediately the question of aggression against Cuba."[341] Later that afternoon, in the emergency meeting of the First Committee, U.S. ambassador to the U.N. Adlai Stevenson responded to Roa's accusations by presenting a CIA-fabricated cover story that was already in the process of unraveling.[342] Two days later, Stevenson again rebuffed Roa's charges that the mercenary force invading Cuba was "organized, financed, and armed by the government of the United States."[343] Among the detrimental consequences of the failed invasion for U.S. policy was "the diplomatic embarrassment of being caught baldly lying to the world community."[344] Stevenson reported back to the president and secretary of state about the atmosphere in the U.N., which he characterized as "extremely dangerous to U.S. position throughout [the] world." The Soviets and the Cubans, he reported, had managed to "capture and so far hold moral initiative." This was in some part due to the fact that "everyone…believes we have engineered this revolution," and thus "we have received virtually no support in [the] speeches of others."[345] The incident

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[341] Quoted in Rasenberger, p. 199.
[342] Kornbluh, *Bay of Pigs Declassified*, p. 3.
[343] Rasenberger, *Brilliant Disaster*, p. 252.
[344] Kornbluh, p. 3.
[345] Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, April 19, 1961, *FRUS* Vol. X: Cuba, Document 148, pp. 295-297.

shattered U.S. credibility and strengthened domestic support for Castro's regime, while burnishing his international image as a "David defeating Goliath."[346]

Moreover, although the operation was aimed at denying the USSR a foothold in the Western Hemisphere, it ultimately drove Castro to seek a defensive military alliance with Moscow.[347] On April 16, Castro declared Cuba a Marxist-Leninist state. Most scholars agree that Castro's decision to officially identify with socialism was prompted by the desire to protect Cuba from another U.S. invasion. Castro knew that Soviet military protection was guaranteed only to other countries of the socialist bloc. On April 18, Khrushchev sent Kennedy a telegram in which he promised to "render the Cuban people and their government all necessary help to repel armed attack," and warned that any further aggression would be answered "in full measure."[348] The next day, U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy sent his brother a memorandum presciently predicting that in one or two years' time, "Castro will be more bombastic, will be more and more closely tied to Communism, will be better armed, and will be operating an even more tightly held state than if these events had not transpired." His assessment of the longer term consequences of the Bay of Pigs invasion hit the bulls-eye. "If we don't want Russia to set up missile bases in Cuba," he concluded, "we had better decide now what we are willing to do to stop it."[349]

Despite Khrushchev's nuclear blustering, the Soviets understood the responsibility that a guarantee of military protection of the Cuban revolution would entail

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[346] Kornbluh, *Bay of Pigs Declassified*, p. 3.
[347] Ibid., p. 4.
[348] Telegram from the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State, April 18, 1961, *FRUS* Vol. X: Cuba, Document 117, pp. 264-265.
[349] Memorandum from the Attorney General to President Kennedy, April 19, 1961. *FRUS* Vol. X: Cuba, Document 157, pp. 302-204.

and were circumspect in their response to Castro's bid. According to Kiva Maidanik, a scholar of Latin America in the Soviet Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), though the Soviet leadership certainly reveled in the humiliation and loss of U.S. prestige that Castro's announcement entailed, Castro's claims to be not just a communist, but a leader of world communism, was highly troubling. "To us," Maidanik confided in an interview with historians James G. Blight and Philip Brenner, "this is an impossible concept because *we* decide who is and is not a communist. And of course, there is no 'leader' other than ourselves." Maidanik claims that the Soviet leadership viewed Castro with suspicion from the moment of his announcement, fearing that the Cubans would reveal themselves as "heretics" who had succumbed to the "Chinese virus."[350] Many in the Soviet leadership, moreover, feared that Castro's statements would complicate his domestic political situation and openly invite U.S. hostility, heightening the prospect of U.S. military intervention and putting Khrushchev's pledges to a very public test.[351]

The Soviet press, rather than trumpeting the triumph of a Marxist-Leninist regime in the Western Hemisphere, remained uncharacteristically silent about this momentous development.[352] In October 1961, Khrushchev proclaimed that, "our hearts are with you, heroes of Cuba, in defense of your independence and freedom from American imperialism." At the 22nd CPSU Congress the same month, Anastas Mikoyan declared that Cuba had taken "the road of true liberation from the yoke of the monopolies…and is

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[350] James G. Blight and Philip Brenner, *Sad and Luminous Days: Cuba's Struggle with the Superpowers after the Missile Crisis* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002), p. 108.
[351] Pavlov, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance*, p. 22.
[352] Jacques Lévesque, *The USSR and the Cuban Revolution: Soviet Ideological and Strategic Perspectives, 1959-1977* (New York: Praeger, 1978), pp. 31-32.

building a socialist life."[353] However, it is notable that until April 11, 1962, over four months after Castro declared that he was a Marxist-Leninist and had been since his student days, *Pravda* refrained from referring to Cuba as "socialist" or Castro as a "communist."[354] Khrushchev's decision to station missiles on Cuban territory was made shortly after the formal recognition of Cuba as a socialist state.[355]

The Soviets interpreted the failed outcome of the invasion as further evidence of the changing correlation of forces – the imperialist bloc was in decline and socialism was on the rise. "The failure of the attempt to export counter-revolution to Cuba," wrote one theorist, "shows that the possibilities of the revolutionary liberation movement are enormously greater than before."[356] At the same time, however, the timing of the invasion proved problematic for Khrushchev – he was forced to come to the defense of the Cuban revolution right in the middle of preparations for the historic Vienna summit scheduled for June. A strong defense of Cuba increased U.S.-Soviet tensions during a period in which "peaceful coexistence" dominated the Soviet party line and Khrushchev was seeking to improve relations with the United States.

The Bay of Pigs strengthened the position of hardliners in the Kremlin and solidified an impression of U.S. President Kennedy as indecisive.[357] That impression was reinforced at the Vienna summit, where Khrushchev had not planned to engage in concrete negotiations, but merely to take stock of the U.S. leader. Apparently, as a result of the Vienna summit, Khrushchev determined that Kennedy was a "mere 'boy' who

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[353] Quoted in ibid., p. 35.
[354] Ibid.
[355] Ibid., p. 38.
[356] Quoted in ibid., p. 29.
[357] Arkady N. Shevchenko, *Breaking With Moscow: The Compelling Story of the Highest Ranking Soviet Defector* (London: Grafton Books, 1986), p. 182.

would be vulnerable to pressure," and considered subjecting him to "a test of strength."[358] Indeed, at the end of the first day of the summit, Kennedy complained to his aides that Khrushchev had treated him "like a little boy," and admitted that "because of the Bay of Pigs," Khrushchev "thinks…that I'm inexperienced."[359] This perception of Kennedy as weak and indecisive contributed to Khrushchev's decision to station nuclear missiles in Cuba.

The Bay of Pigs also provided the Soviets an opportunity to enhance their image in the Third World by linking the struggle of the Cuban people to the trials and tribulations of the decolonizing world. As soon as the fiasco hit the headlines and airwaves, the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee adopted a resolution demanding of the imperialists, "Hands off Cuba!"[360] Occurring on the Solidarity Committee's designated "African Freedom Day," the U.S. invasion was denounced as a "monstrous atrocity." "The time has passed," declared the committee, "when the imperialists could through force of arms subjugate an entire people to its will." Now, the colonialists were opposed by the "powerful socialist camp," as well as by the "many millions of peace-loving peoples in the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, who have firmly committed to bringing a decisive and permanent end to colonialism." The committee concluded with the resounding cry, "Long live the unity and solidarity of the people in the struggle against imperialism and colonialism!"[361]

To a significant extent, such propagandizing reflected the anxieties of Khrushchev and other Soviet leaders about Castro's potential turn toward the Chinese. Peking

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[358] Ibid., p. 183.
[359] Quoted in Rasenberger, *Brilliant Disaster*, p. 347.
[360] Text of the resolution adopted on April 17, 1961 by public representatives of Moscow at a meeting dedicated to Africa Freedom Day. AVPRF, Fond 104, opis' 16, papka 8, delo 9, pp. 20-22.
[361] Ibid., p. 22.

castigated the Soviets as "revisionist" for their contention that peaceful coexistence between states with different social and economic systems did not preclude the triumph of socialist revolution.[362] A collapse of Moscow's position in the Caribbean would entail a major loss of Soviet prestige in the Third World. As early as March 1961, PSP leaders had complained to the Kremlin about Che's support for armed revolutionary movements in the Western Hemisphere, and Castro's launch of a rebel training program in Havana was worrying to Soviet leaders who feared another U.S. invasion of Cuba.[363] Castro's declaration in December 1961 that he was a Marxist-Leninist and sought to transform Cuba into a socialist country had complicated his domestic position, and Soviet intelligence analysts warned that such a course was imprudent.[364] Moreover, in March 1962, Aníbal Escalante, the executive secretary of the PSP, was removed from his post and exiled to the Soviet Union for over-stepping his authority. Moscow worried that the removal of such a staunchly pro-Soviet communist leader signaled a shift in Castro's own loyalties, and that he was poised to embrace the Chinese party line, with its emphasis on armed struggle. The same month, Ramiro Valdés, the Minister of Internal Affairs, visited the Soviet Union and apparently suggested that the Soviets organize an intelligence center in Havana for the purpose of providing support to Latin American revolutionary movements. The request was denied.[365] Khrushchev was stuck between a rock and a hard place – to get behind Castro's revolutionary ambitions would inevitably invite U.S. action, but to deny those ambitions would validate Cuban and Chinese condemnations of Soviet "revisionism."

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[362] Pavlov, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance*, p. 24.
[363] Fursenko and Naftali, *One Hell of a Gamble,* pp. 140-141.
[364] Ibid., p. 161.
[365] Ibid., pp 167-168.

The Cubans, despite successfully repelling the U.S.-backed invasion, were not convinced that the United States had ceased efforts to destroy the revolution. On April 28, Castro and Cuban President Osvaldo Dorticós penned a dire warning of impending U.S. aggression to Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. The revolutionary regime was now in danger of the "direct armed aggression" of the United States and its band of counter-revolutionaries and mercenary thugs. Kennedy himself had "cynically acknowledged" the role of the U.S. government in the failed Bay of Pigs invasion, which "violated the most elementary norms of international law and the fundamental principles of the UN charter."[366] Castro and Dorticós absolved themselves of any responsibility for the breakdown in US-Cuban relations, insisting that the revolutionary government had repeatedly announced its willingness to discuss "contentious issues" with the U.S. government "on a basis of equality." The United States had responded to these benevolent intentions with "threats of aggression and economic blockade, acts of sabotage and subversive activity, the bombardment of [Cuban] cities, and finally, the [Bay of Pigs] invasion." The United States was now bringing to bear its considerable military might against Cuba, "such a small country…which could never, even in a minor way, pose a threat or danger to such as great power as the U.S.A."[367]

On October 11, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko received a telegram from his Cuban counterpart. Cuban Acting Foreign Minister Olivares described the Cuban people as "victims" of "aggressive policies" and warned that the U.S. government was launching a campaign to discredit the revolutionary government by convincing the world that Cuba was bent on "interfering in the domestic affairs" of sovereign nations

[366] Telegram to Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko from Osvaldo Dorticós and Fidel Castro, April 28, 1961. AVPRF, Fond 104, opis' 16, papka 8, delo 9, p. 34.
[367] Ibid., p. 35.

and was thereby "violating the fundamental principles of international law."[368] This was merely a transparent attempt to "isolate Cuba from other Latin American countries" by convincing the latter to "sever relations" with the former. The United States had already received the cooperation of the "anti-peoples" and "anti-democratic" regimes of the Americas. Though the U.S. government had tried to present the Cuban revolution as a "potential threat to the development and stability of Western Hemisphere countries," "everyone knows" that Cuba had cleverly used the United Nations and the Organization of American States to "unmask" these provocations.[369] Olivares launched into a detailed discussion of the fruits of the U.S. campaign. Several countries had already broken diplomatic relations with Cuba, the press had tarred the revolution with accusations of "subversion," and military training camps in Central America were preparing for an armed overthrow of the Castro regime.[370] The CIA, meanwhile, was busy preparing an invasion directed at the "physical destruction of the leaders of the revolution."[371] Although the message included no direct appeal for military aid, the meticulous detailing of the existential threats facing the Cuban revolution suggests that such aid was exactly what the Cuban government was hoping for.

CONCLUSION

Though the Soviets had initially adopted a cautious approach to the Cuban revolution, as Castro pursued a more radical course, and as the United States responded with covert acts of aggression, Khrushchev ultimately became convinced that he could

[368] Telegram from Havana, October 11, 1961, to Minister of Foreign Affairs Gromyko. AVPRF, Fond 104, opis' 16, papka 8, delo 9, p. 93.
[369] Ibid., p. 94.
[370] Ibid., pp. 96-99.
[371] Ibid., p. 100.

shore up Moscow's position in the face of the challenges posed by the increasingly confrontational Chinese communists and ensure Castro's loyalty with a dramatic display of Soviet military might. Judging Kennedy to be a weak and indecisive leader – a judgment that was largely based on the U.S. president's unwillingness to use U.S. military power to achieve the objectives of the Bay of Pigs invasion – Khrushchev sought to present the United States with a fait accompli that would demonstrate the Soviet commitment to Cuba and irrevocably alter the strategic balance of the Cold War.

Chapter Three: Nuclear Fallout:

The USSR and Cuba from the Missile Crisis to Rapprochement

The Cuban missile crisis has been the subject of much spilled ink, and the intention here is not to recount the chronology of events, as others have done quite well.[372] Nevertheless, a cursory examination of the consequences of the crisis is necessary to show that it was a watershed in the Cuban-Soviet relationship. It undermined Cuban trust in the Soviet leadership, led to a breach in the alliance that would not be repaired until the early 1970s, and ultimately contributed to the "palace coup" that ousted Nikita Khrushchev. Throughout the remainder of the 1960s, Cuban-Soviet relations would be constantly plagued by the contradiction between Castro's obligations as Soviet ally and his aspirations for Third World leadership. This manifested most frequently as criticism of orthodox communist parties; sometimes this criticism was thinly veiled, and other times it was direct and harsh. While adhering to the view that Yankee imperialism was the ultimate enemy, Castro consistently chastised both the Soviets and their regional communist allies for their inadequate support of the armed revolutionaries battling the imperialists. At first, this resulted in Soviet attempts to cobble together doctrinal compromises, but as the Cuban economy became increasingly dependent on its Soviet patron, Castro was ultimately brought to heel. By the mid-1970s, Castro had moderated his fiery rhetoric and succeeded in breaking Cuba out of its political and diplomatic isolation, and back into the inter-American community.

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[372] See, for instance, Michael Dobbs, *One Minute to Midnight: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and Castro on the Brink of Nuclear War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008).

THE FALLOUT FROM OPERATION ANADYR

There is no doubt that Khrushchev spearheaded the proposal that became known as Operation Anadyr; absent his forceful personality and prodding, it is doubtful that the more cautious bureaucratic types in the Foreign Ministry would have approved large-scale weapons transfers to any Latin American country, much less one situated a mere ninety miles off the coast of the continental United States. In fact, the Foreign Ministry had opposed such weapons sales when they were first requested in the autumn of 1959. During Khrushchev's famed visit to the United States, the Presidium had resolved that it was "inexpedient at the present time to provide weapons to Cuba."[373] But when Khrushchev returned to Moscow, he pushed these chary naysayers aside and his decision to supply communist-bloc weapons to Cuba prevailed.[374] Two prominent historians have argued that, "by approving the weapons sale, Khrushchev signaled to the top levels of the Soviet government that he would take risks to pursue Soviet aims in Latin America."[375]

Much debate has surrounded Khrushchev's motivations for stationing missiles in Cuba. The official Soviet propaganda line, which continued to be trumpeted well into the post-Cold War period, was that the decision resulted purely from a desire to safeguard revolutionary Cuba against U.S. machinations.[376] Sergo Mikoyan adheres to this line, arguing that though the Soviet decision was "not a case of a superpower's unusual altruism," but that it was designed to prevent the United States from using its military power to "impede…the worldwide victorious march of socialism."[377] The Bay of Pigs

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[373] Quoted in Fursenko and Naftali, *One Hell of a Gamble*, p. 24.
[374] Ibid. Fursenko and Naftali argue that this decision marked a fateful turning point "at which the United States and the Soviet Union started inclining toward their first direct military clash."
[375] Ibid.
[376] See Pavlov, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance*, pp. 34-35.
[377] Mikoyan, *Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis*, p. 95.

and the string of covert operations that succeeded it had proven that the United States posed an existential threat to the Cuban revolution; as one scholar put it, "before the Bay of Pigs, one might have reasonably dismissed Castro's concerns about American aggression as paranoid; afterward, to deny them was absurd." This scholar argues that "fear of American attack was the prime motive to both the Soviets and the Cubans for installing missiles in Cuba."[378] Historian Geoffrey Roberts writes that "there is still no real reason to doubt the veracity of Khrushchev's own account," namely that the Soviets and the Cubans anticipated a U.S. invasion and sought to bolster and protect the Castro regime.[379]

Clearly, the desire to protect the revolution was at the forefront of both Soviet and Cuban thinking. Most scholars, however, recognize that strategic considerations played a major role in Khrushchev's decision-making. In his memoirs, while claiming that "the main thing" was to "restrain the United States from precipitous military action against Castro's government," Khrushchev admits that "in addition to protecting Cuba, our missiles would have equalized what the West likes to call the 'balance of power.'"[380] Castro himself chose to interpret the Soviet proposal as a bid to strengthen the international position of the socialist bloc.[381] Soviet naval officials, moreover, envisioned the operation in terms of Soviet power projection capabilities.[382] Ultimately, the goal of protecting the Cuban revolution dovetailed neatly with the desire of Soviet leaders to improve their geostrategic position, so any attempt to carefully distinguish between the two goals may be a futile exercise.

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[378] Rasenberger, *Brilliant Disaster*, p. 364.
[379] Roberts, *The Soviet Union in World Politics*, p. 57.
[380] Strobe Talbott, editor, *Khrushchev Remembers* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970), p. 494.
[381] Fursenko and Naftali, *One Hell of a Gamble*, p. 187. See also Pavlov, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance*, p. 38.
[382] Fursenko and Naftali, p. 188.

Some have argued that Castro "jumped at" the Soviet offer, accepting nuclear missiles "with enthusiasm."[383] Yuri Pavlov, for instance, claims that Castro was "quick to seize the opportunity of securing Soviet protection for his regime and apparently had no difficulty in accepting Khrushchev's rash offer to put the USSR at risk of a nuclear conflict with the United States in order to guarantee the security of the Cuban Revolution."[384] However, there is ample grounds for skepticism of such claims. Though Castro obviously accepted the Soviet proposal, years later he maintained that he was not thrilled with the arrangement. Although the existence of a Soviet military base on Cuban territory would provide a powerful deterrent to U.S. interventionism, it would also endanger Cuban claims to non-aligned status. The opening summit of the Non-Aligned Movement at Belgrade in 1961 had set specific parameters for membership, among which was a condemnation of superpower military bases. Castro had long fulminated against the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo. He was well aware that the deployment of Soviet missiles on Cuban territory would "damage the image of the Revolution," and he was "very zealous in protecting the image of the Revolution in the rest of Latin America."[385] Castro ultimately accepted the terms of Operation Anadyr, but he opposed the secrecy surrounding the project. He believed that because the agreement did not violate international law, and because it was the prerogative of the Cuban leadership to enter into any sort of military agreement or alliance it chose, "secrecy would give an advantage to the imperialists," and therefore, the agreement should be made public.[386]

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[383] See, for instance, Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution*, p. 39. Apparently this claim is based on the statements of Carlos Franqui, editor of *Revolución*, and Soviet defector Arkady Shevchenko.
[384] Pavlov, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance*, p. 16.
[385] Fidel Castro, quoted in Gott, *Cuba: A New History*, p. 200.
[386] Quoted in Pavlov, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance*, p. 40. See also Mikoyan, *Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis*, pp. 225-226.

In the immediate aftermath of the crisis, Khrushchev and other Soviet leaders, as well as pro-Soviet Latin American politicians, attempted to portray the outcome as a victory for the USSR. Mikoyan was dispatched to Havana on November 2 to assure the Cubans that the primary goal of stationing the missiles in the first place had been achieved – the Kennedy administration had pledged not to invade Cuba.[387] In a conversation at the Soviet embassy in Syria, the Chilean chargé d'affaires, Carlos Dimer, assured his counterpart that the Caribbean crisis had "ended in a total victory for the USSR." Although President Kennedy and his allies "mistakenly believe[d]" that the victory was in fact theirs, "the peoples of Latin America understood that now there are forces which will not allow the United States to subjugate Latin America as in the past."[388]

All of this, however, represented wishful thinking. Before the stationing of Soviet missiles on Cuban soil, U.S. bruiting about the "threat" Cuba posed to other countries of the hemisphere was not as credible as it was in the post-crisis atmosphere. The Cuban missile crisis revealed Cuban-Soviet machinations as an existential threat to the entire Western Hemisphere. On October 23, the Organization of American States issued a unanimous call for the withdrawal of all Soviet missiles from Cuban territory and recommended "all measures…including the use of armed force" in order to ensure that all offensive weapons were removed. Venezuela and Argentina deployed warships, and even staunch Cuban ally President Lopez Mateos of Mexico opposed the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba. As one scholar of Cuban foreign policy has argued, the OAS

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[387] Fursenko and Naftali, *One Hell of a Gamble*, pp. 293-294.

[388] Soviet embassy in Syria, memorandum of conversation with Chilean chargé d'affaires in Syria and Lebanon Carlos Dimer, January 16, 1963. AVPRF, Fond 139, opis' 18, papka 3, delo 1, p. 2.

sanctions imparted a veneer of legitimacy to U.S. efforts to overthrow Castro and united the hemisphere in opposition to Cuba.[389]

For the USSR, the outcome of the missile crisis was a veritable disaster. Not only did it contribute to Khrushchev's ouster two years later, but Soviet credibility among its Third World allies was shaken, and the incident incurred the wrath of Fidel Castro, inaugurating a period of heightened tension in the Cuban-Soviet relationship. On October 29, Aleksandr Alekseev cabled Moscow with the news that he had "never seen [Castro] so distraught and irate."[390] The Cuban people engaged in spontaneous anti-Soviet demonstrations throughout the country, ripping down pro-Soviet posters and billboards, and, at Castro's urging, chanting slurs that called into question Khrushchev's manhood.[391] With the Sino-Soviet conflict in full force, Havana looked to Peking for ideological camaraderie and support to help balance its dependence on Moscow.[392] Indeed, the Chinese were quick to criticize Khrushchev, not only for the "venturesome blunder" of installing missiles in Cuba, but also because by removing the missiles, he had "capitulated to American imperialism."[393] The missile crisis was the first serious rupture in the Cuban-Soviet alliance; Castro felt that Khrushchev had "sold out" the Cuban revolution in order to gain Washington's favor. Indeed, in negotiations with Kennedy, Khrushchev falsified information so as to place the blame squarely on the Cubans; he claimed that the missiles were sent "per request of the Cuban government."[394]

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[389] Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution*, pp. 28-29.
[390] Mikoyan, *Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis*, p. 179.
[391] Blight and Brenner, *Sad and Luminous Days*, p. 25.
[392] Lévesque, *The USSR and the Cuban Revolution*, p. 44.
[393] *Jenmin Jibao* (Peking), quoted in Pavlov, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance*, p. 56.
[394] Mikoyan, *Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis*, p. 211.

The missile crisis was a major breach in the Soviet-Cuban relationship; the level of trust and understanding that existed before the crisis would never again be reached. The Cubans had viewed the Soviet proposal to station missiles on Cuban territory as a form of protection tantamount to that given to the socialist bloc; in other words, the Cubans thought they were safely located under the Soviet nuclear umbrella. Moreover, the Cubans believed that in safeguarding the revolution, the Soviets had tacitly agreed to Cuban support of armed revolutionary movements in the Western Hemisphere. In a single stroke, the Soviet capitulation to U.S. demands disabused the Cuban leadership of these notions. What made the reality particularly disillusioning is that the Cubans had apparently been prepared to lay down their lives as martyrs to the revolutionary cause in the event of a nuclear war.[395] Though the alliance soldiered on until the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the USSR, the Cubans would never again trust the Soviets completely. Lev Mendelevich, the former chief of the Latin American Directorate of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, has been quoted as saying that "after what happened in 1962, the Cubans will never be our real friends."[396]

Castro also expressed his disappointment that Khrushchev, while making voluntary concessions that had not been demanded by U.S. negotiators, had not pressed harder for concessions in Cuba's favor. That the Soviets did not even deign to keep Castro apprised of the negotiations, much less take action to include the Cuban leadership in those negotiations, was a powerful demonstration that when push came to shove, the USSR clearly operated more as a Cold War superpower than as an anti-imperialist guarantor of Third World interests. In January 1968, Castro delivered his own "secret

[395] Blight and Brenner, *Sad and Luminous Days*, pp. 74-75.
[396] Quoted in Pavlov, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance*, p. 55.

speech" to the Central Committee of the Cuban communist party. He admitted that in the period prior to the missile crisis, the Cuban leadership had put "tremendous faith in the Soviet Union…perhaps too much."[397] Castro had been surprised to learn that Khrushchev had secured a secret deal with Kennedy to remove ballistic missiles from Italy and Turkey in exchange for the withdrawal of Soviet missiles from Cuba. In fact, Castro was never supposed to find about the quid pro quo, but Khrushchev accidentally allowed it to slip while reading a letter aloud to a translator in Castro's presence.[398] Khrushchev did not even broach the issue of terminating the U.S. lease on Guantanamo, nor did he request the cessation of U-2 flights over Cuban territory. Had Khrushchev at least obtained these concessions, Castro argued, the missile crisis "might even have been turned into a political victory." Instead, Khrushchev gave away the store, got virtually nothing in return, and the outcome of the entire episode was "an evident defeat for the socialist community and for the revolutionary movement."[399]

For the Cubans, ultimately, the missile crisis was "the moment when the dream that one of the superpowers might help to foster a global revolution disappeared."[400] The Soviets had proven that when push came to shove, they were clearly more comfortable operating as a great power than as a Third World ally. When the Soviet desire for détente with the United States conflicted with the obligation to provide support to small, struggling, socialist countries, the so-called "internationalist duty" to support revolution went by the wayside.[401] The Soviets, for their part, walked away from the missile crisis with a view of the Cubans as reckless, hot-headed, and intransigent. They believed that

[397] Blight and Brenner, *Sad and Luminous Days*, p. 35.
[398] Ibid., pp. 64-65.
[399] Ibid., p. 67.
[400] Ibid., p. 84.
[401] Ibid., p. 86.

the Cubans had a martyr complex and that they had pushed the world to the brink of nuclear holocaust with their intemperance and unrealistic demands.[402] Indeed, Soviet propaganda insisted that it was Castro who had requested the missiles, and portrayed the Cubans as driving the Soviets to the brink of nuclear war.[403] These visions would never really go away, and the subsequent history of Cuban-Soviet relations would be plagued by Cuban distrust of Soviet "bureaucratism," and Soviet wariness of Cuban impetuousness. After the end of the Cold War, Jorge Pollo, a staff member of the Central Committee of the Cuban communist party, remarked that "history has yet to record whether Cuba has suffered more from U.S. imperialism or Soviet friendship."[404] Pollo went on to discuss the great power mentality of the USSR, observing that in their relations with Cuba, "the Russians…were victims of their own imperialist psychology."[405]

Despite Soviet claims that the Cuban revolution had been safeguarded by Kennedy's non-invasion pledge, the missile crisis did not provoke a major re-conceptualization of U.S. policy toward Cuba. The Kennedy administration continued to pursue covert measures to destabilize the Castro regime. In March 1963, in a letter from Cuban Foreign Minister Raúl Roa to U.N. Secretary General U Thant, the Cuban government protested continued U.S. aggression. Citing the openly hostile statements of several U.S. administration officials and Congressmen, Roa maintained that "those directly and indirectly responsible for U.S. foreign policy do not conceal their violations

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[402] Ibid., p. 85.
[403] Victor Israelyan, *On the Battlefields of the Cold War: A Soviet Ambassador's Confession* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), p. 76.
[404] Quoted in Blight and Brenner, *Sad and Luminous Days*, p. 93.
[405] Ibid., p. 94.

of the U.N. Charter or their desire to destroy a Member State."[406] Roa complained of repeated CIA attacks on Cuban fishing vessels and the intensified propaganda campaign against Cuba in the U.S. news media, which was characterized by its "animal fury."[407] He also lambasted the Organization of American States, particularly "the Guatemalan puppet regime, together with those of Venezuela and the Dominican Republic," which had presented false information to the regional body about Cuban-sponsored hemispheric subversion. "Since the Punta del Este meeting," he charged, those countries had coalesced into "an aggressive military block serving U.S. imperialism."[408] Roa also denounced Rómulo Betancourt, for his "repugnant arrogance," and his leadership role in coordinating the attack on Cuba; Betancourt had clearly "joined the servile partisans of U.S. aggressive policy."[409] He served notice to U Thant that unlike the OAS, "the United Nations…cannot be converted into a blank check for U.S. interventionist policy without betraying its principles and aims."[410] Roa was in essence throwing down the gauntlet; if the United Nations failed to respond adequately, it too would be revealed as a tool of U.S. imperialism. Indeed, the outcome of the missile crisis showed that, for all the attempts by U.N. Secretary General U Thant to mediate the conflict, the superpowers would continue to act unilaterally to defend their perceived interests, even when such actions directly contravened both the spirit and the letter of the U.N. charter. U Thant, despite his humble

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[406] "Cuban Protest to the United Nations," letter from Cuban Foreign Minister Raúl Roa to U.N. Secretary General U Thant, March 4, 1963 (Havana, Cuba: Ministry of Foreign Relations, 1963), p. 12.
[407] Ibid., p. 12 & 18.
[408] Ibid., p. 20.
[409] Ibid., p. 23.
[410] Ibid., p. 24.

efforts at mediating the crisis, clearly understood this to be the case, declaring a few months later that "the United Nations cannot overawe the nuclear powers."[411]

The Kremlin plotters who masterminded the "palace coup" that took down Khrushchev cited the missile crisis as the most blatant example of the Soviet premier's recklessness and adventurism. Dmitry Polyanski, who delivered a scathing indictment of Khrushchev's leadership, invited the deposed premier to "ask any one of our marshals or generals, and they will tell you that plans for the military 'penetration' of South America were gibberish, fraught with the enormous danger of war."[412] One former Soviet diplomat recalls that "of all the international conflicts that erupted during the decade of Khrushchev's rule, the Cuban missile crisis…damaged his authority the most."[413] Khrushchev was chided for losing sight of Soviet security interests, which they argued must always be paramount in policy decisions. Though the KGB would continue support for Third World national liberation movements, Leonid Brezhnev, Khrushchev's successor, took a much more cautious approach to foreign policy and reasserted Soviet security interests as the lodestar of that policy. Indeed, the Brezhnev era witnessed a reorientation of Soviet foreign policy, away from the revolutionary adventurism of the Khrushchev era and toward a more pragmatic calculus of Soviet security. This reflects the degree to which the Cuban adventure was the product of Khrushchev's mercurial adventurism. The Cuban missile crisis was the one glaring exception to the general trend of Soviet relations in Latin America, and would not have occurred absent the leadership of one unpredictable man. The outcome of the crisis led to a humiliating public defeat for

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411 U Thant, quoted in Bernard J. Firestone, *The United Nations under U Thant, 1961-1971* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2001), p. 16.
412 Quoted in Blight and Brenner, *Sad and Luminous Days*, p. 353.
413 Israelyan, *On the Battlefields of the Cold War*, p. 75.

the Soviets and a constituted a serious blow to Moscow's international prestige and its image in the Third World.

For Castro, meanwhile, the outcome of the missile crisis imparted an even greater urgency to the revolutionary struggle in the hemisphere. The cultivation of Third World allies became more important for Castro as he faced both U.S. hostility and the inadequacy of Soviet protection. Fomenting revolutionary movements in Latin American and Africa would also force the United States into the sort of imperial overstretch envisioned by Che Guevara when he called for "two, three, many Vietnams." Additionally, the internationalism of the revolution would boost Cuban morale, which had suffered a grave defeat in the missile crisis.[414] The Cuban leadership viewed its support for revolutionary movements in the Western Hemisphere as critical to Cuban national security, which was constantly threatened by real or imagined U.S. aggression. Though the Cubans had never toed the "peaceful coexistence" line, after the missile crisis they viewed it as a fundamental betrayal of Third World interests and shorthand for the imperialist collusion that had sold out the Cuban revolution.[415] That the Soviets and the Cubans drew such conflicting lessons from the missile crisis inevitably put them on a collision course.

PATHS TO POWER: THE SOURCES OF CUBAN-SOVIET ACRIMONY

As the Soviet-Cuban relationship developed, a massive effort was undertaken to improve Soviet knowledge of Latin America and to bolster Soviet influence in the hemisphere. In April 1961, right after the failed Bay of Pigs invasion, the Latin America

[414] Blight and Brenner, *Sad and Luminous Days*, p. 87.
[415] Ibid., p. 96.

Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences was created, though it was not until 1969 that the institute began regular publication of a journal, *Latinskaya Amerika*, devoted to Latin American issues. Anastas Mikoyan's son, Sergo Anastasovich, became the first chief editor of the journal.[416] The Soviet Foreign Ministry created a new department for Latin American affairs, which reported to the Central Committee on developments in the Western Hemisphere, and the KGB also formed a separate department for Latin America. According to Nikolai Leonov, the Cuban Revolution "forced a re-evaluation of the entire continent, which had traditionally occupied the lowest position in the hierarchy of Soviet foreign policy."[417]

The Cuban revolution shattered the Soviet theory of "geographical fatalism," which held that the proximity of Latin American countries to the United States, and their economic dependence on the United States, would prevent the region from turning to socialism. In the words of one Soviet scholar, the Cuban revolution heralded the entrance "of all Latin America into the arena of active struggle against imperialism."[418] Throughout 1959, Soviet publications urged a greater role for the Cuban communist party in the revolution, and stressed that the interim government could not be considered revolutionary.[419] However, with the radicalization of the revolution in 1960, the Soviets changed their tune. Satisfied with Castro's domestic reforms, anti-U.S. foreign policy, and appointment of orthodox communists to leadership positions, the Soviets embarked upon a process of doctrinal modification that sought to reconcile Cuba's experience with Marxist-Leninist dogma. At first, this entailed the creation of the "national democratic

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[416] Leonov, *Likholet'e*, p. 55.
[417] Ibid., p. 60.
[418] Lévesque, *The USSR and the Cuban Revolution*, p. 69.
[419] Ibid., pp. 51-52.

state," which was held to be superior to non-socialist states and undergoing a transition to socialism. Significantly, the national democratic state was not required to be under the leadership of the communist party.[420] Later, this concept was modified to include "revolutionary democracies," of which Cuba was the exemplar.

According to one scholar, this new theoretical approach "nourished and supported a particularly dynamic phase of Soviet foreign policy." This is because the Soviets tacitly recognized that the revolutionary vanguard in Third World countries was not always composed of orthodox communists, and therefore revolutionary allies should be supported regardless of their adherence to the principles of Marxism-Leninism.[421] Nikolai Leonov has suggested that the Cuban Revolution proved correct those Soviet officials who had argued that the growth of the movement for national liberation in the Third World could be interpreted as a "reserve of the international communist movement, headed by communist and workers' parties."[422] The Cuban Revolution strengthened the influence of this faction, as was evidenced by the doctrinal modifications that emerged to buttress a more active Soviet approach to the Third World. In December 1963, an article in *Pravda* allowed that the previously denounced "petit-bourgeois" nationalists could play a "positive role."[423] The article was followed by a statement from Khrushchev himself, acknowledging that "there is no universal recipe suitable for all countries," and applauding the actions of "revolutionary-democratic statesmen."[424] Thus, this shift in Soviet doctrine jettisoned the old orthodoxy in favor of a more flexible approach. It is important to note, moreover, that these theoretical shifts did not precede, but followed

[420] Ibid., p. 55.
[421] Ibid., p. 67.
[422] Leonov, *Likholet'e*, p. 48.
[423] Nogee and Donaldson, *Soviet Foreign Policy*, p. 170.
[424] Ibid.

Soviet policy toward Cuba, suggesting that ideological considerations were not the primary determinant of Soviet policy.

Moreover, such doctrinal modifications were driven by a desire to maintain credibility and relevance in a region that had been radicalized by the Cuban revolution and the Chinese ideological "heresy." Prior to the Cuban revolution, a vast array of leftist political parties enjoyed legal status in Latin America. In addition to the Moscow-oriented parties, which were subject to CPSU discipline, there were a number of socialist parties that lacked international connections, as well as a variety of Trotskyite factions. The non-Marxist parties of the left included secular groups like Peru's APRA, Venezuela's Acción Democrática, and Mexico's ruling PRI, as well as Christian Democratic parties, like that existing in Chile. In the aftermath of the Cuban revolution, some of these parties embraced *fidelismo*, a loyalty to Fidel Castro's revolutionary goals and methods. Even those parties that did not elevate the Cuban revolution as a model stood to gain from its popularity by emulating Castro's anti-Yankee posture.[425] The advent of *fidelismo* as a model for Latin American progressives catalyzed a fierce competition between the various reformist parties for the loyalties of Latin America's peasants and urban proletariat. At the same time, the Cuban revolution had an ambiguous impact on the region's orthodox communist parties, which came to be identified with the status quo due to their fidelity to the Moscow party line emphasizing gradualism and rejecting violent insurrection. Some of Latin America's communists became impatient with this emphasis on incremental change and abandoned the communist parties to found *fidelista* groups that championed guerrilla warfare. The Cuban revolution thus intensified

[425] Thomas C. Wright, *Latin America in the Era of the Cuban Revolution* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001), p. 51.

the ferment among the Latin American left and contributed to its splintering and factionalism. This fragmentation would intensify further with the emergence of the Sino-Soviet split, which led to the creation of Chinese-oriented radical groups. Even in countries like Venezuela and Chile, where the democratic left held power, frustration mounted at the pace of reform efforts, which seemed glacial compared to the rapid and far-reaching transformations underway in Cuba.[426]

Castro's support for revolutionary movements in Latin America had been a source of tension in the Cuban-Soviet relationship even before the missile crisis. Such support directly contradicted the CPSU line, which asserted that peaceful coexistence did not preclude socialist revolution, and that the best way to achieve the latter was through the concerted efforts of regional communist parties. On May 23, 1963, Castro and Khrushchev worked out a theoretical compromise on the issue of armed struggle. A joint communiqué stated that "the question of the peaceful or non-peaceful road to socialism in one country or another will be definitely decided by the struggling peoples themselves."[427] This theoretical shift was interpreted by orthodox communist parties as a confirmation of their non-violent tactics, but Castro seems to have interpreted it as an endorsement of revolutionary violence, because the next year he was back to trumpeting the "inevitability" of the armed struggle.[428]

In the fall of 1963, Che Guevara's primer on guerrilla warfare was published. The piece was a slap in the face to the Soviet rejection of the violent path to communism, and argued for "the necessity of guerrilla action in Latin America as the central axis of the

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[426] Ibid., pp. 52-53.
[427] D. Bruce Jackson, *Castro, the Kremlin, and Communism in Latin America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969), p. 21.
[428] Ibid., p. 22.

struggle."[429] Alluding to the inevitability of the armed struggle, Che asserted that "all the immense territories this continent embraces are destined to be the scene of the struggle to the death against imperialist power."[430] Then, in a speech in November, Che called for the Cuban people to demonstrate solidarity with the people of Vietnam, not out of an altruistic sense of "proletarian internationalism," but because Vietnam was "the great laboratory of Yankee imperialism," where the troops "are being trained…that one day will be able to defeat our guerrillas – ours in all America."[431] The South Vietnamese were Cuba's "brothers in battle…and even more, our allies, as front-line soldiers in the front trenches of the world proletariat against imperialism."[432] While Che's view was clearly a Manichean one, pitting the forces of colonialism and imperialism against the righteous struggles of the mythical "people," this speech can also be read as a tacit rebuke to the Soviet Union, which in the minds of the more radical Cuban leaders, was not doing enough to support its socialist brethren in the Third World.

By 1964, Cuban support for armed guerrilla movements in the hemisphere had become a major source of tension in the Soviet-Cuban alliance. The Soviets, for their part, were frustrated with Castro's revolutionary ambitions, as they tended to complicate relations with other Latin American countries and to impede efforts at détente with the United States.[433] Castro and other Cuban leaders did not shy away from harsh criticism of the Soviets, whom they deemed opportunistic and eager to pander to U.S. interests in the

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[429] Che Guevara, "Guerrilla Warfare: A Method," *Cuba Socialista*, No. 25, Sept. 1963, in *Venceremos! The Speeches and Writings of Ernesto Che Guevara*, edited by John Gerassi (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), p. 273.
[430] Ibid., p. 275.
[431] "On Solidarity with Vietnam," speech at the Ministry of Industry, November 20, 1963, in *Venceremos!*, p. 289.
[432] Ibid., p. 291.
[433] Piero Gleijeses, *The Cuban Drumbeat: Castro's Worldview: Cuban Foreign Policy in a Hostile World* (London: Seagull Books, 2009), p. 12.

desire to mitigate hostilities between the Cold War superpowers. The Cubans also criticized the Soviets for being too stingy in their aid to Third World countries and not doing enough to help their struggling Third World allies – not just Cuba, but North Korea and North Vietnam as well.[434]

The November 1964 conference of Latin American communist parties was held in Havana, symbolizing Cuban leadership of the region's communists. Moscow availed itself of the opportunity to assail the Chinese and to undermine their influence. Only doctrinaire communists loyal to the CPSU party line were invited; the Chinese communist party did not even bother to send observers.[435] The final communiqué issued by the conference exhorted Latin American revolutionaries to strengthen the "unity of the international communist movement," which can be read as a statement of support for the USSR in its dispute with the Chinese, who had been urging Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries to break away from the so-called "revisionists."[436] A compromise was reached on the issue of armed struggle, which was approved in the case of six countries. The communist parties would support the "freedom fighters" of Colombia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Paraguay, and Venezuela, while the parties of the other countries would continue to support peaceful means.[437] According to the German Democratic Republic's embassy in Havana, Castro was subjected to criticism by the communist parties for his revolutionary adventurism in the hemisphere, which had created difficulties for what was considered the more legitimate work of the parties. Embassy analysts suggested that

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[434] Ibid., p. 14.
[435] Jackson, *Castro, the Kremlin, and Communism*, p. 28. See also Appendix A in William E. Ratliff, *Castroism and Communism in Latin America, 1959-1976: The Varieties of Marxist-Leninist Experience* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1976), p. 195.
[436] Ratliff, p. 19.
[437] Lévesque, *The USSR and the Cuban Revolution*, p. 103.

Castro's speech on January 2, 1965, which was focused on the liberation movements of Asia and Africa, heralded a new course for Cuban foreign policy. "This is the first time," the embassy noted, "that in a speech of this importance Latin American problems were not accorded special treatment." Embassy officials observed that since the conference, Castro had "kept some distance from the Latin American liberation struggle," and predicted that he would "compensate for this through a strong focus on Africa."[438]

For Castro, revolutionary adventurism in Africa ultimately proved more feasible than in Latin America. In the U.S. "backyard," the Cubans faced the awesome power of the United States, which had decisively demonstrated its intolerance of Cuba's support for armed guerrilla movements in the Western Hemisphere. Moreover, by the mid-1960s, many of the region's dictators had fallen, and to support guerrilla movements struggling against legitimately elected governments was to transgress international legal conventions.[439] In contrast, the revolutionary struggle in Africa was against colonial power structures reluctant to loosen their grip on fledgling independent states. Moreover, whereas many Latin American countries had well-organized communist parties, most countries of Africa did not. Although for years diplomats and scholars assumed that Castro was acting at the Kremlin's behest in Africa, in fact it was the Cubans who spearheaded the initiative, sometimes in the face of Soviet opposition. Paradoxically, Moscow's provision of military and economic aid to revolutionary Cuba helped create the circumstances under which Castro was able to act independently.[440] Though Castro frequently told the Soviets what they wanted to hear, he was never a pawn of the Kremlin, nor were the Cubans ever particularly compliant with Moscow's wishes when

[438] Report prepared by GDR embassy in Havana, quoted in Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 29.
[439] Gleijeses, *Cuban Drumbeat*, p. 17.
[440] Ibid., pp. 71-72. See also Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*.

those wishes were in direct conflict with their own. At least one author has pointed out the irony of Cuba competing with the Soviet Union in Africa, while relying on Soviet aid.[441] Without Soviet military and economic assistance, the Cubans would not have been able to provide support to revolutionary groups in Africa. Cuba was thus simultaneously a vehicle for enhancing Soviet prestige in the Third World and a competitor for influence.

Despite the emphasis on Africa, the Cubans had not given up on the Western Hemisphere, and Castro and Che Guevara amplified efforts to foment revolutions in South America. These efforts were bound to create tensions in the Cuban relationship with the USSR, which was attempting to establish and strengthen ties with the regimes the Cubans were attempting to overthrow.[442] Such efforts, moreover, were bound to incur the wrath of the United States, which had shown through its support of the 1964 Brazilian coup and its invasion of the Dominican Republic the following year that it would not tolerate the rise to power of leftist revolutionary governments in the hemisphere. The Pentagon had also adopted a counterinsurgency program designed to stamp out the spreading influence of *fidelista* and other Marxist-inspired guerrilla groups. Che's call for "two, three…many Vietnams" reflected his conviction that U.S. imperialism could be stretched to a breaking point.[443] Arrayed against Che's ambitions, however, was not just the might of the juggernaut of the North, but the rancor and acrimony that characterized relations between the panoply of leftist-oriented groups. The ideological and theoretical hair-splitting that distinguished the *fidelistas* from the Maoists from the pro-Soviet factions prevented the level of unity and cooperation that would have been necessary for

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[441] Henry Butterfield Ryan, *The Fall of Che Guevara: A Story of Soldiers, Spies, and Diplomats* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 27.
[442] See Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, pp. 217-218.
[443] Quoted in Wright, *Latin America in the Era of the Cuban Revolution*, p. 81.

effective action. Che's attempts to establish a rural foco in Bolivia were hindered by the complete lack of peasant support for his operation and by the squabbling among the Bolivian leftist groups.[444] Mario Monje, the leader of Bolivia's communist party, waxed and waned in his support of the foco, but the tensions between the two leaders were such that some still believe that it was Monje who sold out Guevara to the Bolivian military.[445]

By 1965, Castro was generally disappointed with Soviet foreign policy, but he was especially unhappy about the weak Soviet response to the U.S. invasion and occupation of the Dominican Republic. The United States had also intensified its bombing campaign in North Vietnam, and Castro was distressed by the Soviet inability or unwillingness to respond proportionately to this aggression.[446]

In February 1966, the First Afro-Asian-Latin American Peoples' Solidarity Organization (OSPAAAL) convened its first summit, also known as the Tricontinental Conference, in Havana. The idea for the conference had germinated at prior meetings of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization (AAPSO), which had held its third meeting in Moshi, Tanganyika in February 1963. Approximately four hundred delegates from Africa and Asia, as well as several Latin American observers, had attended the conference, where a resolution was reached to "firmly support the struggle of the Latin American peoples against imperialism, colonialism, and neocolonialism." The Cubans were singled out for special attention, as they were "fighting against the military aggressions and the economic blockade of the imperialists." The fourth AAPSO conference was held in Accra, Ghana in May 1965, where the delegates devoted special

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[444] Ibid., p. 86.
[445] Apparently, Che's widow, Aleida March, holds Monje responsible. See Anderson, *Che*, p. 705.
[446] Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution*, p. 70.

attention to Latin America and determined to convene the first Afro-Asian-Latin American Peoples' Solidarity Conference in Havana the following year.[447]

The introduction to the conference proceedings clearly stated that the historic contribution of the conference was to unite "the two great contemporary currents of the World Revolution" – the socialist revolution spearheaded by the USSR and the "parallel current of the revolution for national liberation." It was noted as especially appropriate that the meeting place was in Havana, because the Cuban Revolution was "in effect the concretisation [sic] of the union of these two historic currents."[448] Cuba was thus recognized as the tangible link between the socialist bloc and the Third World. The text of the conference reflected the strong influence of the Cuban delegation, with repeated references to the machinations of Yankee imperialism and a description of the Organization of American States as the "Yankee Ministry of the Colonies."[449] "Yankee imperialism," as the "fortress of colonialism and neo-colonialism," represented the "greatest enemy of world peace" and constituted "public enemy number one of all the peoples of the world."[450] The only references to the Soviet Union in the conference proceedings and declarations were laudatory, praising the Russian Revolution and crediting the socialist bloc with providing crucial support to Third World national liberation movements.

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[447] "The First Tricontinental Conference, another threat to the security of the inter-American system," A study prepared by the Special Consultative Committee on Security at its Sixth Regular Meeting, April 2, 1966, pp. 11-13.
[448] Introduction, *First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America* (Havana: General Secretariat of OSPAAAL, 1966).
[449] "Antecedents and Objectives of the Movement of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America," in ibid., p. 10.
[450] Ibid., p. 26.

The Tricontinental Conference took place during a period of heightened Sino-Cuban conflict, and Castro's opening remarks were explicit criticisms of the Chinese leadership.[451] Soviet aims for the conference were to enhance Cuba's prestige in the Third World while undermining China's.[452] Yet the Cubans continued to promote armed struggle as the only viable path to socialism and to make statements that were implicitly critical of the Soviets. Che Guevara sent a message to the conference, which was published as a pamphlet by the Executive Secretariat of the OSPAAAL. His message focused on the plight of the Vietnamese people, whom he characterized as "forgotten" and "tragically alone." This can be read as a tacit rebuke of the USSR, which Che had criticized sharply for not providing enough aid to the struggling Vietnamese "brothers." Indeed, in a more direct critique, Che blamed not only "U.S. imperialism," but "those who…hesitated to make Vietnam an inviolable part of the socialist world."[453] In another dig at the Soviets, Che argued that "we cannot harbor any illusions…that freedom can be obtained without fighting."[454] Che also blasted the Organization of American States, which he described as a "suitable mask" for U.S. aggression, and lamented the U.N. as "ridiculous as well as tragic."[455] He characterized the Cuban revolution as the "voice of the vanguard," and argued that its role was now "creating a Second or a Third Vietnam, or the Second *and* Third Vietnam of the world."[456] The text of the conference, moreover, made repeated assertions of the necessity of the armed struggle. Insisting that the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America "must answer imperialist violence with revolutionary

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[451] Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution*, p. 69.
[452] Lévesque, *The USSR and the Cuban Revolution*, p. 116.
[453] Ernesto Che Guevara, "Message to the Tricontinental," in Gerassi, ed. *Venceremos!* p. 415.
[454] Ibid., p. 421.
[455] Ibid., p. 417.
[456] Ibid., p. 420. Emphasis in the original.

violence," the conference asserted that "the effective channel to reach victory is armed insurrection."[457]

The Special Consultative Committee of the Organization of American States prepared a report on the conference, which was characterized as "another threat to the security of the inter-American system." The report reprimanded "the reluctance of many governments to adopt coordinated and joint measures to counteract subversion," and bemoaned the lack of solidarity among democratic and reformist governments of the hemisphere.[458] The "true and alarming significance" of the conference, concluded the committee, was the "scope and nature of the participation of official or nonofficial groups representing Africa, Asia, and Latin America, which for the first time met openly and ostentatiously to discuss their experiences with subversion and to establish coordinated and joint plans for carrying it out."[459] That the committee described the danger in terms of "Russo-Chinese communism" and averred that the conference sought to "display…to observers…the result of a true doctrinal unity," suggests an inadequate awareness of the ideological disputes that had riven the communist bloc.[460]

Though the Soviet delegation to the conference was one of the largest, the aims of the conference – "to incite the revolutionary struggle" and "to encourage a program of support for the…'national liberation movements'" – flew in the face of Moscow's continued adherence to the "peaceful path."[461] And although the head of the Soviet delegation, Sharaf P. Rashidov, delivered an address claiming that "the Soviet people

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[457] "Antecedents and Objectives of the Movement of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America," in *First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America*, p. 22.
[458] "The First Tricontinental Conference, another threat to the security of the inter-American system," p. 3.
[459] Ibid., p. 4.
[460] Ibid., p. 5.
[461] Ibid., p. 25.

have always supported…the armed struggle of the oppressed peoples," such claims were clearly aimed at masking the doctrinal disagreements between the Soviets, Cubans, and Chinese.[462] Rashidov's contention that "the Soviet Union is supplying the fraternal people of Viet Nam with the most modern weapons for meeting U.S. aggression," had an air of defensiveness about it, considering the criticisms that the Cubans and Chinese had lobbed at the Russians concerning the latter's deficiency of support to the Vietnamese.[463] Rashidov's declaration that "by its might the Soviet Union is keeping in check the main forces of the imperialist powers," and that "the Soviet people highly value the revolutionary support that the progressive forces in…Asia and in the countries of Africa and Latin America have been rendering them for many decades," suggests that the Soviets saw no contradiction between the doctrine of peaceful coexistence and support for Third World revolutionary movements.[464]

Osmany Cienfuegos, a member of the Cuban delegation, gave a speech in which he declared the "the duty of every revolutionary is to make revolution." In the face of calls for Third World and Latin American solidarity, Cienfuegos argued that it was necessary to "give solidarity…a militant content."[465] Cienfuegos was implicitly arguing that in the absence of armed insurrection, rhetorical calls for revolutionary solidarity were meaningless. Castro repeated this theme, pointing out that "in many other nations of America there are ample conditions for armed revolutionary struggle," and arguing that "the duty of every revolutionary is to carry out the revolution…not with words but with deeds." "Sooner or later," Castro averred, "the peoples will have to fight, arms in hand,

[462] Ibid., pp. 26-27.
[463] Ibid., p. 27.
[464] Ibid., pp. 28-29.
[465] Ibid., p. 32.

for their liberation."[466] He went on assert his belief that "on this continent…the struggle will assume more violent forms."[467] This can be read an implicit rebuke of the Soviets, whose "bureaucratism" and paper-pushing were seen as a failure of revolutionary vision.

Despite ample evidence of the tension that continued to plague the communist bloc over the appropriate means of waging socialist revolution, the special consultative committee of the OAS read the delegates' statements as "evidence of a true doctrinal unity" and "conformity" within the movement.[468] The committee also viewed the proceedings of the conference as "solidifying…Soviet support for the Cuban revolution, and, by extension, firm support to any other American country that follows Cuba's example."[469] Though the committee clearly recognized the disagreement between the USSR and the PRC regarding the appropriate path to revolution, it did not detect in the statements of the various delegates any evidence of this disagreement, but interpreted the proceedings as a triumph for both the Soviet Union, "because it was held in Cuba and with substantial participation by affiliated Latin American delegations," and "Communist China, since its violent method for implanting communism…was adopted."[470] Despite recognizing the existence of the Sino-Soviet split, the consultative committee observed that at the Tricontinental Conference, "the Russians and the Chinese coincided in their general points of view, and there were no reports of any great friction between the two

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[466] Speech Delivered by Major Fidel Castro Ruz, Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government and First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba, in the Closing Session, *First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America*, pp. 169-170.
[467] Ibid, p. 170.
[468] "The First Tricontinental Conference, another threat to the security of the inter-American system,", p. 35.
[469] Ibid., p. 36.
[470] Ibid., pp. 36-37.

delegations."[471] This may be true but it represented Russian efforts to disguise hostilities between the two camps rather than a genuine coincidence of views. The committee concluded that the Soviets, "in order to continue to exercise the leadership that was disputed by the Chinese…is accepting the Chinese policy of violent revolution along with its own theory of 'coexistence.'" Moreover, the committee recognized that the two tendencies were in conflict, and that "in order to exercise its [Soviet] hegemony over the American communist parties, it will use Fidel Castro as an instrument to apply the revolutionary technique in the Americas."[472]

The conference also adopted a resolution condemning the Organization of American States, averring that the OAS "has no juridical or moral authority whatsoever to represent the Latin American continent," and that the "only Organization able to represent Latin America will be the one created by the democratic and anti-imperialist governments born from the free will of the peoples of Latin America."[473] This can be read as a tacit challenge to the democratic and reformist regimes of the hemisphere, including that of Raúl Leoni, who had succeeded Rómulo Betancourt, the "Father of Venezuelan Democracy." In case the message was insufficiently clear, it was further resolved "to lend the most determined assistance to the revolutionary movements in Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Panama, Ecuador and other Caribbean and South American countries."[474] According to Castro, any Latin American government that adhered to the principles of the inter-American system – principles that were designed as a mere

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[471] Ibid., p. 56.
[472] Ibid., pp. 56-57.
[473] "Resolution on the OAS," in *First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America*, pp. 71-72.
[474] "Resolution on Aid to the Revolutionary Struggle of the Peoples of Colombia, Venezuela, and Peru," in ibid., pp. 104-105.

smokescreen for Yankee imperialism – was by definition a puppet government serving the ends of U.S. monopolies and local oligarchs. Such a view did not reject the concept of hemispheric solidarity, but rather advanced a countervailing version of it.

Another significant outcome of the Tricontinental Conference was the establishment of the Latin American Solidarity Organization (OLAS), which was to be permanently headquartered in Havana. The special consultative committee of the OAS located "the tremendous significance of the event" in "the fact that it is no longer Cuba on its own initiative that proposes to export its 'revolution'…but Russia that makes common cause with the 'revolutionary movements' and promises determined support to the 'popular liberation movements' that follow the example of Cuba."[475] Despite the statements of the Russian delegate, which sought to paper over differences between the CPSU line and those of the Cubans and Chinese, the Soviets were not ready to abandon the doctrinal emphasis on the peaceful path.

The special consultative committee concluded that the Tricontinental Conference represented "the most direct and open threat to the inter-American system that has so far been presented," and recommended the immediate launch of "an intensive, coordinated, constant, and organized propaganda campaign in favor of democracy." In order to "put a stop to the dangers of communist subversion while there is time," the committee urged the coordination of the security and intelligence activities of the American governments.[476] Eighteen permanent Latin American representatives to the United Nations set forth their complaints in a letter to U.N. Secretary General U Thant, to which the Soviets made an immediate formal reply. The Latin American reaction to the

[475] "The First Tricontinental Conference, another threat to the security of the inter-American system," p.55.
[476] Ibid., p. 69.

conference may have been a factor in the subsequent shift in the Soviet approach to the region, which would focus on expanding and strengthening traditional state-to-state ties.[477]

The Soviet foreign policy shift away from an emphasis on communist party ties and towards a more traditional diplomatic approach may have been a response to Fidel Castro's personal opposition to much of the Western Hemisphere's orthodox communist leadership. On July 26, 1966, Castro delivered a speech excoriating Latin American communist parties as the "most important allies of imperialism in Latin America." Then, in a speech on August 29, he unequivocally declared that "the revolutionaries" would wage revolution in Latin America, "with or without [communist] parties."[478]

In August, the Soviet Foreign Ministry prepared a report on the U.S. government's "aggressive actions" against Cuba, which involved a propaganda campaign aimed at discrediting the Tricontinental. Secretary of State Dean Rusk had informed Congress that the Havana conference "reflects the strengthening of terrorist and subversive activity."[479] The report also took note of a special investigation into the conference by the Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security. On June 7, the subcommittee published a report in which "international communism" was accused of meddling in the internal affairs of states and Havana was identified as "the headquarters of subversive and partisan operations on a global scale."[480] On May 27, Cuban president Dorticós had received the ambassadors of several socialist countries and informed them that the Cuban government considered U.S. actions and statements to be "a provocation

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[477] Ratliff, *Castroism and Communism in Latin America*, pp. 9-10.
[478] Quoted in Jackson, *Castro, the Kremlin, and Communism in Latin America*, p. 107.
[479] August 23, 1966. Briefing on U.S. Aggressive Actions in Relation to Cuba – USA Department of Soviet Foreign Ministry. AVPRF, Fond 104, opis' 21, papka 17, delo 14, p. 11.
[480] Ibid., p. 12.

and a psychological preparation for armed aggression against Cuba."[481] Dorticós also informed his guests that the Cuban government was "ready to receive volunteers from brotherly countries that had evinced a willingness to render aid to Cuba in connection with the threats of aggression from the U.S.A."[482] The CIA was readying its mercenaries among the Cuban émigré community in Miami. Troops were being trained in Nicaragua as well.[483]

The Soviet Foreign Ministry also reported on the successful use by the United States of the OAS to further its anti-Castro agenda. The OAS had essentially been used as a mechanism to pressure the countries of the Western Hemisphere into isolating Cuba. The U.S. campaign bore fruit. Mexico alone refused to sever diplomatic relations with Cuba. The report also warned that the United States was likely to use the Organization of Central American States (ODECA) as a tool for implementing military actions directed against the Castro regime. These actions would undoubtedly include "the training of Central American defense councils, the formation and preparation of Central American armed forces, and joint military maneuvers." Finally, it should be expected that the United States would continue to push for the creation of "permanent armed forces," under the auspices of the OAS, to use as a "tool in the struggle against the national liberation movement in Latin America."[484] This was possibly a reflection of Cuban fears and hostilities surrounding the creation of the Inter-American Peace Force and its deployment in the Dominican Republic the previous year. The Tricontinental had issued a resolution "condemning the so-called Inter-American Peace Force" as "the armed counter-

[481] Ibid., pp. 13-14.
[482] Ibid., p. 14.
[483] Ibid., p. 15.
[484] Ibid., p. 16.

revolution of Yankee imperialism," which, through the "participation of the Latin American puppet troops," was "disguised as Latin American."[485] Such a perspective clearly failed to ascribe even a modicum of agency or independent thought to Castro's centrist and right-wing opposition in the hemisphere. Nevertheless, the prominence of the issue in the Soviet Foreign Ministry report suggests that to a significant extent, Cuban fears and preoccupations remained central to Soviet perceptions of U.S.-Latin American relations.

On January 24, 1967, Castro and Dorticós penned a letter to Brezhnev, Nikolai Podgorny, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and Alexei Kosygin, chairman of the Council of Ministers. The letter essentially affirmed the loyalty of Cuba to the Soviet Union, assuring the Soviet leaders that the "friendship and cooperation between our peoples will continue to strengthen in the joint struggle against the reactionary and exploitative forces oppressing the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America."[486] Dorticós and Castro expressed their strong desire for "the unity of all progressive and revolutionary forces of the world in their struggle for the utter annihilation of U.S. imperialism," and for the "definitive victory of the communist and socialist cause."[487] Such a statement seems clearly aimed at reassuring the Soviets of Cuban friendship in the face of the harshly critical statements made regarding the USSR's revolutionary zeal (or lack thereof). Nevertheless, two months later, on March 13, Castro vehemently denied that Cuba was a Soviet "satellite," and proclaimed that he would "never ask anyone's

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[485] "Resolution Condemning the So-Called Inter-American Peace Force and the Governments that Support It," in *First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America*, pp. 69-70.
[486] Telegram to Comrade Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Comrade Podgorny, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, and Comrade Kosygin, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, from Osvaldo Dorticós and Fidel Castro, January 24, 1967. AVPRF, Fond 104, opis' 22, papka 18, delo 9, p. 1.
[487] Ibid.

permission…be it in ideology or in domestic or foreign affairs." He even expounded upon the real meaning of communism, arguing that in the context of the Western Hemisphere, "what defines a communist is…action in the armed revolutionary movement."[488] Clearly, Castro recognized that his reliance on Soviet largesse contributed to the labeling of Cuba as "Soviet satellite." Yet he chafed under that label and the circumscribed independence of action it implied; seeking through reassurances to the Soviets to keep the aid flowing, Castro reiterated for international audiences Cuba's independent orientation.

The first meeting of the Latin American Solidarity Organization (OLAS), which emerged from the Tricontinental Conference, was held in Havana in August 1967. The Cubans envisioned the conference as an opportunity for the revolutionary movements of the hemisphere to "strengthen their solidarity and renew for the benefit of world public opinion the accusations against the growing American imperialist domination of Latin America and the complicity of the native oligarchies in this repression."[489] Just as the Cubans were preparing for the opening of the conference, Soviet premier Alexei Kosygin paid them a visit to issue a warning about the possibility that Soviet aid could dry up if Castro's regime remained adamant about the armed struggle and continued to provide support for violent revolutionary movements in Latin America.[490] Apparently, Kosygin's visit did not yield the anticipated results. Castro used the conference to snub the Soviets, by ensuring that most delegations were headed by non-communist revolutionary leaders,

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[488] Quoted in Jackson, *Castro, the Kremlin, and Communism in Latin America*, p. 114.
[489] Text of questionnaire prepared by OLAS Organizing Committee, reprinted in "The First Conference of the Latin American Solidarity Organization, July 28-August 5, 1967," A Staff Study Prepared for the Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and other International Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary of the United States Senate (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 28.
[490] Gott, *Cuba: A New History*, pp. 232-233.

and by issuing provocative statements that were clearly aimed at Moscow. Arguing that "there is a much broader movement on this continent than the movement composed simply of the communist parties in Latin America," Castro defiantly declared that "we shall judge the conduct of organizations, not by what they claim they are, but by what they prove to be, what they do, their conduct." He seemed to be sending the message that Soviet "revisionism" would be judged accordingly, and that the communist parties of Latin America would not be considered truly revolutionary if they continued to oppose the armed struggle in favor of the electoral path to power.

In case that message was too subtle, Castro clarified his meaning. "There are some," he intoned, "who wonder whether there may be a case in one of the Latin American countries where one can come to power without armed struggle." In response to "those who really believe that peaceful transition is possible in some country of this continent," Castro had nothing but contempt. "We do not understand what peaceful transition they are talking about," he continued, "other than a peaceful transition in agreement with imperialism." In response to those who claimed that socialism could be achieved peacefully, Castro retorted, "This is a lie, and those who say in any place in Latin America that they are going to achieve power peacefully will be deceiving the masses."[491] The twenty-point proclamation issued by the conference declared that "the armed revolutionary struggle constitutes the fundamental course of the Revolution in Latin America," and that "all other forms of struggle must serve to advance and not to retard the development of this fundamental course, which is armed struggle."[492]

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[491] Fidel Castro Speech at LASO Closing Session, August 11, 1967. Castro Speech Database, Permanent URL: http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1967/19670811.html
[492] Ratliff, p. 206.

U.S. officials took note of the conference, and especially the participation of Stokely Carmichael, a radical activist, whose statements at the conference provoked the ire of Washington. Carmichael informed audiences in Havana that "we are moving toward guerrilla warfare within the United States since there is no other way to obtain our homes, our lands, and our rights." In a message of solidarity with Che Guevara, Carmichael also proclaimed that "when the U.S. has fifty Vietnams inside and fifty outside that will mean the death of imperialism."[493] The Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary of the U.S. Senate prepared an investigatory report on the conference. Though the report was mostly composed of factual information about the conference, including biographical sketches of the various delegates, in the brief analysis of the conference proceedings, the subcommittee failed to identify the conflict between the Cubans and the Soviets.[494]

The Soviets, for their part, were not happy about this turn of events. The USSR had hoped to use Cuba to raise its prestige and increase its influence in Latin American and the Third World, and had provided generous subsidies to the Cuban revolution. Now Castro was blatantly rejecting the idea of solidarity with the Latin American communist parties and developing his own international organization, thereby discrediting the Soviet Union among the non-communist revolutionary movements in Latin America and the Third World.[495] OLAS did not last long, however, but was folded into the Organization for Solidarity with the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (OSPAAAL).

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[493] Stokely Carmichael, quoted in Ryan, *Death of Che Guevara*, p. 111.
[494] "The First Conference of the Latin American Solidarity Organization, July 28-August 5, 1967," Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and other International Security Laws of the U.S. Senate.
[495] Lévesque, *The USSR and the Cuban Revolution*, p. 132.

Moreover, though the OLAS conference had provided a venue for Castro to criticize the Soviets, subsequent events ultimately served to mitigate tensions in the Cuban-Soviet relationship.

THE DEATH OF CHE AND CUBAN-SOVIET RAPPROCHEMENT

Che Guevara's attempts to establish a foco in Bolivia, from which it was hoped that the revolutionary struggle would spread throughout South America, was a major source of tension in the Cuban-Soviet relationship. Apparently, Fidel Castro had sent Che to Bolivia without consulting the Soviets, and his decision was frowned upon in the Kremlin. Sending Che to Bolivia flew in the face of Soviet attempts at détente, and made "peaceful coexistence" with the West more difficult. Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin met with U.S. President Lyndon Johnson in New Jersey in June 1967, and apparently an exchange of acrimonious letters between Brezhnev and Castro had prompted Kosygin to visit Havana on the eve of the OLAS conference before returning to Moscow.[496] Though Kosygin's efforts to bring Castro to heel were apparently unsuccessful, the failure of Che's mission in Bolivia catalyzed the rapprochement between Cuba and the USSR.

Che's attempts to establish a foco in Bolivia ultimately came to naught, and there were several reasons for this failure. He was thoroughly unprepared for the level of acrimony between himself and Mario Monje, the secretary general of Bolivia's communist party. The tension between Monje and Guevara reflected the broader doctrinal dispute between radical revolutionaries and orthodox pro-Soviet communist parties over the proper source of leadership for the revolution. For orthodox communists like Monje, the army was a tool to be controlled by the party, whereas for Che, the idea

[496] Ryan, *Death of Che Guevara*, p. 62.

of subordinating his military leadership to the political leadership of the party was anathema.[497] For Monje to accept Che's leadership of the Bolivian struggle would entail revising his entire theoretical approach and sacrificing party leadership of the struggle to a ragtag band of foreign guerrillas. In addition to their failure to account for the opposition of orthodox communists, Castro and Guevara also underestimated the strength of Bolivian nationalism. The widespread lack of support for revolution among the Bolivian peasantry was a reality check for the Cubans, who had posited their own revolutionary experience as the model for the rest of Latin America. They failed to consider that conditions in rural Bolivia were far from what they had been in 1950s Cuba.[498]

Moreover, Che had been an even more vehement critic of Soviet policies than Castro. In March 1964, he delivered a speech to the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), in which he chided the socialist bloc for the terms of trade offered to under-developed countries. The creation of the UNCTAD was proposed at the 1961 summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade and was envisioned as a platform for the presentation of Third World demands. The Group of 77, which was initially comprised of seventy-seven underdeveloped states, was created at UNCTAD, with the purpose of forming a bloc within the United Nations to represent the interests of the Third World within that organization. Guevara used UNCTAD to condemn trade discrimination against under-developed countries. Observing that "the socialist camp has developed uninterruptedly," he lamented that "in contrast to the rapid rate of growth of the…socialist camp…the unquestionable fact is that a large proportion of the so-called

[497] Ibid., p. 65.
[498] Ibid., pp. 156-157.

underdeveloped countries are in total stagnation."[499] Thus, he suggested that the socialist countries, with their highly developed industrial economies, had more in common with the capitalists than with the under-developed world. While absolving the socialist bloc of any responsibility for this situation, he argued that "in the case of trade relations with the socialist countries based on market prices, the latter will also benefit from this situation since they are, in general, exporters of manufactured goods and importers of raw materials."[500] Che was essentially castigating the Soviet bloc for participating in (and benefiting from) an exploitative system of international trade.

Then, in a speech at the U.N. in December, Che rejected the concept of détente and reiterated his support for violent revolution. In February 1965, at the second seminar of the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization (AAPSO), he openly censured the Soviet Union for not doing enough to support decolonizing countries. Arguing that the development of such countries was the responsibility of the socialist bloc, he implied that the USSR had eschewed its international obligations. The socialist countries, due to the terms of trade based on world market prices, were "accomplices of imperialist exploitation." Che argued that "the socialist countries have a moral duty to end their tacit complicity with the Western exploiting countries."[501]

Che's capture and execution by the Bolivian armed forces was virtually ignored in Moscow. The only public demonstration to commemorate Che's life was a rally by a small group of Latin American students from Moscow's Patrice Lumumba People's Friendship University. Soviet news media continued to sneer at the brand of

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[499] Ernesto Che Guevara, "Freedom of Competition or 'A free fox among free chickens'?" Address to the Geneva Trade and Development Conference, March 25, 1964. In *To Speak the Truth*, p. 103.
[500] Ibid., p. 109.
[501] Che Guevara, quoted in Smith, *Castro's Cuba: Soviet Partner or Nonaligned?*, p. 18.

revolutionary "adventurism" exemplified by Guevara, and a month after his execution, Brezhnev gave a speech in which he declared that socialist revolutions should only be launched in countries where the necessary objective conditions for revolution had already been fulfilled. The message was clearly about Che's failure in Bolivia. Orthodox communist parties in Latin America followed suit, issuing denunciations of armed struggle and declaring their loyalty to the CPSU line.[502]

The death of Che and the obliteration of the nascent Bolivian foco he had nurtured, combined with guerrilla defeats in Guatemala, Colombia, and Venezuela, contributed to an improvement in Cuba's relations with the USSR. Though Castro continued to aid revolutionary movements in the Western Hemisphere, he was more selective in determining which movements to support, and he toned down his fiery rhetoric about the inevitability of the armed struggle.[503]

In November 1967, Cuban Foreign Minister Raúl Roa sent a telegram to his Soviet counterpart, Andrei Gromyko, expressing his confidence that "friendly relations and mutual cooperation between Cuba and the USSR," along with the "support rendered to all peoples struggling for liberation," would remain an "important contribution in our struggle against imperialism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism."[504] Two weeks later, however, the Soviet embassy in Havana prepared a report on the reception by the Cuban press of the 50th anniversary of the "Great October Socialist Revolution."[505] The embassy drew the Foreign Ministry's attention to the fact that the Cubans were continuing to

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[502] Ryan, *Death of Che Guevara*, p. 164.
[503] See Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, pp. 220-221.
[504] Telegram to Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko from Cuban Foreign Minister Raul Roa Garcia, November 6, 1967. AVPRF, Fond 104, opis' 22, papka 18, delo 9, p. 27.
[505] Soviet embassy in the Republic of Cuba, November 21, 1967. Cuban press coverage of the 50th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution (press review). AVPRF, Fond 104, opis' 22, papka 18, delo 9, p. 30.

espouse the "armed path." The communist daily *Granma* had emphasized the significance of the "armed struggle against imperialists and exploiters."[506] The publication of Cuba's National Association of Small Farmers had also printed an article lauding the Bolshevik revolution, noting its significance for the peoples of Latin America, especially of Venezuela, Bolivia, and Colombia, where "with weapons in hand they battle against imperialism and the reactionary oligarchs for their freedom."[507] When it came down to it, virtually "all [press] materials" had focused on the "role and significance of the armed uprising in the fulfillment of the October revolution and accordingly, emphasized the importance and applicability of the armed struggle of the peoples of the modern era."[508] If the Soviets were looking for indications that Castro had moderated his stance in the aftermath of Che's capture and execution, such expressions were certainly not reassuring.

The Cultural Congress of Havana, held from January 4-12, 1968, provided the Soviets with further evidence that Castro had not moderated his position in the aftermath of Che's death. The Special Consultative Committee on Security of the Organization of American States prepared a report on the congress, which was characterized as "openly subversive," an attempt "to incite the underdeveloped countries…to violent revolution," and "an important landmark in the continued intervention of international communism in the Hemisphere," which constituted an "obvious threat to the democratic countries of the Americas."[509] The report "presumed that in view of the deterioration of Cuba's relations

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[506] Ibid.
[507] Ibid., p. 31.
[508] Ibid., pp. 32-33.
[509] "Cultural Congress of Havana," Study Prepared by the Special Consultative Committee on Security Against the Subversive Action of International Communism at its Tenth Regular Meeting (Washington, D.C.: General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, 1968), pp. 27-29.

with Russia, as well as the failure of armed subversion by guerrillas sponsored and supported by Castro," the Congress "would be the most appropriate means for him to recover his declining revolutionary prestige and to ensure the continued economic support of Russia."[510] Cuban President Dorticós delivered the inaugural address to the congress, in which he declared that "noble revolutionary violence had to play an inevitable and decisive role…in that climb of man to the summit of his true liberation."[511] The third committee of the congress, composed of delegates from Cuba, Argentina, Mali, and Portuguese Guinea, and tasked with "the responsibility of the intellectual regarding the problems of the underdeveloped world," resolved that "liberation…can be achieved only through a process of armed revolutionary struggle."[512] The fifth committee also issued a resolution declaring that "armed struggle is required as the principal means by which the revolutionary forces can carry out their historical tasks."[513]

Expressions of solidarity with the Vietnamese people were found in almost every congress document, speech, and statement. The General Declaration of the Cultural Congress of Havana asserted the "necessity" of "revolutionary violence," and expressed "militant solidarity with all the peoples in struggle and most especially with the people of Vietnam."[514] The "heroic example of Che" was naturally lauded.[515] In what can be read as a subtle dig at the Soviets for the inadequacy of their support to the Vietnamese, the Congress's Resolution on Vietnam exhorted "all peace and justice-loving individuals, peoples and governments to do everything in their power to…give the Vietnamese people

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[510] Ibid., p. 3.
[511] Dorticós, quoted in ibid., p. 14.
[512] Ibid., p. 17.
[513] Ibid.
[514] Ibid., pp. 22 & 24.
[515] Ibid., p. 25.

the utmost help in their titanic struggle against the most brutal aggressor ever known in history."[516]

Mere weeks after the Cultural Congress of Havana, Castro made another display of Cuban independence from the Soviets. Aníbal Escalante had returned to Cuba in 1964 after a brief exile in Czechoslovakia, and had resumed leadership duties in the Cuban communist party. In January 1968, behind closed doors, Fidel and Raúl Castro prosecuted the pro-Soviet "micro-faction" of the party, delivering a clear message to Moscow that it no longer had any communist allies in Havana with whom it could intrigue against Fidel.[517] The timing of the exposure of the microfaction coincided with the anniversary of José Martí's birthday, which was clearly symbolic of Cuban strivings toward national independence and sovereignty. The message seemed to be that Castro's government would not tolerate any threat to its sovereignty, even from its Soviet patron and ally.[518] Though the episode clearly boded ill for the Cuban-Soviet relationship, developments later in the year constituted a sort of about-face and Castro actively took measures to improve relations with his patrons in the Kremlin.

The turning point came with the crushing of the Prague Spring. Though Castro supported the Soviet invasion, he also tacitly chastised Moscow for its unwillingness to provide military support to the peoples of North Vietnam, North Korea, and to Cuba itself. Some have argued that Castro's speech in response to the crushing of the Prague Spring represented a decisive move into the Soviet foreign policy camp. Richard Gott has claimed that the speech proved that "Castro had drunk deeply at the well of Soviet

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[516] Resolution on Vietnam, presented by the Congress Bureau, ibid., p. 99.
[517] Blight and Brenner, pp. 135-137.
[518] Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution*, p. 75.

orthodoxy," and even that Castro had "surrendered to the Soviet empire."[519] The truth seems to be a bit more ambiguous. By refusing to condemn the Soviet invasion, Castro was signaling to the Soviets that he would support their foreign policy line. However, his speech was not a wholehearted endorsement of Soviet policy; indeed, it contained several veiled criticisms of the Soviets. Yet the occasion did represent a turning point, after which Soviet-Cuban relations were much closer and less contentious.

The twenty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly provided cause for cautious optimism. Cuban Foreign Minister Raúl Roa had devoted a "significant portion of his speech" in the committee discussions to the "unmasking of the imperialist policy of the United States and its Latin American allies in the internal affairs of Cuba." Soviet officials in the Latin American department of the Foreign Ministry seemed pleased with Roa's speech, believing that it had a "more constructive character" than many of his past utterances in the assembly. He had devoted more attention to "propagandizing the victories of socialism in Cuba." Roa had also spoken out against the U.N.'s decision on "the Vietnam issue," arguing that the prerogative of making such decisions belonged "exclusively to the Vietnamese people," who were "already on their way" to delivering a "devastating defeat to the invaders and their puppets."[520] On the most pressing international issues, the Cuban position had not changed, and on a number of these issues, Cuba's position "seriously diverged" from that of the majority of socialist countries, especially on the issues surrounding disarmament.[521] Overall, however, the Latin American department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry concluded that Cuba's

[519] Gott, *Cuba*, p. 237 & 246.
[520] On the Question of Cuba's Position at the XXII Session of the U.N. General Assembly. III Secretary of the Latin American Department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry (hereafter, OLAS MID), V. Nikolayenko. AVPRF, Fond 104, opis' 23, papka 19, delo 7, p. 11.
[521] Ibid., p. 18.

engagement with the United Nations and its "more active and constructive participation in its work," would lead to a "strengthening of Cuba's internal political situation, the elevation of its international authority," and a corresponding "weakening of Cuba's political isolation."[522]

Despite these indications of a more positive outlook for Soviet-Cuban relations, the Soviet embassy in Havana continued to monitor developments in Cuba for any signs of friction. In May 1969, the third secretary of the embassy, Vladimir Makarenko, reported back to the Foreign Ministry about a lecture prepared by two professors in the political science department at the University of Havana. The lecture emphasized that the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the "so-called Third World," had "for a long time" been in thrall to "imported ideologies."[523] Because of the "peculiarities of historical development in Latin America," the influence of "bourgeois ideologies" had been great. When Marxism arrived in Latin America, it was already "dead on arrival," having been "ripped from…Latin America's own historical traditions." The Cuban revolution, therefore, was the first successful achievement of the "expression of Latin American realities through Marxism."[524] Castroism was identified as the first native Latin American ideology. To the chagrin of the Soviets, the lecture suggested that Latin American communist parties were no longer at the forefront of the "struggle of the masses," and indeed, had remained "indifferent" to their plight.[525] The lecture characterized the "peaceful path to socialism" as a sign of the "weakness" of the

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[522] Ibid., p. 19.
[523] Soviet embassy in Cuba, May 19, 1969, Information about lecture "Latin America: Policy of Armed Struggle," II Secretary V.Makarov. AVPRF, Fond 104, opis' 24, papka 20, delo 8, p. 28.
[524] Ibid.
[525] Ibid., p. 29.

communist parties, who "pretend to be in the progressive vanguard," but in reality "are connected with the oligarchs and the economic pressure of imperialism."[526]

Castro would never really abandon his emphasis on the armed struggle, and would continue to promote the necessity of revolutionary violence even after the election of Salvador Allende in Chile vindicated the CPSU line. Nevertheless, during the early 1970s, Cuban foreign policy became more moderate, and aimed less at fomenting violent revolutions than at re-establishing traditional diplomatic and political relations with Latin American countries and reintegrating into the inter-American community. By the mid-1970s, Cuba had largely broken out of the diplomatic and political isolation imposed by the United States. The coming to power of Allende in Chile, and the military coup that brought General Juan Velasco to power in Peru, marked the beginning of a progressive alliance in Latin America. Castro also modified his support for revolutionary movements in the hemisphere and became more open to bargaining with Latin American leaders. As a result, several Latin American countries reestablished diplomatic ties with Cuba and signed trade agreements.[527]

The Latin American governments had excluded Cuba from their caucus in the United Nations, but in 1969 Cuba was elected to a vacant spot in the U.N. Development Program's Council. Cuba had also been excluded from membership in the Group of 77, a caucus for less developed countries within the U.N. Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD). In 1971, at the initiative of the Peruvian government and with the backing of the nonaligned countries, Cuba was admitted to membership in the

[526] Ibid., p. 30.
[527] Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution*, p. 225.

group.[528] In 1972, Cuba became a member of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), the Soviet-led economic assistance organization comprising the socialist bloc countries. Later in the year, the Soviets and the Cubans signed a series of trade, economic, and financial agreements, in which generous credits and the restructuring of Cuban debt featured prominently.[529] Cuba's economic dependence on the USSR at this point was almost total, and the Cuban economy developed along Soviet lines. As a result, Castro moderated his anti-Soviet rhetoric and subdued his antagonism toward regional communist parties. Cuban support for the Soviet international agenda manifested in the United Nations and especially in the Non-Aligned Movement, where Castro's aspirations to Third World leadership frequently conflicted with his obligations as Soviet ally.

The 1973 summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Algiers provided the occasion for Castro to demonstrate solidarity with the Soviets. Whereas previous Cuban delegates had deemphasized their country's status as Marxist-Leninist, Castro declared up front that Cuba was a Marxist-Leninist state and expressed his gratitude to the Soviets, "who developed their technology and economy with tremendous effort and heroism and without exploiting other countries." Without the efforts of the Soviets, "the end of colonialism would have been absolutely impossible."[530] Declaring that Soviet security guarantees and economic aid had contributed to the survival of the Cuban revolution, Castro suggested that "any estrangement from the socialist camp means weakening and

[528] Ibid., p. 222.
[529] Nikolai Zaitsev, "The Soviet Union, Russia, and the Latin American Countries: Major Issues in Trade and Economic Cooperation," in Domínguez, *The Soviet Union's Latin American Policy*, p. 61.
[530] Quoted in Smith, *Castro's Cuba*, p. 26.

exposing ourselves to the mercy of the still-powerful forces of imperialism."[531] Castro put forward the "natural ally" thesis, which held that the Soviet Union and the communist bloc were the natural allies of the Non-Aligned Movement. It was a difficult sell. Influential states like Yugoslavia, India, Tanzania, and Algeria rejected the thesis in favor of the concept of "equidistance" – a refusal to endorse one side or the other in the Cold War, thus remaining equally distant from both superpowers. The "two imperialisms" theory, moreover, which was spearheaded by the Chinese and viewed the United States and the Soviet Union as morally equivalent, was held by many nonaligned states, with Algeria and Libya among its strongest advocates. Castro strenuously repudiated the theory of two imperialisms, extolling the "glorious, heroic, and extraordinary services that the Soviet people have rendered to humanity" and asking, "how could the Soviet Union be classified as imperialist? Where are its monopolist enterprises? What is its participation in multinational companies? What industries, what petroleum deposits does it own in the under-developed world? What worker is exploited in any country of Asia, Africa or Latin America by Soviet capital?"[532] Indeed, others have observed, for Castro to accept the "two imperialisms" theory would "suggest that he is exchanging one imperialism for another," and this would be "more than his pride can bear."[533] Despite being unable to convince his colleagues of the natural ally thesis, Castro did succeed in removing any direct condemnation of the USSR from the official conference

[531] Quoted in Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution*, p. 105.
[532] Quoted in Gouré and Rothenberg, *Soviet Penetration of Latin America*, p. 73.
[533] Ibid., p. 74.

statements.[534] Moreover, the Algiers summit marked the advent of the Non-Aligned Movement as a reliably anti-U.S. voting bloc in the United Nations.[535]

CONCLUSION

The missile crisis had ruptured the Cuban-Soviet alliance and exposed the reality of Soviet great-power chauvinism, proving that in times of crisis, Moscow would have no qualms about sacrificing the goals and interests of its Third World allies to the necessity of maintaining cooperative relations with the United States. Though ultimately the breach was repaired and the Cubans became consistent defenders of the Soviet Union in the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement, this was reflective more of Castro's unwillingness to antagonize his revolution's patrons in a changed situation of Cuban economic dependence on the USSR. Moreover, as the Cuban leadership subordinated its support for armed revolutionary movements to more traditional diplomatic and political engagement with the countries of Latin America, Cuba was reintegrated into the inter-American community and Soviet-Cuban relations improved dramatically. With the election of Salvador Allende in Chile, Soviet and Cuban optimism about the prospects for progressive and socialist development in the Western Hemisphere peaked. Such hopes were subsequently crushed by the military coup that overthrew Allende, which ultimately ushered in a new cycle of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary violence in the region.

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[534] Smith, *Castro's Cuba*, p. 27.
[535] Richard L. Jackson, *The Non-Aligned, the UN, and the Superpowers* (New York: Praeger, 1983), p. 28.

Chapter Four:

The Soviet Union and the Chilean Solidarity Campaign

On September 11, 1973, a military coup headed by General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte seized Chile's Presidential Palace, violently deposing the Popular Unity government and leading President Salvador Allende Gossens to take his own life in a tremendously gruesome fashion. Allende had been the first Marxist leader in the world to come to power through electoral means and the coup was a watershed in Chilean history, marking the abrupt and traumatic end of 140 years of "almost uninterrupted constitutionalism and civilian rule."[536] Allende had run for president as head of the Chilean socialist party (PS) and leader of the Popular Unity (UP) coalition of leftist and Marxist parties, campaigning on a platform that explicitly called for Chile's rapid conversion to socialism. One scholar has opined that those who have mistakenly characterized Allende as a social democrat "confused the methods of his struggle with the desired outcome."[537] Thus, although Allende's ultimate goal was to do away with capitalism and to install a "dictatorship of the proletariat," he loyally adhered to Chile's democratic processes and traditions.

Scholars have debated the salience of the various factors that contributed to the overthrow of Allende. From the left, critics have charged that he underestimated the strength of the rightist opposition and the determination of the United States to bring the Popular Unity government to an end. The communist critique of Allende focused on his inability to deal decisively with the leftist radicals in the socialist party and the

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[536] Paul E. Sigmund, *The Overthrow of Allende and the Politics of Chile, 1964-1976* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977), p. 272.
[537] Victor Figueroa Clark, *Salvador Allende: Revolutionary Democrat* (London: Pluto Press, 2013), p. 141.

Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR). Historian Paul Sigmund has argued that the lesson of Chile, was not, as the left would have it, that Allende moved too slowly in implementing his reform package, but that considering the constraints built into the Chilean political system, he moved too quickly to implement "irreversible" changes.[538] Critics on the right have tended to emphasize the disastrous economic situation prevailing under the Popular Unity government, suggesting that Allende's refusal to retreat from his revolutionary program made the coup all but inevitable. Contrary to the myth of the apolitical nature of the Chilean military, the army had a history of interference in the country's governmental and political affairs and "at the very least they regarded themselves as the first line of defence of the constitutional order."[539] Largely due to this misplaced faith in Chile's military, the UP miscalculated its room for maneuver within the political system.[540]

The majority of the scholarship on the coup focuses on the Nixon administration's covert intervention in Chile. Former U.S. ambassador Nathaniel Davis maintains that "there is a real difference between covert financing that facilitates the continuation of a country's free political processes and covert financing that corrupts them."[541] While this is undoubtedly true, most scholars have categorized the Nixon administration's actions in Chile as falling into the latter category. Nevertheless, as Tanya Harmer has argued, a clear distinction exists between "creating the conditions" for a coup, and "masterminding" a coup, and although CIA aid to the opposition forces made a

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[538] Sigmund, *The Overthrow of Allende*, p. 291.
[539] Jonathan Haslam, *The Nixon Administration and the Death of Allende's Chile: A Case of Assisted Suicide* (London: Verso, 2005), p. 41.
[540] Ibid., p. 229.
[541] Nathaniel Davis, *The Last Two Years of Salvador Allende* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 344.

"psychological difference," it is "doubtful that it was a necessary or sufficient cause."[542] Another scholar has similarly concluded that while individual U.S. actions were not decisive, they had a "cumulative effect" that contributed to the collapse of the UP government.[543] Even those scholars harshly critical of the CIA and U.S. interference in Chile tend to acknowledge that a significant source of opposition to Allende resulted from the UP's lack of a coherent policy and Allende's miscalculations of the military's intentions.[544] Conversely, those who have exonerated the CIA from responsibility for the coup have acknowledged the Nixon administration's "hostile intent" toward Allende's Chile.[545]

The Soviets had provided substantial moral, political, and economic support to the UP government, but had refused to subsidize the regime to the extent necessary to keep Allende in power. This refusal was driven by Soviet fears of a "second Cuba," and by concerns over Allende's ability to impose discipline on his own governing coalition. The Soviets, nevertheless, were quick to capitalize on Allende's overthrow at the hands of Pinochet. Through communist front groups, "non-governmental" organizations, and international institutions, the Soviets were active and enthusiastic participants in the transnational solidarity campaign that emerged in the wake of the September 11 coup. Interestingly, Soviet anti-Pinochet activism was driven more by a desire to improve the USSR's international standing and to appease the Chilean communists than by the urge to

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[542] Tanya Harmer, *Allende's Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), pp. 221 & 285.
[543] Julio Faúndez, *Marxism and Democracy in Chile, From 1932 to the Fall of Allende* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), p. 191.
[544] See, for example, Edy Kaufman, *Crisis in Allende's Chile: New Perspectives* (New York: Praeger, 1988), p. 331.
[545] Kristian Gustafson, *Hostile Intent: U.S. Covert Operations in Chile, 1964-1974* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2007).

strike a blow against the United States. Soviet rhetoric only obliquely referred to the U.S. role in the coup; Chilean communists in exile, however, were quick to point the finger at the Nixon administration and the CIA.

"NO MORE CUBAS": SOVIET POLICY TOWARD ALLENDE'S CHILE

The election of Salvador Allende in 1970 was a major triumph for the Soviet Union. It vindicated the CPSU party line emphasizing the peaceful road to socialism, and dealt a blow to the Chinese communists, who supported armed insurgency as the only legitimate means to revolutionary ends. Moreover, Chile had one of Latin America's oldest, largest, and most well-organized communist parties (*Partido Comunista de Chile*, PCCh). Between 1956 and 1969, the PCCh formed a precarious and somewhat strained electoral alliance with the socialist party, which was more radical and militant than the country's communist party. In 1969, the PCCh called for a broader electoral alliance and played a key role in the founding of the Popular Unity coalition. The communist party was one of the best-organized and most influential groups within the coalition.[546] Though Allende was a member of the PS, he tended to side with the communists, who were determined to overthrow the existing "bourgeois" state and constitution but through the legal means of the plebiscite.[547]

Salvador Allende was not a social democrat; he was a committed Marxist-Leninist with ties to Moscow dating back to the 1950s. He had declared during the Stalin years that "the communist party is the party of the Soviet Union…and whoever wishes to form a socialist government without the communists is not a Marxist. And I am a

[546] Theberge, *Soviet Relations with Allende's Chile and Velasco's Peru*, pp. 1-2.
[547] Ibid., p. 2.

Marxist."[548] Socialist Party leader Carlos Altamirano carefully distinguished Chile's party from the socialist and social democratic parties of Europe: "our party…has always defined itself as a Marxist-Leninist party."[549] Allende's belief that "socialism was true nationalism" was what "prevented him from being another reformist nationalist."[550] Allende's close ties to Moscow and the strength and loyalty of the Chilean communist party to the CPSU virtually assured Soviet support for his government, and prevented the Kremlin from maintaining relations with Chile after the coup that toppled him from power.

The Soviets treated Allende's government with caution, and intentionally avoided becoming embroiled in an economic or military commitment to Chile. Soviet propagandists were careful not to describe the UP as "socialist," as to do so would imply certain guarantees of communist-bloc protection. At the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in 1971, Brezhnev described the UP victory as "an extremely important occurrence," and evidence of a "progressive direction in Chile."[551] By carefully avoiding a description of that direction as "socialist," Brezhnev sidestepped the necessity of the extending the sort of ideological commitment that the Soviets had extended to Cuba.

One of Moscow's main concerns was Allende's failure to keep his governing coalition unified. Chile's communist and socialist parties had always been rivals for power, and relations between the two were uneasy at best. The Socialist Party had

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[548] Salvador Allende, quoted in Haslam, *Death of Allende's Chile*, p. 9.
[549] Altamirano, quoted in ibid., p. 91.
[550] Figueroa Clark, *Salvador Allende: Revolutionary Democrat*, p. 141
[551] Report by General Secretary of the CPSU L.I. Brezhnev to the 24th CPSU Congress, May 21, 1971, in "Paths of International Communism in the Americas," A Study Prepared by the Special Consultative Committee on Security at its 15th Regular Meeting. Washington, D.C.: General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, 1971. pp. 30-31.

undergone a process of radicalization from 1952 to 1970, and by the mid-1960s had eschewed electoral politics, declaring the inevitability of revolutionary violence. In practice, however, the party continued to adhere to parliamentary tradition.[552] The Chilean communist party had followed the line set forth at the 20th CPSU party congress, which asserted that socialism could be achieved through electoral means. This stance contributed to the further erosion of relations between Chile's communists and socialists, with the latter suspicious that the former would not be prepared to wage the armed struggle.[553] The effects of the Sino-Soviet split and the Cuban revolution were to further reinforce the Chilean communist party's loyalty to Moscow.[554] The factionalism unleashed by these developments, moreover, rent the leftist forces in the country and undermined any prospects for unity.

The Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR) further detracted from Allende's ability to unite the UP around his reform program. The MIR had criticized Soviet "bureaucratism" and the CPSU line stressing the peaceful path to power. Allende's election proved, of course, that electoral methods could bring a Marxist government to power, but it did not ease relations between the MIR and the UP coalition.[555] While the socialists argued that the revolutionary process had begun with the election of Allende and that the rapid implementation of the UP's reform program would alter the balance of forces in the country, the MIR flatly rejected the idea that the conquest of power by the proletariat could occur within the existing political structure. Thus, the MIR called for

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[552] Faúndez, *Marxism and Democracy in Chile, From 1932 to the Fall of Allende*, p. 164.
[553] Ibid., p. 167.
[554] Ibid., p. 173.
[555] Haslam, *Death of Allende's Chile*, p. 53.

political and military preparations for the showdown it was sure would soon take place.[556] The Soviets had no patience for the ultra-radical leftists who contributed to the destabilization of the situation in Chile. *Radio Moscow* chided the extremists within the UP coalition "who make the air tremble with pseudo-revolutionary phrases," and *Pravda* deprecated them as "provocateurs who hide behind all sorts of ultra-leftist masks."[557]

The Soviets had learned important lessons from their alliance with Cuba; the necessity of preventing another Latin American country from becoming a burden on the Soviet economy was perhaps the most significant. Though Chile was the second largest Latin American recipient of Soviet-bloc aid during the Allende period, that aid amounted to $350 million in credits, which, when compared with the $600 million dollar loan extended to Peronist Argentina in 1974, is shown to be rather insignificant.[558] Another reason for Moscow's reluctance to subsidize the UP government was Allende's economic mismanagement. The Soviets did not push for Chile's rapid conversion to a command economy, but consistently cautioned Allende to move slowly in implementing social and economic reforms.[559] Though the first half year after Allende's election had witnessed an impressive economic growth rate, soon severe inflation pummeled the economy, spurred on by massive government spending and the central banks printing and issuing a stream of currency. Even the Chilean communist party grew concerned about the direction of the

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[556] Faúndez, *Marxism and Democracy in Chile*, p. 197.
[557] Quoted in Nogee and Sloan, pp. 361-362.
[558] Nicola Miller, *Soviet Relations with Latin America, 1959-1987* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 128-129. James Theberge has reported a higher number, claiming that the total amount of economic aid and credits to the UP government was $620 million. Even if this number is closer to the mark, it was still only $20 million more than that received by Argentina, which could in no way be construed as an ideological ally to the Soviet Union. See James Theberge, *Soviet Relations with Allende's Chile and Velasco's Peru* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1974), pp. 4-6.
[559] Joseph L. Nogee and John W. Sloan, "Allende's Chile and the Soviet Union: A Policy Lesson for Latin American Nations Seeking Autonomy," in *Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Aug., 1979), pp. 353 & 355.

economy and worried about adhering too closely to the economic course of the socialist-bloc countries.[560] Because of the influence of dependency theory on UP's economists, some of them assumed that increasing autonomy from the hegemon of the north would automatically confer economic benefits on Chile. Yet the results of Chile's decreased dependence on the United States were disappointing at best.[561]

Finally, the Allende years coincided with the period of détente, during which efforts to reduce tensions with the United States retained a very high priority. Détente circumscribed Soviet policy toward Latin America; as one scholar has noted, "the prestige to be won among the world's left-wing forces by supporting Allende simply did not compare with the potential economic and political benefits of peaceful coexistence with the United States."[562] The Soviets were thus reluctant to intrude further into the U.S. sphere of influence; the fact that Allende's government was plagued by mismanagement issues only compounded that reluctance.[563]

UP FOREIGN POLICY: "IDEOLOGICAL PLURALISM" AND NON-ALIGNMENT

The UP government had come to power promising to review all treaty negotiations, especially those concluded with the United States. Yet the government made clear that it would not attempt to play the Cold War superpowers off each other, but would adhere to a course of strict non-alignment.[564] Once in power, however, the UP government did not denounce any of the OAS treaties, nor did it sever links with the

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[560] Haslam, *Death of Allende's Chile*, p. 107.
[561] See Joseph L. Nogee and John W. Sloan, "Allende's Chile and the Soviet Union: A Policy Lesson for Latin American Nations Seeking Autonomy," in *Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Aug., 1979), p. 348.
[562] Miller, *Soviet Relations with Latin America*, p. 131.
[563] Haslam, *Death of Allende's Chile*, p. 155.
[564] Faúndez, p. 193.

United States; indeed, Chile continued to participate in the Alliance for Progress.[565] Military assistance to the Chilean armed forces continued and for a time enabled the military to resist pressure from the UP government to accept more generous terms of Soviet-bloc assistance.[566] Chile was thus able to avoid becoming overly dependent on Soviet military aid. In November 1970, diplomatic relations with Cuba were restored. The UP government also moved within the OAS to reduce Cuba's isolation in the Western Hemisphere and to bring it back into the inter-American fold. As one scholar has put it, the election of Allende marked the beginning of "Cuba's formal re-integration into the inter-American system."[567]

Nixon administration officials were not the only ones who had learned the lessons of Cuba. Allende sought to prevent Chile becoming isolated by expanding state-to-state ties, broadening Third World solidarity, and increasing Chile's involvement in international organizations. The UP foreign policy platform had called for a policy of "ideological pluralism," a concept developed by Clodomiro Almeyda. Such a policy entailed full respect for the principles of the U.N. charter – non-intervention, self-determination, and national sovereignty. The platform affirmed UP's support of peaceful coexistence, and stressed that the Chilean government would maintain relations with "all countries of the world, irrespective of their ideological and political position."[568] Moreover, despite UP campaign pledges of opposition to the OAS, Allende realized that only by keeping Chile within the inter-American system could it hope to influence its

[565] Ibid., p. 204.
[566] Davis, *Last Two Years*, p. 99.
[567] Harmer, *Allende's Chile*, p. 2.
[568] Quoted in Kaufman, *Crisis in Allende's Chile*, footnote 3, p. 51. See also Kaufman, p. 40.

agenda.[569] In pursuit of these diplomatic goals, the Chilean government launched an offensive in 1971 aimed at strengthening relations with other Latin American countries. Chile was also a signatory to the Andean Pact, which was envisioned as an instrument for economic collaboration, but was ultimately ineffective as such. Chilean Foreign Minister Clodomiro Almeyda acknowledged that prospects for such economic collaboration were slim, and that the purpose of Chilean involvement was more political in nature.[570]

Allende was a firm advocate of the restructuring of the global economy, and he used all available international forums to argue against the injustices wrought by U.S. monopolies. He also contributed to the radicalization of the Third World economic agenda, made manifest in the New International Economic Order.[571] At the 1972 session of the U.N. General Assembly, Allende delivered a speech excoriating ITT, Kennecott and Anaconda, and more generally proclaiming the Third World the "victims of a new form of imperialism." He also used the occasion to defend his government's nationalization policy, and cited U.N. Resolution 1803, arguing that nationalization was an expression of national sovereignty, and that all disputes should be settled in domestic courts.[572]

The third conference of the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development was held in Santiago in 1972. The location for the conference underscored Chile's growing prestige in Third World economic forums, and Allende used the occasion to reiterate Chile's commitment to the restructuring of the global economy. As Chile had already initiated procedures to nationalize industry and was engaged in a protracted legal battle

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[569] Harmer, p. 81.
[570] Ibid., p. 96.
[571] Harmer, *Allende's Chile*, p. 14.
[572] Davis, *Last Two Years*, pp. 124-125.

with U.S. corporations, UNCTAD revealed not only Chile's rising prestige, but also the deteriorating U.S. position and the decrease of U.S. influence in the Third World.[573] Indeed, the Nixon administration expressed concerns about not only UNCTAD, but about the revelations of ITT influence in Chile that had broken in the news media on the eve of the conference, lamenting the consequences for the global prestige of the United States.[574]

At the April 1973 OAS General Assembly in Washington, Chilean foreign minister Almeyda delivered a speech that criticized the United States for having "lined up with the rich countries," instead of with the hemisphere.[575] The Chileans floated a proposal for the creation of a new regional organization, which would include Cuba and exclude the United States. Though the plan was initially supported by Peru and Argentina, it met with significant opposition and Allende was overthrown before it could be further pursued.[576] Chilean proposals within the OAS tended to alienate the organization's more conservative members.[577]

Allende had participated in the Tricontinental Conference in Havana and had been a prominent figure in the founding of the Latin American Solidarity Organization in 1966.[578] As has already been seen, though the OLAS ultimately proved to be an ineffective instrument through which to cultivate revolutionary solidarity and disseminate the radical ideals of Latin America's Marxists and other leftists, it did provoke the fears and concerns of the hemisphere's centrist and right-wing political groups. The right-wing

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[573] Harmer, *Allende's Chile*, p. 151.
[574] Ibid., p. 161.
[575] Quoted in Harmer, p. 213.
[576] Kaufman, *Crisis in Allende's Chile*, p. 42.
[577] Harmer, p. 213.
[578] Faúndez, p. 170.

elite of the region drastically over-estimated the capabilities of the OLAS, which was believed to be "responsible for all acts of terrorism" in Latin America.[579] Allende came under fire from the Chilean opposition for his participation and leadership in OLAS.[580]

On November 4, 1971, Chile formally joined the Non-Aligned Movement. Though former president Eduardo Frei had initiated the procedure for Chile's membership in the movement, Allende accelerated preparations. This was significant as a demonstration of Allende's international aspirations, and because Chile was only the second Latin American country to formally join the movement, though many had been sending observers to the NAM summits.[581]

Castro visited Chile shortly thereafter, and pressured Allende to develop the Chilean economy according to Soviet prescriptions for economic growth and development.[582] Castro's visit ultimately created more difficulties for Allende, both with his domestic political opposition and for his international image.[583] Castro's relations with Allende's Chile were tenuous at best. This is because Castro had moved closer to the CPSU line, eschewing support for violent revolutionaries in favor of conducting state-to-state relations with Latin American governments. Allende's Socialist Party, moreover, was far to the left of the Chilean communist party, and it was the latter behind which Castro had thrown his support. Castro still had contacts with MIR, and in meetings with MIR leaders he apparently cautioned them against opposing Allende. Nevertheless, Castro's presence in Chile exacerbated political polarization there.[584] In his farewell

[579] Quoted in Harmer, p. 36.
[580] Harmer, p. 36.
[581] Ibid., p. 82.
[582] Haslam, p. 112.
[583] Ibid., p. 113.
[584] Figueroa Clark, p. 109.

speech on December 2, Castro warned that the Popular Unity government's prioritization of pluralism and free speech was interfering with its ability to crack down on the opposition. Castro proclaimed that "all decadent social systems…have defended themselves with tremendous violence throughout history," and that "the confidence of your [UP's] enemies…is the result of weaknesses in your effort to consolidate your forces, to unite them and to increase them."[585]

The Algiers summit of the Non-Aligned Movement was convened in the fall of 1973, and although Algerian president Boumedienne had pleaded with Allende to attend, the latter was unable to due to crisis conditions in Chile. Reflecting Chile's growing prestige in the Third World, Chilean diplomats had been elected to chair the NAM's Economic Council. Yet because of the situation in Chile, Allende was able only to send a message of support to the summit, hailing the "growing unity of our countries in the struggle against imperialism…dependency and underdevelopment."[586]

During the period of Allende's tenure, the Soviets were optimistic about developments in the Western Hemisphere. The leftist military junta in Peru under General Juan Velasco, like the UP government in Chile, sought to break away from economic and political dependence on the United States and took radical steps to nationalize private industry and to chart an independent foreign policy course. The Velasco regime re-established relations with Cuba, while establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, China, and other socialist bloc countries. Peru became the second Latin American country after Cuba to sign military agreements with the

[585] Quoted in Davis, *Last Two Years*, p. 44.
[586] Quoted in Harmer, *Allende's Chile*, p. 223.

Soviets, and became the region's second largest recipient of Soviet military aid. Additionally, Peru sought to play a leadership role in the Non-Aligned Movement.[587]

As early as 1966, the Latin American department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry noted that Peru under President Belaunde "will unwaveringly defend the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of states."[588] The department prepared a report on the positions taken by the Peruvian delegation to the 21st session of the United Nations General Assembly and noted that "on important international issues Peru occupied the exact same position as the Chilean delegation." The Peruvians and the Chileans had both voted with the USSR and against the United States on the fulfillment of the declaration on presentation of independence to colonized states and peoples. The report observed that at the 21st assembly the Latin American nations had formed a "united bloc, especially on colonial issues, issues of non-interference and sovereignty," and predicted that the "strengthening tendency" of the Latin American countries toward "foreign policy independence" would continue.[589]

Soviet press accounts praised Velasco's Peru, lauding its "striving to find its own road to non-capitalist development" and expressing optimism that "once capitalism had been rejected," Peru would undoubtedly "choose the socialist road."[590] After Allende's overthrow, moreover, the Soviets turned to Peru as the most promising prospect for socialist development in Latin America. At the end of 1973, Peru became the second largest Latin American recipient (after Cuba) of Soviet military aid, with the Soviets supplying 100-200 T-55 medium tanks and heavy artillery on generous terms. Soviet

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[587] Wright, *Latin America in the Era of the Cuban Revolution*, p. 124.
[588] Peru's Position at the 21st session of the U.N. General Assembly, September-December 1966, OLAS MID, Fond 121, opis' 19, papka 1, delo 1, p. 5.
[589] Ibid., p. 6.
[590] Theberge, *Soviet Relations with Velasco's Peru*, p. 17.

military advisers were also sent to Peru to assist with training. In July, 1974, in a military parade commemorating 153 years of Peruvian independence, fifty T-55 tanks were on display in Lima.[591]

THE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

In the immediate post-coup period, non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations, exiled Chileans, philanthropic foundations, and religious and social groups formed a transnational advocacy network to shame and pressure the military junta into changing its policy of political repression.[592] Domestic and international human rights pressure groups set important precedents for human rights legislation and activism. Indeed, their efforts led to the U.N. General Assembly's 1974 resolution condemning the junta for human rights violations. Though South Africa and Israel had previously been condemned for their human rights records, these resolutions were tied to regional conflicts. By placing Chile in the same category as South Africa and Israel, and condemning the junta for human rights violations unrelated to regional or international conflict, the United Nations set an important precedent.[593] The activities of this transnational advocacy network, in the words of one scholar, "constituted one of the first and most important international campaigns against gross and systematic human rights

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[591] Ibid., pp. 19-20. See also Rubén Berríos, "The USSR and the Andean Countries: Economic and Political Dimensions," in Eusebio Mujal-León, ed. *The USSR and Latin America: A Developing Relationship* (Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman, 1989), pp. 350-356.
[592] On transnational advocacy networks, see Darren G. Hawkins, *International Human Rights and Authoritarian Rule in Chile* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), pp. 19, & 56-57.
[593] Hawkins, p. 62. See also Thomas Wright, *State Terrorism in Latin America: Chile, Argentina, and International Human Rights* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), p. 75.

abuses in a single country,"[594] and facilitated what another scholar has described as the "tremendous growth in a global human rights consciousness."[595]

The Soviets played an active role in this transnational campaign, creating "non-governmental organizations" that were ultimately beholden to the dictates of the CPSU, and pressuring the United Nations to condemn and isolate the military junta in Chile. The overthrow of Allende convinced many Soviet theorists that the successful transition to socialism in Third World countries required the full and active support of the country's armed forces.[596] Yet in the immediate aftermath of the coup, the Soviets continued to emphasize the possibilities inherent in the peaceful path to power, and to reiterate that the strategy had been correct, but the implementation of it had been faulty. Soviet theorists acknowledged that Allende had alienated the middle sectors of Chilean society and had failed to keep his own governing coalition unified.[597] Though Soviet critiques of the Chileans focused on Allende's failure to build the support of the middles classes and his refusal to crack down on the ultra-radical left, the exiled Chilean communists in the socialist bloc were at the forefront of efforts to apply the lessons learned from the coup, and ultimately embraced the necessity of combating counter-revolutionary violence with revolutionary violence.

On September 18, a mere week after the Popular Unity government was toppled, Leonid Brezhnev visited Bulgaria and used the occasion to issue a joint Soviet-Bulgarian declaration of solidarity with the Chilean people. Brezhnev and Bulgarian leader Todor Zhivkov spoke at length about events in Chile and condemned the imperialist reactionary

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[594] Hawkins, p. 55.
[595] Patrick Kelly, "The 1973 Chilean Coup and the Origins of Transnational Human Rights Activism," *Journal of Global History*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (March, 2013), p. 166.
[596] Albright, *Vanguard Parties*, p. 46.
[597] Gouré and Rothenberg, *Soviet Penetration in Latin America*, p. 109.

forces that had moved to quash democracy in the country.[598] Notably, the United States was neither named nor condemned.

The Soviet Committee for Solidarity with the Chilean Democrats was founded on November 30, 1973, and gathered representatives from various Soviet social organizations, including the Soviet Committee for the Defense of Peace, the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, and the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions. The secretary of the latter group, Stepan Shalaev, was appointed chairman of the solidarity committee. The opening convention was, not surprisingly, dedicated to expressing "solidarity with the righteous struggle of the Chilean people."[599] The participants demanded the immediate cessation of politically motivated arrests and the liberation of members of the UP government from the "junta's torture chambers."[600] The participants also expressed concern for the secretary general of the Chilean communist party (PCCh), Luis Corvalán, whose life was believed to be in danger.[601] A report prepared by the solidarity committee bemoaned the fact that Chile had become the "victim of an imperialist plot and the treachery of the military establishment."[602] Expressions of international solidarity were not, however, merely rhetorical. Indeed, such international solidarity had "helped revolutionary Cuba withstand the economic blockade and direct military intervention organized by imperialism."[603] International solidarity was also credited with helping Cuba break out of its diplomatic and political isolation.

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[598] Victor Dahl, "The Soviet Bloc Response to the Downfall of Salvador Allende," in *Inter-American Economic Affairs*, Vol. 30, 1976-77, p. 38
[599] Soviet Committee for Solidarity with the Chilean Democrats, opening convention, November 30, 1973. State Archive of the Russian Federation (hereafter, GARF), fond 9644, opis' 1, document 1, p. 9.
[600] Ibid., p. 4.
[601] Ibid., p. 13.
[602] GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, document 1, p. 38.
[603] Ibid., p. 48.

At the 1973 World Congress of Peace Forces, held in Moscow from the 25th to the 31st of October, Brezhnev included in his speech an expression of "full solidarity with the democrats and patriots of Chile."[604] The congress was attended by 3,200 representatives of over 1,100 political parties and national organizations, and by the leaders of 123 international organizations. At the first plenary session on October 25, the Secretary General of the World Peace Council, Romesh Chandra, delivered an address in which he proclaimed that "our hearts are with the resistance of Chile," and expressed confidence that "the fascist junta shall not triumph."[605] Brezhnev's speech the following day expressed "complete solidarity with Chile's democrats and patriots" and vowed to "always cherish the memory of Salvador Allende." Although Brezhnev vigorously denounced the military junta in Chile, declaring it a "monstrous and blatant outrage," and vilifying the "junta's truly fascist snarl," he failed to so much as mention the U.S. role in the coup. Indeed, he lauded "the development of relations of peaceful cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States of America," which was "an important factor in…averting another world war and ensuring universal peace."[606] It seems that détente and the prospects for cooperation with the United States prevented the Soviet leadership from engaging in direct (or even oblique) criticism of U.S. interventionism in Chile.

Brezhnev did, however, deliver a lengthy condemnation of the Chinese, denouncing their "total lack of principle" in foreign policy, and claiming that they "go out of their way to undermine the international positions of the socialist countries." Even

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[604] Ibid., p. 18.
[605] Speech by Romesh Chandra, in *Peace is the Concern of One and All: Materials and Documents of the World Congress of Peace Forces, Moscow, October 1973* (Moscow: Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, 1973), p. 9.
[606] Speech by L.I. Brezhnev, in *Peace is the Concern of One and All*, p. 23.

though "they call themselves revolutionaries," they nevertheless "cordially shake the hand of a representative of the fascist junta of Chilean reactionaries, a hand stained with the blood of thousands of heroes of the revolution, the sons and daughters of the working class, of the working people of Chile." Such criticisms were far harsher than anything lobbed in the direction of the United States. Détente had clearly conditioned the Soviet propaganda line. Immediately after censuring the Chinese, Brezhnev announced that "the development of relations of peaceful cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States of America is an important factor in solving the problems vitally important for the peoples of the earth, of averting another world war and ensuring universal peace."[607] Thus it seems that the strident condemnation of the Chilean junta was aimed not so much at the United States as it was at the Chinese.

In May 1974, a Soviet analysis of revolutionary prospects in Latin America linked the Chilean junta to reactionary and oligarchic forces all over the continent.[608] It was perhaps connected with several recent developments in the transnational human rights campaign against Pinochet. In early 1974, the U.N. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) passed a resolution exhorting the Chilean junta to "restore and safeguard basic human rights." The resolution passed by a vote of 41 to 0, with the only two countries abstaining from the vote being Chile and the United States. Then, in April, a report issued by the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) shed light on the interference in Chilean domestic affairs by multinational corporations and the CIA.[609] The ICJ exhorted the peoples of the world to protest "threats of bodily harm" against Luis

[607] Ibid., p. 23.
[608] Victor Dahl, "The Soviet Bloc Response to the Downfall of Salvador Allende," in *Inter-American Economic Affairs*, Vol. 30, 1976-77, p. 44.
[609] Protocol 4, April 8, 1974, GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, document 3, p. 3.

Corvalán and former Chilean Foreign Minister Clodomiro Almeyda.[610] In response to the commission's findings, the Chilean embassy in Washington ran a series of newspaper ads labeling the International Commission of Jurists as a Soviet front organization.[611] Ironically, the ICJ had recently come under fire for being in indirect receipt of CIA funding.[612]

The permanent secretariat of the International Commission of Enquiry into the Crimes of the Military Junta in Chile convened in Berlin on April 27th.[613] The International Commission had been established in late 1973, and held its first meeting in March 1974 in Helsinki. The commission had close ties to the World Peace Council and was headed by Nordic statesmen who had a history of working with communist groups.[614] The commission petitioned to send observers to Chile to visit concentration camps, prisons, and police stations and to interview representatives of opposition political parties, the press, trade unions, and religious leaders.[615] The commission also composed a letter to U.N. Secretary General Kurt Waldheim detailing the crimes of the military junta and decrying its attempts to "defy justice" by means of "illegal judicial processes," which were likened to the "fascist tribunal on the issue of the burning of the Reichstag." The committee requested that Waldheim use the "lofty authority of the U.N." to bring an end to human rights violations and "extralegal terror," to "free all political prisoners and close

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[610] Ibid., p. 4.
[611] Lars Schoultz, *Human Rights and United States Policy toward Latin America* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 54.
[612] Iain Guest, *Behind the Disappearances: Argentina's Dirty War against Human Rights and the United Nations* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1990), p. 99.
[613] GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, document 12.
[614] On the activism of the International Commission of Enquiry into the Crimes of the Military Junta in Chile, see Patrick Kelly, "The 1973 Chilean Coup and the Origins of Transnational Human Rights Activism," pp. 177-180.
[615] GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, document 12, p. 5.

the concentration camps."[616] Another letter was sent to state governments, exhorting them to use their "authority in international organizations" to "take all possible measures for the political isolation of the Chilean junta," including the immediate severing of diplomatic relations and the termination of "all economic and other aid to the junta."[617]

On September 11, 1974, the one-year anniversary of the violent overthrow of the UP government, the chairman of the Soviet Committee for Solidarity with the Chilean Democrats, Stepan Shalaev, delivered a speech in which the United States was neither mentioned nor condemned; the coup was blamed on the forces of "internal reaction" and "foreign monopolies."[618] Although the peace-loving peoples of the world had already helped save the lives of "many of the loyal sons and daughters of Chile," the junta, "supported by the most reactionary forces of international imperialism," was now embracing "more sophisticated methods of repression." The week was declared the "week of international solidarity with the people of Chile," and Brezhnev personally issued a statement "in the name of the CPSU and all the Soviet people," which proclaimed "the unchanging support for the Chilean patriots and democrats in their just struggle."[619] The Soviet solidarity committee boasted that the exiled Chileans in Moscow had emphasized the "extreme importance of radio programs aimed at Chilean listeners, which allow the people of Chile to be objectively informed about world events, the decisions of the U.N., the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural

[616] Ibid., p. 11.
[617] Ibid., p. 13.
[618] Speech by Stepan A. Shalaev, September 11, 1974. GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, document 7, p. 32.
[619] GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, delo 31, p. 52.

Organization (UNESCO), and other international organizations on the Chilean issue, and about the world-wide indignation provoked by the current government of Chile."[620]

The following day, an article by Brezhnev commemorating Allende appeared in *Pravda*. Neither the United States nor the CIA was named specifically, but were referred to obliquely as "imperialist circles from abroad." These imperialist circles had "committed a fiendish crime" – the murder of Chile's constitutional president and the establishment in that country of a "bloody dictatorship." The Soviet Union, and all of its people, was applauded for being among the first to "resolutely condemn the military coup." The Soviet people would continue to "support the democratic, antifascist forces of Chile," and indeed to "most actively participate in the international movement of solidarity with the Chilean democrats." The movement had by now reached "worldwide proportions" and encompassed "millions of people with diverse views and convictions."[621]

In the fall of 1974, the U.N. General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for adequate protection of human rights in Chile. The only countries to vote in opposition to the resolution were Chile and seven other Latin American nations.[622] In December, U.N. ambassador to the U.N. John Scali shocked the General Assembly with an open denunciation of the trend toward the consolidation of the Third World and socialist voting blocs in the United Nations.[623] Also in December, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) of the Organization of American States released a report charging the Chilean junta with "extremely serious violations" of fundamental human

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[620] Ibid., p. 53.
[621] *Pravda*, September 12, 1974. GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, document 7, p. 22.
[622] Dahl, "Soviet Bloc Response," p. 41.
[623] James Daniel Ryan, *The United Nations under Kurt Waldheim, 1972-1981* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2001), p. 51.

rights.[624] Although the OAS had adopted the American Declaration of Human Rights at its founding in 1948, it was not until 1959 that the organization established an institutional mechanism to protect the rights enumerated in the declaration, and it was partly in response to the Cuban revolution that the IACHR was created. However, it was not until 1969 that the OAS finally adopted a binding treaty, the American Convention on Human Rights.[625] The IACHR was thereby upgraded from an "autonomous entity" to a major instrument of the Organization of American States for the protection and promotion of human rights in the hemisphere.[626]

It was around this time as well that the U.S. Congress assumed the human rights mantle. Starting in the late 1960s and early 1970s, two groups emerged within Congress – one that focused on human rights in communist-bloc countries, and the other more concerned with human rights in anticommunist countries allied with the United States. The latter group argued that U.S. policy was profoundly contradictory in its embrace of certain ideals and in its support of anticommunist regimes guilty of extensive human rights violations.[627] The Nixon administration viewed a focus on human rights as contrary to its primary mission, and the efforts of Congress were viewed as an obstacle. Congressional efforts to pass human rights legislation barring aid to Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay were undermined by both Nixon and his successor, Gerald Ford.[628] It was not until Jimmy Carter came into office that the executive branch embraced human rights as a foreign policy plank. Carter had made repeated references to Chile during the 1976

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[624] Schoultz, *Human Rights and U.S. Policy toward Latin America*, p. 12.
[625] Sikkink, *Mixed Signals*, p. 43.
[626] Dykmann, *Philanthropic Endeavors or the Exploitation of an Ideal? The Human Rights Policy of the Organization of American States in Latin America, 1970-1991* (Frankfurt: Vervuert Verlag, 2004), p. 20.
[627] Sikkink, pp. 52-53.
[628] Ibid., p. 106.

presidential campaign, invoking the case more often than any other foreign policy issue. He pointed to Chile as a glaring example of the U.S. failure to promote democratic ideals and values in foreign policy, and also to accuse the Nixon administration of complicity in the coup that toppled Allende and thus the human rights violations that followed.[629] Carter's strident condemnation of the Nixon and Ford administrations was far harsher than the Soviets' own rhetoric about the overthrow of Allende.

From November 14 to 16, 1975, an international conference for solidarity with the Chilean democrats was held in Athens, and was attended by members of parliament, clergy, representatives of scientific and cultural organizations, jurists, trade unions, political parties, and women's and youth organizations from eighty-five countries. A letter was sent to the chair of the U.N. General Assembly, in which the delegates praised the efforts of the U.N. to date, but lamented that the junta had "ignored [both] U.N. appeals and world public opinion."[630] Indeed, the junta "systematically insults the U.N., its organs, its charter, and its functionaries." The committee called for "all possible measures" to be used against the junta, including sanctions, coercive measures, and the emplacement of enforcement mechanisms to ensure that the junta complied with U.N. resolutions. Specifically, the committee exhorted the U.N. General Assembly to implement an economic boycott, and to take all possible measures aimed at the political and diplomatic isolation of the junta.[631]

The international conference also drafted an appeal to the "peoples of the world," which detailed the crimes of the military junta, whose "demagoguery and lies" had not succeeded in "deceiving world opinion." The junta's actions were totally "contradictory

[629] Ibid., p. 75.
[630] GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, document 14, pp. 57-58.
[631] Ibid., p. 58.

to the general tendencies of contemporary development and the spirit of the times." The worldwide condemnation of Chilean fascism was "eloquent testimony" to this.[632] The communiqué exhorted the peoples of the world to demand an immediate end to the terror, torture, and systematic violation of human rights, the closure of all concentration camps and interrogation centers, the immediate release of all political prisoners, and the prevention of further arrests. The communiqué also called upon the peoples to "exert pressure" on their governments to enact measures for the further political, diplomatic, and economic isolation of the junta.[633] The adoption in December of a U.N. General Assembly resolution accusing the Chilean junta of "the institutionalized practice of torture" suggests that the efforts of the solidarity committee were at least somewhat successful.[634]

In the late 1970s, as the human rights situation improved, the focus of the solidarity movement shifted. Foreign investment in Chile, which had been virtually non-existent in 1974, began to skyrocket in later years. Thus, during the late 1970s, the efforts of the international solidarity movement focused on cutting off loans, credits, and private investment in Chile.[635] In January 1978, the International Commission of Enquiry into the Crimes of the Military Junta in Chile convened its fifth session in Algiers. The commission reviewed a trove of evidence that had been smuggled out of the country by concerned activists – things like video recordings captured by secret cameras and conversations captured on tape recorders.[636] The commission expressed disappointment

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[632] GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, document 19, p. 8.
[633] Ibid., p. 10.
[634] Schoultz, *Human Rights and U.S. Policy toward Latin America*, p. 13.
[635] Ibid., p. 342.
[636] International Commission of Investigation into the Crimes of the Military Junta in Chile, 5th Session, January 27-29, 1978, Algiers. GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, ed. xr. 42, p. 1.

that the international financial community continued to invest in and provide credits to the military junta, and called for more extreme "government measures" to prohibit further foreign investment in Chile.[637]

THE ROLE OF THE CHILEAN EXILE COMMUNITY

Chileans exiled to communist-bloc countries were hugely influential in determining the agenda of the international solidarity campaign and in shaping the narrative of Allende's overthrow. During this period, Chilean communist party members in exile in the socialist camp began to develop proposals that the PCCh create an armed faction to combat the Pinochet regime with revolutionary violence. A group of young communist party activists in East Germany formed the Leipzig Group, which was inspired by the revolutionary groups in Central America and sought to apply the guerrilla techniques championed by Che Guevara to the situation in Chile.[638] The Leipzig Group has been credited with developing a critique of the UP government that focused on its failure to arm the populace. The group also developed a strategy for bringing down the military junta, which called for the use of all means necessary, including armed rebellion.[639] The Chilean exiles dedicated themselves to the solidarity movement. Jorge Insunza was one such exile, and had remained in Chile clandestinely until 1975, when he went into exile in East Germany. He spent the early 1980s in Moscow, and he recalls that his experiences as an exile in the socialist bloc reinforced his commitment to communism. While in exile, he developed a critique of the UP government centered on

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[637] Ibid., p. 10.
[638] Katherine Hite, *When the Romance Ended: Leaders of the Chilean Left, 1968-1998* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), p. 47.
[639] Ibid., p. 148.

its inability to mobilize the masses and its failure to develop a military strategy that involved the Chilean armed forces as well as the middle sectors of Chilean society.[640]

In January 1976, at the Moscow House of Friendship with Peoples from Foreign Countries, a "solemn assembly" was held to commemorate the 54th anniversary of the founding of the Chilean communist party. Fernando Contreras, who had joined the Chilean communist party in 1963, and fled to East Germany at the party's orders when Allende was overthrown, delivered a speech at the assembly.[641] His tone was defiant; the junta's repression had not succeeded in "destroying [the PCCh]…nor in severing its ties to the working class," nor had it managed to "root out Marxism."[642] He expressed optimism that the junta would not ultimately succeed in destroying Marxism, and cited the solidarity that the communist parties of Latin America had evinced for their Chilean brothers. The struggle of the Chilean people was the struggle of "Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Nicaragua, Argentina, Haiti, Bolivia, Guatemala, Puerto Rico"; indeed, it was a "struggle against a common enemy."[643]

In August 1976, Chilean exile Graciela Uribe sent an update on internal Chilean developments to the Soviet solidarity committee. She indicated that the CIA was cooperating with the National Intelligence Directorate (DINA) and helping to improve the "technical means for carrying out repression." But the opposition to the junta was growing, and was "felt even in the United States." The forces of imperialism had attempted to use the recent OAS meeting in Santiago to pressure the Latin American countries to support the Pinochet government, but the discussions had instead focused on

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[640] Ibid., pp. 66-67.
[641] Ibid., p. 146.
[642] GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, delo 24, p. 2.
[643] Ibid., p. 3.

human rights issues. Uribe described the principled absence of the Mexican delegation, combined with the opposition of states like Peru, Venezuela, Jamaica, and others, as "evidence that imperialism is no longer able to suppress the growth and development of progressive tendencies in Latin America."[644] Exiled Chilean communists were much quicker to point the finger at the Nixon administration and the CIA than were the Soviets.

In February 1977, the Soviet solidarity committee issued a bulletin describing the October 1976 visit of Chilean exile Alberto Texier to several African and Arab countries, during which he met with trade union delegations and others to encourage solidarity efforts on behalf of the Chilean patriots. Texier visited Algeria, Ghana, Libya, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Syria, meeting with representatives of various professional and trade unions and encouraging them to support various initiatives of the Chilean solidarity campaign, including sending telegrams to the U.N. and petitioning Pinochet for the immediate release of all political prisoners and the dissolution of DINA. Texier also participated in the 19th UNESCO conference in Nairobi, where he "contributed to the campaign of solidarity with the Chilean people." The Soviet solidarity committee characterized the "activism of the trade unions in the international arena" as a "major factor" in contributing to the "condemnation of the military junta at the UNESCO conference, and also in the U.N."[645]

In December 1976, the U.S. government arranged an exchange of Luis Corvalán for Vladimir Bukovsky, a Soviet dissident who had been committed to a psychiatric hospital. Former U.S. ambassador to Chile Nathaniel Davis was responsible for arranging the exchange, which he suggests might have been the first time that the Soviets implicitly

[644] Note to the Secretariat from G. Uribe, August 9, 1976. GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, delo 26, p. 167.
[645] Bulletin of the International Solidarity Committee, February 1977. GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, delo 27, p. 3.

acknowledged that they had imprisoned their citizens for political crimes. The Soviets wasted no time in portraying Corvalán's release as the result of pressure from worldwide democratic forces, and assigned themselves one of the leading roles in achieving this victory.[646] The Soviets simultaneously sought to evade the implications of their own human rights practices, which had resulted in the imprisonment in asylums of citizens whose only "crime" was political dissidence.

The International Trade Union Committee for Solidarity with the People and Workers of Chile, which functioned as an appendage of the World Federation of Trade Unions, convened in Prague on December 20. They characterized Corvalán's release as a "major victory" for the Chilean people and for "international solidarity." After engaging in a brief hagiography of Corvalán, the committee "did not fail to express its gratitude to the Soviet government for its efforts, which have paid off." The committee also expressed certainty that as an émigré in Moscow, Corvalán would be "surrounded by the friendship and solidarity of all advocates of peace and progress," and would have the "opportunity to further develop the tireless struggle for the liberation of his homeland from the fascist yoke."[647]

In January 1977, a meeting of workers was held in a "great hall" in Moscow, where Luis Corvalán was the guest of honor. The Soviet solidarity committee pointed to the meeting as "clear evidence of the loyalty of Soviet workers to the principle of proletarian internationalism and support of the people of Chile in its serious and difficult

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[646] Davis, *Last Two Years*, pp. 388-390.

[647] International Trade Union Committee for Solidarity with the Workers and People of Chile, Announcement of the Release of Luis Corvalán, December 20, 1976, Prague. GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, delo 27, p. 16.

struggle against the Pinochet regime."[648] On April 21, Corvalán was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize. At the award ceremony, Stepan Shalaev delivered a speech in which he described the decision of the award committee as the "international recognition" of Corvalán's "service…in the struggle for peace, democracy, and social progress, against the forces of reaction and fascism" and praised Corvalán's "readiness to sacrifice everything in the name of the interests of the working people."[649]

On September 4, 1978, a meeting of the Soviet solidarity committee was held at a factory in Moscow to honor the anniversary of the election of Salvador Allende. Luis Corvalán was the guest of honor, and he gave a speech in which he thanked the Soviet Union "with all [his] heart" for its solidarity efforts and for its commemoration of "the victorious battle waged by Chilean people on September 4, 1970." Correctly characterizing the election of Allende as a hemispheric development second only to the Cuban Revolution in its "major international impact," Corvalán praised the UP government for having "carried out the most profound economic and social changes" in Chile, among which the nationalization of industry, agrarian reform, and the decision to "reject the yoke of ignominious imperialist domination" figured most prominently. The "Chilean Revolution," however, had provoked the "profound anxiety and concern" of "North American imperialism," and thus, plans for the "fascist coup" were "hatched in the United States."[650] Corvalán's rhetoric was clearly more radical than that of the Soviets, and he did not shy away from placing the blame for Allende's overthrow squarely on the shoulders of the United States. He also enumerated the lessons of the

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[648] Stepan Shalaev, on Moscow Radio, September, 1977. GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, delo 28, p. 16.
[649] Speech of Stepan Shalaev at the presentation of the Lenin Prize to Luis Corvalán, April 21, 1977. GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, delo 33, p. 4.
[650] "Ningun dictador cae solo en virtud de sus crimenes. Lo fundamental es la lucha de las masas." Discurso de Luis Corvalán, el 4 de sieptembre de 1978. GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, delo 36, p. 29.

coup, among which the most important was the necessity of the armed struggle. Thus, exiled members of the Chilean communist party were "preparing military cadres" for the struggle in Nicaragua. Fifty members of the PCCh were participating as officers in "armed actions in Nicaragua," and were playing a "decisive role in the successes of the southern front of the Sandinista army."[651] Chilean communists in exile were at the forefront of efforts to embrace the armed struggle, and actively called for the violent overthrow of not only Pinochet, but Somoza in Nicaragua, and other hemispheric dictators as well.

THE QUEST FOR LEGITIMACY: THE CHILEAN RESPONSE

The Chilean military junta's initial reaction to international pressure was to defend the repression of the Marxist left as a national security requirement. Rather than denying the charges of human rights violations, the regime responded by asserting the necessity of violence to wipe out the Marxist threat to democracy, and dismissed international advocacy efforts as a communist conspiracy to discredit Chile's government.[652] The junta was clearly concerned about the effects of what it described as a Soviet-orchestrated propaganda campaign. The Chilean Foreign Ministry was convinced that the "efforts of Soviet communism" were directed at "achieving the overthrow of the government of Chile." Votes in the U.N. and other international organizations created the "serious problem" of how to defend "the authority of our delegation to the U.N. General Assembly or any other international organization."[653]

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[651] Memorandum of Conversation with the delegation of the Chilean Communist Party, February 11, 1978. GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, delo 38, p. 2.

[652] Hawkins, *International Human Rights and Authoritarian Rule in Chile*, p. 60.

[653] The Soviet Committee for Solidarity with the Chilean Democrats had, by means unknown, come into possession of a top-secret analysis prepared by the Chilean Foreign Ministry. Confidential Memorandum,

Clearly, the junta saw the parallels with Cuba, and worried about Chile's political and diplomatic isolation. The junta also realized that there would be difficulties in continuing to secure private investment in Chile, obtaining shipments of arms and other materiel, and maintaining trade relations. It was also frankly acknowledged that Chile's neighbors would exert pressure in the hopes of "securing their traditional geopolitical goals."[654]

The Foreign Ministry proposed a new strategy for enhancing the legitimacy of the Chilean government in international forums. Emphasizing the nature of the struggle against international communism as a purely internal affair would allow the Chileans to "appeal to the principle of non-interference." It was suggested, moreover, that Chile's efforts in international forums be "based on the unchanged anti-colonial position of Chile and on its solidarity…with developing countries." The opening of legations in some countries of Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean basin, as well as the "strengthening of our representation in the U.N. and in Central America could provide the basis…for this new strategy," which envisioned a spirited defense of Chilean interests and the "firm repudiation…of any direct attack on our government".[655] The Foreign Ministry also emphasized the importance of "strengthening our representation in the United States, in some countries of South America and all of Central America, and especially in the areas of traditional Chilean influence."[656]

The Foreign Ministry also proposed initiatives to combat the efforts of the Chilean solidarity movement. The release of political prisoners, would "help our friends…defend us." Moreover, it was considered necessary "to assert the necessity and

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Chile, December 9, 1974. GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, delo 20, document 52, p. 262.

[654] Ibid., p. 263.

[655] Ibid., p. 264.

[656] Ibid., p. 266.

legality of extreme measures," rather than "attempting to present a false picture of full democracy."[657] The junta sought to use the existence of armed insurgencies as a justification for what was increasingly being branded "state terrorism." When the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights issued a report in December 1974 on the junta's systematic human rights abuses, the government rejected the premises of the report and argued that the state of emergency in Chile served as a legitimate basis for the restriction of certain constitutional guarantees.[658] The junta prepared a formal rebuttal to the report and requested that it be disseminated to the U.N. General Assembly. Such actions were a clear demonstration of Pinochet's desire for international legitimacy.[659]

Indeed, the military junta apparently considered the 1976 convening of the Foreign Ministers of the Organization of American States in Santiago as a clear political victory and an indicator of its own enhanced legitimacy.[660] In June, the Soviet Committee for Solidarity with the Chilean Democrats had lodged protests against the convening of the OAS in Santiago.[661] In June 1976, the Soviet solidarity committee had sent telegrams to all the OAS delegations, condemning the decision to hold the session in Santiago and declaring that it was a clear attempt by "Chilean and international reaction…to strengthen the foreign policy position of the junta."[662] It seems that this assessment of the junta's intentions was fairly accurate.

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[657] Ibid., p. 267.
[658] Klaas Dykmann, *Philanthropic Endeavors or the Exploitation of an Ideal? The Human Rights Policy of the Organization of American States in Latin America, 1970-1991* (Frankfurt: Vervuert Verlag, 2004), p. 175.
[659] Ibid., p. 200.
[660] Ibid., p. 210.
[661] Report on Soviet Activities in Support of the Chilean Democrats against the Fascist Junta, GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, delo 22, p. 7.
[662] Information on the work of the Soviet Committee for Solidarity with the Chilean Democrats. GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, delo 31, p. 7.

In 1977, in an attempt to further enhance the junta's international legitimacy, Pinochet disbanded the National Intelligence Directorate (DINA). Though he replaced it with the National Information Center, it did mark an improvement in the human rights situation in Chile. The timing of the junta's announcement of its intention to dissolve DINA reflected the influence of the Carter administration's human rights-based foreign policy. It occurred during what one scholar has characterized as the early "active phase," when both Congress and the administration were applying heavy pressure on Pinochet to improve the human rights situation in Chile, and specifically to dissolve DINA.[663] The murder of human rights activist Orlando Letelier in Washington, D.C., presumably by agents of Pinochet, led U.S. officials to intensify pressure on the junta.[664] Thus it seems that the Carter administration's efforts to improve the human rights situation in Chile were at least partly successful.

The Soviets were quick, however, to take credit for this development. The Soviet solidarity committee, though characterizing the dissolution of DINA as one of many "various maneuvers…attempting to misinform and deceive world public opinion," and part of the junta's shift from "open terror to secret repression," nevertheless described such maneuvers as resulting from the direct pressure of the solidarity movement.[665] Three weeks after the announcement of the dissolution of DINA, General Secretary of the Soviet solidarity committee Stepan Shalaev went on Radio Moscow to applaud the

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[663] Kathryn Sikkink, *Mixed Signals: U.S. Human Rights Policy and Latin America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), p. 126.
[664] Hawkins, *International Human Rights and Authoritarian Rule in Chile*, p. 78.
[665] Resolution of the Soviet Committee for Solidarity with the Chilean Democrats, September 6, 1977. GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, delo 33, p. 23.

"various sectors of Soviet society" that had so "decisively" defended the Chilean people.[666]

By 1979, the human rights situation in Chile had improved dramatically. Amnesty International reported that the number of remaining political prisoners in the country was very low as a result of the junta's release of many of them into exile. The U.S. State Department issued its annual report on the human rights situation, which observed that the disappearances had been stopped, allegations of executions had become extremely rare, and incidents of torture had declined dramatically. Nevertheless, some 1,500 people remained missing and the OAS General Assembly reported in October on the "serious limitations on the exercise of human rights" in the country.[667] Moreover, as one scholar has pointed out, Pinochet probably would not have disbanded DINA had it not "essentially accomplished its mission."[668] Likely sensing that there was little more to be gained from its activism, the Soviet Committee for Solidarity with the Chilean Democrats was dissolved at the end of 1979.

CONCLUSION: HUMAN RIGHTS VS. SOVIET SELF-INTEREST

None of this is to say that Soviet anti-Pinochet activism falsified events or created the disillusionment and despair that so many of Latin America's leftists felt during the late 1970s and early 1980s period of intense state repression. The military junta that violently toppled the UP government was brutal and thuggish, and the crimes of Pinochet

[666] GARF, fond 9644, opis' 1, delo 28, p. 13.
[667] Schoultz, *Human Rights and U.S. Policy toward Latin America*, p. 350.
[668] Wright, *State Terrorism in Latin America*, p. 79.

and his cronies have been examined in detail.[669] According to the Chilean truth commission, state repression peaked in 1973, declining significantly after 1976, but terminating only with the end of Pinochet's rule. After the 1973 peak, there were an average of 189 deaths and disappearances per year from the period 1974 to 1976, an average of 16 per year from 1977 to 1982, and an average of 43 per year from 1983 to 1990.[670] The average number of deaths and disappearances during the years that coincide with the Carter administration's human rights-based foreign policy was significantly lower, which suggests that such an approach did indeed have an impact. Moreover, though the Soviets were a vocal and active participant in the transnational solidarity campaign, they were nevertheless a small part of a much broader movement composed of non-governmental organizations, inter-governmental organizations, religious, social, and advocacy groups, and international institutions.

Nevertheless, it is clear that Soviet actions were not driven by a genuine concern for human rights. During the same period, the Carter administration had become embroiled in a protracted confrontation with the USSR over its own human rights practices, and particularly over the issue of emigration. Moreover, the Soviets maintained and even strengthened relations with Argentina, which during the late 1970s killed or "disappeared" over twice as many of its citizens than did Pinochet. The average number of deaths and disappearances in Argentina from 1976 to 1978 was over twice as high as

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[669] See John Dinges, *The Condor Years: How Pinochet and his Allies Brought Terrorism to Three Continents* (New York: The New Press, 2004); Peter Kornbluh, *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability* (New York: The New Press, 2003); Wright, *State Terrorism in Latin America*; and Ariel C. Armony, "Transnationalizing the Dirty War," in Joseph and Spenser, *In From the Cold*.

[670] Sikkink, *Mixed Signals*, p. 98.

the average in Chile, even during the peak of repression in the latter country.[671] Yet this did not prevent the Soviets from supporting the Argentine junta in international organizations, particularly the United Nations, where Soviet officials used their clout to prevent the U.N. Human Rights Commission from condemning the junta's human rights violations.[672] Nor did it prevent the Soviets from signing a trade agreement with Argentina. During the period of the junta's most severe repression, from 1975 to 1979, the Soviet Union's annual trade turnover with the country averaged $330 million.[673] When the Carter administration imposed a grain embargo on the USSR in retaliation for the invasion of Afghanistan, Argentina pointedly refused to join the embargo, though not so much out of a sense of solidarity with the Soviet Union as out of financial necessity. In 1978, Argentina exported almost a million and a half tons of grain to the USSR, and by 1980, that figure had reached 7.6 million tons.[674] By 1981, the USSR had become the recipient of 80 percent of Argentina's grain exports and 33 percent of its total exports.[675]

The overthrow of progressive regimes in Latin America did not preclude the maintenance of diplomatic relations with the USSR, which was perfectly content to maintain relations with Brazil after the fall of Goulart, Bolivia after the overthrow of Torres, and Uruguay after the military coup in 1973. Indeed, according to Sergo Mikoyan, immediately after the September 11 coup in Chile, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko cabled the Kremlin with a proposal to maintain diplomatic relations

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[671] Ibid., pp. 101-102.
[672] Guest, *Behind the Disappearances*, p. 119. See also Aldo C. Vacs, "Pragmatism and Rapprochement: Soviet Relations with Argentina and Brazil," in Eusebio Mujal-León, ed. *The USSR and Latin America: A Developing Relationship* (Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman, 1989), p. 325.
[673] David E. Albright, "Latin America in Soviet Third World Strategy: The Political Dimension," in Mujal-León, *The USSR and Latin America*, p. 47.
[674] Guest, *Behind the Disappearances*, pp. 182-183.
[675] Vacs, "Pragmatism and Rapprochement," p. 326.

with the Pinochet government.[676] Yet because of the close relationship between Allende and the USSR, the strength and loyalty of the Chilean communist party, and the junta's severe repression of the Chilean communists, the Soviets saw more to gain in a vocal and activist anti-Pinochet effort than in making accommodations with the new regime.[677]

The content of the Soviet propaganda campaign, moreover, reveals the influence of détente on both Soviet-Latin American and U.S.-Soviet relations. Whereas in earlier periods of the Cold War, Soviet propaganda had adopted a viciously anti-U.S. tone, the downfall of Allende and the UP government was not explicitly blamed on the United States. Though Soviet propaganda occasionally referred obliquely to the U.S. role in the coup, the importance of détente and maintaining cooperative relations with the Nixon administration and its successors took precedence over the desire to strike a blow at U.S. influence in Latin America. It was the Chilean communists who were vocal about the role of the Nixon administration and the CIA in destabilizing the situation in Chile and contributing to the overthrow of Allende. In order to remain credible in the eyes of its allies, the Soviets were pushed by the radicalism of the Chileans to pursue an active role in the transnational solidarity movement.

That the Soviets were very active in the solidarity campaign also suggests that they attempted to take advantage of the situation to portray themselves as protectors, not violators, of human rights, and to deflect international attention from their own appalling human rights record. This was especially necessary after the signing of the Helsinki accords committed the USSR to upholding certain human rights guarantees. Though the

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[676] Sergo Mikoyan, "The Soviet Union and Latin America: The Political and Strategic Domain," in Edmé Domínguez, *The Soviet Union's Latin American Policy: A Retrospective Analysis* (Sweden: Göteborgs Universitet, 1995), p. 41.

[677] Leon Gouré and Morris Rothenberg, *Soviet Penetration of Latin America* (Florida: Center for Advanced International Studies at the University of Miami, 1975), p. 17.

accords were largely unenforceable, Soviet dissidents attempted to use them to hold the state and party accountable for its human rights violations. Ironically, the Soviet Union had opposed measures designed to strengthen the U.N.'s human rights apparatus until it sought to use a strengthened U.N. against Pinochet.[678]

The fall of Allende also occurred during a period in which the Soviet Union often found itself siding with the United States against the demands of Third World countries for economic justice. The New International Economic Order (NIEO), for instance, which was championed by the Group of 77 in the United Nations, called for a total restructuring of international economic relations and was opposed by both Cold War superpowers. Though at first the Soviets supported such demands, many Third World countries had become more vocally critical of the USSR, blaming it equally for underdevelopment and other economic ills. Moreover, since the Soviets had shifted focus to expanding trade relations with Western countries, they recognized that their interests in becoming a greater part of the international economy would not be served by the NIEO.[679] Thus, the vocal support for Allende and the strident condemnation of Pinochet may have been at least partly aimed at improving Moscow's standing in the eyes of the Third World.

Soviet anti-Pinochet activism also revealed and took advantage of the changed balance of power in the United Nations. In 1971, one Soviet commentator was crowing that "in the United Nations…Latin American countries have ceased to be mere cogs in a once smoothly running U.S. 'voting machine,'" and that "some Latin American countries act jointly with the socialist countries, especially on such issues as stopping the arms

[678] Guest, *Behind the Disappearances*, p. 97.
[679] Carol R. Saivetz and Sylvia Woodby, *Soviet-Third World Relations* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985), p. 123.

race, prohibiting nuclear weapons, condemning acts of aggression and the use of force."[680] By the early 1970s, the U.S. Congress was vocally questioning the purpose of contributing such a large percentage of money to the coffers of an international organization that failed to represent U.S. interests. The U.S. share of the U.N. budget was 31.5 percent, and partly as a result of U.S. pressure, the U.N. General Assembly voted in 1972 to lower the ceiling on assessments to 25 percent.[681] During the same period, Brezhnev sought to strengthen the mission of the USSR in New York and to broaden Soviet policy in the United Nations.[682] As one former Soviet diplomat recalls, Soviet proposals in the U.N. were "overtly propagandistic in nature," and did not have to be "genuine" or even to have "the slightest chance of being implemented."[683] Thus, Soviet anti-Pinochet activism in the United Nations was concerned less with the actual situation in Chile than it was aimed at portraying the USSR as a protector of international human rights.

Finally, Soviet anti-Pinochet activism revealed the influence of the Chilean communists, particularly those exiled to communist-bloc countries. The Leipzig Group in Berlin, and Corvalán and others in Moscow were at the forefront of efforts to reshape the narrative of the Chilean coup and to apply its lessons to the revolutionary struggle in Central America, where the Sandinista National Liberation Front battled Somoza's forces for control of Nicaragua and an entirely new phase in Latin America's Cold War was unfolding.

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[680] S. Gonionsky, quoted in ibid., p. 191.
[681] Thant Myint-U and Amy Scott, *The UN Secretariat: A Brief History, 1945-2006* (New York: International Peace Academy, 2007), p. 58.
[682] Victor Israelyan, *On the Battlefields of the Cold War: A Soviet Ambassador's Confession* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), p. 102.
[683] Ibid., p. 122.

Chapter Five: The Soviet Union and the Nicaraguan Revolution

The 1979 victory of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (*Frente Sandinista Liberación Nacional*, FSLN) over the Anastasio Somoza Debayle regime in Nicaragua marked the first successful Latin American revolution since the Cuban revolution. The FSLN had begun as a *fidelista* political movement in 1961 and had by the mid-1970s emerged as the leading opposition group to the Somoza dictatorship. The FSLN was inspired by (and named after) Augusto César Sandino, who in the late 1920s and early 1930s led a rebellion against the U.S. occupation of Nicaragua. Interestingly, the policy of the Communist International (Comintern) toward Sandino had been based on the principle of "non-ideological collaboration," which aimed to take advantage of the rebellion's anti-imperialism. The Comintern dispatched two Latin American cadres to Nicaragua, Carlos Aponte and Augusto Farabundo Martí, who joined Sandino's high command and sought to radicalize the movement. The Comintern, however, lacked both an appreciation of Sandino's methods and motivations, and an adequate understanding of the situation in Nicaragua. As a result, the Comintern ultimately disavowed Sandino and condemned him as a "traitor" for his failure to transition the movement into a more "revolutionary phase."[684]

By the time the FSLN came to power, Soviet policy toward Latin America was less ideological than it had been during any other period of the Cold War, and focused primarily on the cultivation of traditional diplomatic relations and political support in the international arena. The Sandinistas looked to the Soviet Union for political, moral, and

[684] Edmé Domínguez, "The Latin American Communist Movement: Realities and Relations with the Soviet Union," in Mujal-León, *The USSR and Latin America*, pp. 122-123.

military support, but ultimately came to realize that the situation in the USSR was vastly different from the realities of Nicaraguan society and should therefore not be taken as a model.[685] Though the Sandinistas petitioned the Soviets for military hardware and for offensive weaponry for use in the regional conflict that had been simmering in Central America and the Caribbean since the mid- to late 1970s, the Soviets refused to provide the FSLN with anything other than defensive weaponry. Moreover, as relations with the Reagan administration began to improve, Soviet premier Mikhail Gorbachev subordinated support for the Sandinistas to the imperative of cooperation with the United States.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE SANDINISTAS

Though some historians have considered revolutions like the one in Nicaragua to have been "inevitable" due to a combination of factors, among which grinding poverty and geographical proximity to the United States figure prominently, others have emphasized the unique set of circumstances in Nicaragua to show that its revolution was far from preordained.[686] The latter perspective, put forward by historian Hal Brands, contends that the revolution in Nicaragua was not exemplary of hemispheric trends, but owed its success to four distinct though interrelated factors that combined to render the situation in that country unique. Not only was the Nicaraguan system deteriorating from the late 1960s, but the guerrillas had learned enough from the travails of their predecessors to earn substantial support from among the agrarian population. Moreover,

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[685] Fernando López-Alves, "Soviets and Insurgents in Latin America: A Third World View," in Varas, *Soviet-Latin American Relations in the 1980s*, pp. 89-90.
[686] For an example of the former, see Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions*. For an example of the latter, see Hal Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*.

the insurgents enjoyed significant foreign backing, not only from Moscow and Havana, but from other Latin American nations as well. Finally, the Carter administration, by means of a confused and incoherent foreign policy, effectively weakened or destroyed the traditional levers of U.S. influence in Nicaragua. The period of revolutionary ferment in 1980s Central America, when viewed through the lens of foreign intervention, reveals the meddling of several players; external intervention, writes Brands, "was not a one-sided affair."[687] In contrast to the Cuban revolution, the Nicaraguan revolution lacked charismatic political figures like Fidel Castro and Che Guevara; the Sandinista leadership, moreover, was moderate and embraced incremental reforms in contrast to the rapid pace of radical reform in Cuba.[688] The Sandinistas did not make the same mistakes as other armed revolutionary groups; they worked hard to develop international support and to forge domestic alliances with moderate groups.[689] The Nicaraguan revolution did, however, inspire other revolutionary movements, particularly those in El Salvador and Guatemala, which contributed to the further destabilization of Central America and intensified the hostility of the Reagan administration.

Much of the controversy surrounding U.S. policy toward Central America in the 1980s has focused on U.S. support for the *Somocista* counter-revolutionary forces, widely known as the contras. The Somoza dynasty had been one of the hemisphere's most loyal U.S. allies, and its fierce anticommunism translated into domestic repression of the political left and firm support for the U.S. international policy agenda, in both the Organization of American States and the United Nations. Nicaragua had provided the

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[687] Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, p. 221.
[688] Wright, *Latin America in the Era of the Cuban Revolution*, pp. 165-166.
[689] Ernest Evans, "Revolutionary Movements in Central America: The Development of a New Strategy," in Howard J. Wiarda and Mark Falcoff, eds., *The Communist Challenge in the Caribbean and Central America* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1987), p. 172.

United States with territorial access in order to launch the invasion of Guatemala in 1954, and the invasion of Cuba in 1961. Nicaragua also sent troops to the Dominican Republic in 1965, and had offered troops for the Korean and Vietnam wars. Successive U.S. administrations rewarded the Somozas with generous financial and military aid. Liberal critics of the Reagan administration have wax outraged over the "imperial presidency" and decried the immorality of U.S. support for the contras, while downplaying or ignoring altogether the extent of Soviet support for the Sandinistas. Commentators on the right tend to dismiss the moral implications of U.S. policy and some even criticize Reagan for not defying Congress more flagrantly than he did. Such assessments tend to be based on an exaggerated view of Soviet and Cuban aims in Nicaragua, with some going so far as to suggest that the FSLN was manipulated by its "Cuban masters," and that if the Soviets succeeded in drawing Nicaragua into its orbit, "the Soviet Union, through its Cuban satellite, will have achieved the greatest possible victory in its march toward world hegemony."[690] While the FSLN clearly enjoyed the backing of Moscow and Havana, it was far from a mere marionette in the hands of its puppet-masters. And as we have seen, Cuba exercised enough independence from the USSR as to render the "satellite" label inaccurate at best. Moreover, by the early 1980s, and certainly by the time of Gorbachev's ascent to power, the Soviets did not wish to become further embroiled in Central America; indeed, they pursued a number of face-saving measures to extricate themselves from the imbroglio, among which was the active promotion of the Contadora peace process.

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[690] G.W. Sand, *Soviet Aims in Central America: The Case of Nicaragua* (New York: Praeger, 1989), pp. 28 & 58.

William LeoGrande, a former Democratic staffer who worked for Congress on Central American issues during the 1980s and whose bias is distinctly anti-administration, nevertheless provides a thorough and reasonably balanced account of U.S. policy during the Reagan era. While hard-liners like Alexander Haig rang the alarm about Soviet-Cuban penetration of Central America, moderates like George Schulz sought to mitigate the social and economic causes of the regional crisis.[691] While his treatment of the ideological preconceptions that virtually guaranteed Reagan's support for the contras is not entirely unsympathetic, he launches a blistering – though not undeserved – attack on the administration for its "reluctance to peer too closely into the charnel house of the death squads."[692] Others have argued that the Reagan administration did not have a clear and consistent policy towards Central America, and that officials on the ground in these countries were frequently confused by conflicting policy imperatives. A former commander of the U.S. Military Group in Honduras recalls that some U.S. officials thought U.S. policy was to overthrow the Sandinistas, while others thought the policy was one of "calculated intimidation" towards the Nicaraguan government, while yet others thought the policy was to goad the Sandinistas into committing an act that could provide the United States with a pretext for intervention.[693] As a result, U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) was unable to coordinate an effective regional policy or strategy.[694]

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[691] William LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard: The United States In Central America, 1977-1992* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), p. 189.
[692] Ibid., p. 234.
[693] Sewall Menzel, *Dictators, Drugs, and Revolution: Cold War Campaigning in Latin America, 1965-1989* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2006), p. 164.
[694] Ibid., p. 165.

With the exception of Cuba, we know more about Soviet policy in Central America than about any other aspect of Soviet-Latin American relations during the Cold War. The KGB had established contacts with the Sandinistas two decades before their ascent to power, and the success of the revolution in Nicaragua had much the same effect as the Cuban revolution in reviving the optimism of Soviet leaders regarding the revolutionary potential of Latin America.[695] In the initial period of the Sandinista revolution, Moscow took a backseat to Havana and was content with providing the bulk of economic assistance and military hardware. However, as the Sandinista leadership became more frustrated with Castro's excessive demands, they sought a more balanced position and Moscow gained influence at Havana's expense.[696]

Robert Kagan has examined the Managua-Havana-Moscow nexus in exquisite detail. He refutes charges that hostile U.S. policy drove the Sandinistas into the arms of the Soviets. Instead, he argues, the Sandinistas actively sought an alliance with the Soviets and availed themselves of every opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty to Moscow.[697] They extolled the Cuban revolution as a model for the transformation of Nicaragua and looked to Havana for material, military, and moral support. Kagan catalogs and itemizes the Soviet-bloc shipments of arms and materiel furnished to the Sandinistas – and the list is indeed impressive. He is also attentive to key shifts that occurred in Soviet Third World policy as the result of the rise to power of a new generation of leaders and a rapidly deteriorating internal economic situation.[698] Gorbachev's "New Thinking" explicitly subordinated ideological solidarity to economic

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[695] Andrew, *The World Was Going Our Way* p. 31.
[696] Pavlov, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance*, p. 99.
[697] Robert Kagan, *A Twilight Struggle: American Power and Nicaragua, 1977-1990* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), p. 130.
[698] Ibid., pp. 300-302.

realities.[699] On the U.S. side, the Reagan Doctrine subsumed the anticommunist crusade within the larger goal of promoting democracy and therefore attracted support from both sides of the political aisle.[700] Thomas Carothers has supported this view, documenting official attention to democratic development in Latin America from his vantage point within the State Department.[701] The overriding rhetorical emphasis on promoting democratic development, rather than existing merely as window-dressing, actually led officials on both sides of the aisle to pursue policies that they believed were conducive to strengthening democracy in the region. Kagan's pro-administration bias is nevertheless evident throughout the study, particularly in his assertion that "the contra army was the only threat capable of forcing moderation on the Sandinistas."[702] The Reagan administration is therefore vindicated and the moral implications of U.S. support for the contras elided.

Walter LaFeber has suggested that Brezhnev hoped the guerrilla war in Central America would preoccupy the United States as the Red Army bogged down in Afghanistan.[703] If this is true, then U.S. policies toward Central America during the tumultuous 1980s played into Soviet hands. After Brezhnev passed from the scene, however, Soviet policy underwent a fundamental transformation. Support for Third World regimes and national liberation movements was scaled back and Soviet national security interests re-examined. As Gorbachev and Reagan became ever closer, they began to cooperate on Central American issues. In October 1988, Moscow suspended

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[699] Ibid., p. 642.
[700] Ibid., pp. 352-353.
[701] Thomas Carothers, *In the Name of Democracy: U.S. Policy Toward Latin America in the Reagan Years* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
[702] Kagan, *A Twilight Struggle*, p. 722.
[703] LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions*, p. 293.

shipments of heavy arms to Nicaragua in response to the U.S. decision to cease delivery of military aid to the contras. This decision was premised on the understanding that continued weapons deliveries to the Sandinistas would be viewed by Washington as evidence of Soviet intransigence in reaching a diplomatic solution to the crisis.[704] Nevertheless, Gorbachev's efforts to improve relations with the United States and extricate the Soviet Union from cumbersome Third World commitments met with resistance from party hardliners.[705] His restructuring of the Soviet foreign policymaking apparatus also widened the circle of decision-makers so that Soviet policy became subject to constraints, including public opinion, that had formerly played little or no role in the policy process.[706]

Though the Soviets had been following the situation in Central America for years, the triumph of the Sandinistas came as a surprise. According to Sergo Mikoyan, as late as 1979, the Soviets still did not anticipate a Sandinista victory in Nicaragua's civil war. This was at least partly due to the fact that Somoza's National Guard was so well-equipped that the Soviets doubted the guerrillas even stood a chance.[707] This view was at least partly conditioned by the pro-Moscow Nicaraguan communist party (*Partido Socialista Nicaragüense*, PSN), which informed the Soviets that the FSLN was "adventurist" and "too daring." Indeed, the PSN did not join the anti-Somoza insurrection

[704] Pavlov, *Soviet-Cuban Alliance*, p. 147.
[705] Jan S. Adams, *A Foreign Policy in Transition: Moscow's Retreat from Central America and the Caribbean, 1985-1992* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992).
[706] Ibid., p. 46.
[707] Danuta Paszyn, *The Soviet Attitude to Political and Social Change in Central America, 1979-1990: Case Studies on Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), p. 24.

until its last months, and even then provided only propaganda support and modest financial aid.[708]

Yet the triumph of the Sandinistas was clearly a welcome development for Moscow. On July 20, Brezhnev declared the USSR's intention to "develop multifaceted ties with Nicaragua," and formal diplomatic relations were established on October 19.[709] As with Allende's Chile, the Soviet approach to the Sandinistas was cautious, and Moscow deliberately refrained from categorizing Nicaragua as "socialist" or "Marxist-Leninist." Instead, the country was referred to as a "progressive democratic state" that had "embarked on the road of independent development." Victor Volsky, the director of the Latin America Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, stated that "we would not like to repeat…the commitment which we have made to Cuba for the last twenty years," and asserted that "Nicaragua must maintain flexibility in its international relations; it must not adhere to a single country."[710] Soviet involvement in Nicaragua was envisioned in terms of the Reagan administration's desire to challenge the USSR through its perceived "proxies" in Central America. Thus, the Soviets did not seek so much to expand their own presence in the region as they sought to challenge U.S. interventionism there.[711]

International developments contributed to the moderation of the Sandinista government. In the Soviet Union, the reforms championed by leader Mikhail Gorbachev moved Soviet society toward an accommodation with Western culture and a tentative embrace of free-market principles. As a result, even committed Marxists began having

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[708] Ibid., p. 26.
[709] Ibid., p. 27.
[710] Victor Volsky, quoted in ibid., p. 31.
[711] Kiva Maydanik, "The Ideological Aspects of Soviet Relations with Latin America," in Domínguez, *The Soviet Union's Latin American Policy*, p. 31.

doubts about the viability of the Soviet economic model. Moreover, the trend in the Third World during this period was away from centralization and toward privatization.[712] The Soviets, additionally, had learned important lessons from the experience with Allende's Chile. Thus, they encouraged the Sandinistas to not move too quickly toward implementing a command economy, and recommended instead the maintenance of a mixed economy, which would entail state ownership of some sectors, but would maintain private control over others. This approach would be less likely to alienate Nicaragua's middle classes and thereby avoid making what had been considered one of Allende's greatest mistakes.[713] Socialist bloc aid to Nicaragua during the period 1979 to 1983 was estimated at only twenty percent of total aid rendered, with the majority being provided by other countries of Latin America and Western Europe. Moscow's share of the socialist bloc aid proffered to Nicaragua was estimated at less than one percent.[714]

The degree of Cuban support for the FSLN during the civil war is disputed. It seems that the support of other Latin American regimes exceeded that provided by Cuba. In May 1979, Havana sent a few planeloads of light weaponry and a small contingent of military advisers. However, it seems that the bulk of support provided by Castro during the insurrectionary period was political, and involved negotiations with various factions to unite them behind the FSLN.[715] During the FSLN's first year in power, Cuba stepped up its aid to Nicaragua, providing $10 million in emergency relief and economic aid, and signing in April 1981 an economic cooperation agreement totaling $64 million.[716] Though provided immediate aid to the Sandinistas upon their triumph over Somoza and

[712] Wright, *Latin American in the Era of the Cuban Revolution*, p. 181.
[713] Paszyn, *Soviet Attitude to Political and Social Change in Central America*, p. 37.
[714] Ibid., p. 41.
[715] Ibid., p. 25.
[716] Ibid., p. 41.

his security forces, he urged them to be cautious and to not provoke the United States unnecessarily. Though the Cubans also supported the revolutionaries in El Salvador, Castro supported a negotiated settlement to end the conflicts in Central America.[717]

Thus, as two prominent scholars argue, "the Reagan administration's claims about an active Soviet effort to establish revolutionary footholds in Latin America credited Moscow with far more interest and investment in the region than Soviet behavior ever actually warranted."[718] Nevertheless, as at least one scholar has observed, during the period leading up to Reagan's inauguration, Soviet and Cuban rhetoric about the revolutionary prospects in Central America gave considerable cause for concern that the Soviets and Cubans "might try to exploit the situation in an increasingly aggressive manner." Nevertheless, the origins of the upheaval in the region were clearly indigenous, and the Reagan administration "grossly exaggerated" the threat of Soviet-Cuban subversion.[719]

MOSCOW AND THE FSLN

The downfall of Somoza had a transformative effect on Central America's communist parties. Though the Nicaraguan communist party had not joined the insurrection until the last months, and then only provided minimal support, the communist party of El Salvador had reached a decision at its 7th Congress in April 1979 to abandon its commitment to legality and to support the armed struggle.[720] As we have seen, the Chilean communists in exile in Moscow were at the forefront of efforts to

[717] Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution*, p. 177.
[718] Nogee and Donaldson, *Soviet Foreign Policy*, p. 222.
[719] Wayne S. Smith, "An Overview of Soviet Policy in Latin America," in Wayne S. Smith, ed. *The Russians Aren't Coming: New Soviet Policy in Latin America* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), p. 21.
[720] Paszyn, *Soviet Attitude to Political and Social Change in Central America*, p. 88.

reshape the narrative of Allende's downfall and to argue for the necessity of revolutionary violence to combat counter-revolutionary violence. As ties between Managua and Moscow developed, it was not the Soviets who were probing for opportunities to expand their influence in Central America, but the Sandinistas who pushed for more support than the Soviets were willing to proffer.

On July 20, 1979, the day after the FSLN captured Managua, Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev issued a relatively moderate and measured declaration of support for the Nicaraguan revolutionary regime, in which he emphasized the USSR's respect for the principle of self-determination and stressed the "right of every people, every country to choose its own path of development." Brezhnev expressed the readiness of the USSR to establish diplomatic relations with Nicaragua and to "develop diverse ties with Nicaragua…in the interest of strengthening world peace and international cooperation." This was a measured statement that shied away from direct criticism of the United States, or even of oblique references to the forces of imperialism and neo-colonialism. By August, Nicaraguan and Soviet representatives were already engaged in negotiations to normalize relations and exchange embassies.[721] On October 18, an agreement on the establishment of diplomatic relations at the embassy level and the exchange of ambassadors was signed by representatives of the Nicaraguan and Soviet governments in Managua.[722]

After the July triumph of the FSLN, many countries and international financial organizations had proffered support to Nicaragua. But, as the Nicaraguan ambassador to

[721] Nicaragua, August 22, 1979, Otdel Latinskikh Amerikanskikh Stran, Ministerstvo Inostrannykh Del [hereafter, OLAS MID]. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 22, papka 2, delo 4, p. 10.
[722] Nicaragua, Summary. October 31, 1979, OLAS MID. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 22, papka 2, delo 4, p. 19.

the United States Rafael Solís complained to the first secretary of the Soviet embassy in Washington, such aid was far from sufficient. The Nicaraguan ambassador lamented that his country was "lacking in means and resources," and that the U.S. withholding of aid to the country was being "keenly felt." Solís predicted that the United States would continue to take a "wait-and-see" approach to Nicaragua, and that further aid would not be forthcoming.[723]

In August, 1979, the Soviet embassy in Costa Rica prepared a report for the Foreign Ministry on the actions of the Sandinista government. It lauded the steps taken to nationalize industry and "the liquidation of the repressive institutions of Somoza," and argued that the Sandinista program represented "a foundation for the creation of a democratic state in Nicaragua."[724] The report noted that Nicaragua's army and security forces were being strengthened and reorganized; the urgency of such a task was intensified by the "very real threat of intervention…by former National Guardists" located in Honduras and other countries of Central America. The creation of the "Sandinista military police" was aimed at the "struggle against counter-revolutionary elements."[725] Nicaragua's foreign policy predilections were identified as the defense of the "principles of non-alignment, peaceful coexistence and cooperation of states on an equal basis." The interim government had sent a request for formal membership in the

[723] Memorandum of Conversation between Nicaraguan ambassador to the U.S. Rafael Solís and First Secretary of the Soviet embassy in Washington, G. Elkin, November 6, 1979. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 22, papka 2, delo 2, p. 5.
[724] Embassy of the USSR in Costa Rica, August 18, 1979, Nicaragua (Summary). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 22, papka 2, delo 4, p. 4.
[725] Ibid., p. 6.

Non-Aligned Movement and hoped to participate in the 6th Conference of Heads of State, scheduled to take place in Havana in September.[726]

In October, Nicaraguan ambassador to the United States Rafael Solís delivered a speech at Johns Hopkins, in which he declared that the United States was "always concerned with influencing foreign governments in the Caribbean basin, viewing the region as their own domestic sea."[727] The first secretary of the Soviet embassy in Washington prepared a report for the Soviet Foreign Ministry on the speech, in which he suggested that Nicaraguan foreign policy was aimed at non-alignment and would "not take an anti-American direction if there is not sufficient reason to."[728] In response to a question about Cuba, Solís had assured listeners that neither Cuba nor the Soviet military personnel in Cuba posed a threat to U.S. interests. The first secretary found it "perfectly obvious" that the U.S. "scare campaign" regarding the Soviet brigade in Cuba was an attempt to "justify the cultivation of their own military presence in the Caribbean basin." He also noted that Nicaragua intended to improve and develop its relations with Cuba.[729]

By the end of the month, the Latin American Department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry was warning of the constant "threats of counter-revolutionary and interventionist forces."[730] The department noted that the Nicaraguan government had announced "its intention to renounce all military agreements with the US."[731] The permanent delegation of the USSR to the U.N. composed a report on U.S. policy toward

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[726] Ibid., p. 7.
[727] Soviet embassy in Washington, November 5, 1979. On the speech by Nicaraguan ambassador to the U.S. Rafael Solís at Johns Hopkins University, October 24, 1979. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 22, papka 2, delo 4, p. 40.
[728] Ibid., p. 42.
[729] Ibid., p. 43.
[730] Nicaragua, Summary. October 31, 1979, OLAS MID. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 22, papka 2, delo 4, p. 16.
[731] Ibid., p. 18.

Nicaragua, in which was noted the tendency of the Carter administration to refrain from "responding to criticism of U.S. policy in the local Nicaraguan mass media, in the U.N. General Assembly, and at the recent conference of non-aligned countries in Havana."[732] The report emphasized that U.S. officials were gravely concerned that "economic feebleness attracts the attention of Fidel Castro." The U.S. news media, moreover, was expressing the "danger that Nicaragua will turn into a second Cuba."[733] In January, 1980, the United States cut off all aid to the FSLN. Sandinista leaders traveled to Moscow in March, where an inter-party agreement was signed, denoting official Soviet recognition of the FSLN as the vanguard force in the Nicaraguan revolution. The Soviets had granted Castro's 26th of July movement the same status, which amounted to a recognition that Latin America's communist parties were often not the leaders of the region's revolutionary movements.[734]

In February, the Soviet Foreign Ministry prepared a report with background material to prepare Soviet officials for upcoming negotiations with a Nicaraguan delegation comprised of both party and government representatives. The report detailed the Nicaraguan delegation's activities and voting record at the 34th U.N. General Assembly. Describing the Nicaraguan revolution as "clear evidence" of "the ascent of the national liberation movement," the report noted that at the 34th session, Nicaraguan officials "condemned U.S. hegemony," with Daniel Ortega drawing attention to the fact that "aggressive circles in the United States dream about restoring Somoza's regime."[735]

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[732] Permanent Mission of the USSR to the U.N., October 31, 1979. U.S. Policy Toward Nicaragua (Summary). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 22, papka 2, delo 4, p. 37.
[733] Ibid., p. 38.
[734] Paszyn, *Soviet Attitude to Political and Social Change in Central America*, p. 32.
[735] Material for talks with representatives of the party-state delegation of Nicaragua, February, 1980. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 23, papka 3, delo 3, p. 20.

At the General Assembly, the USSR had sponsored resolution 34/103, on the "impermissibility of hegemonic policies in international relations," of which the Nicaraguan delegation had voted in favor. Among other provisions, the initiative called or "strict respect for the rights of all states to determine their own political and social systems."[736] The Soviets expressed "deep satisfaction" that the Nicaraguans had voted for the resolution, and expressed their "hopes for the most active cooperation with the delegation of Nicaragua."[737]

The report also condemned the "attempts of American imperialists and Chinese hegemonists to use the U.N. for interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan," and asserted that the "further cooperation of all progressive forces is needed in order to frustrate the attempts of imperialism and reaction to again impose upon the U.N. discussion of the non-existent Afghan question."[738] On March 15, a joint Soviet-Nicaraguan communiqué announced the "decisive support" of the USSR and Nicaragua "for the inalienable right of the people of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan to go along the chosen path of progressive transformation."[739] The communiqué denounced the "attempts of some states to dominate others by…announcing entire regions of the world to be the sphere of their 'vital interests,' and by means of direct politico-military and economic pressure."[740]

On April 8, 1980, the first Nicaraguan ambassador the USSR, Ricardo Wheelock, met with the vice chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and informed him

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[736] Ibid., p. 21.
[737] Ibid., p. 23.
[738] Ibid., pp. 32-33.
[739] Joint Soviet-Nicaraguan communiqué, March 15, 1980. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 23, papka 3, delo 3, p. 8.
[740] Ibid., p. 9.

that Nicaragua could consolidate its "revolutionary gains" only with the "provision of effective economic and military support from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, who are the true friends of Nicaragua." Wheelock added that the "consolidation of the revolutionary process in Nicaragua" would stimulate the "further development of the liberation struggle in Central America." However, in light of the U.S. administration's "worsening of the international atmosphere," Wheelock emphasized the necessity of "decisively rejecting…the attempts of imperialism to destabilize progressive regimes in different regions of the world."[741] The vice chairman of the Supreme Soviet assured Wheelock that the Soviet Union was "ready to provide help and assistance in the goal of progressive development in Nicaragua," but emphasized that the Soviets "feel that the important factor in the struggle against imperialism, with which the core interests of developing countries are connected, is the…strengthening of the process of détente." Though Wheelock had indicated that Nicaragua "firmly intends to lead the country along the path of constructing socialism," the Soviets served notice of their unwillingness to take steps in support of the FSLN that would jeopardize prospects for détente.[742]

The Soviet Foreign Ministry also expressed approval of the entrance of Nicaragua into the Non-Aligned Movement, and positively noted that the Nicaraguans "firmly support Cuba as representative of the movement." At the Havana summit of the NAM, "Nicaragua immediately became sufficiently active…with anti-imperialist positions."[743] Daniel Ortega had proclaimed the NAM as a "growing influence in the international

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[741] Memorandum of Conversation between Nicaraguan ambassador to the USSR Ricardo Wheelock and vice chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet I.R. Kebin, April 8, 1980. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 23, papka 3, delo 3, p. 2.
[742] Ibid., p. 4.
[743] Material for talks with the Nicaraguan delegation – Non-Aligned Movement, November 25, 1980. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 23, papka 3, delo 3, p. 44.

arena in the peoples' struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism, apartheid, and all forms of interference and hegemony."[744] Moreover, the Foreign Ministry applauded Nicaragua's opposition to "the attempts of the West, Peking, and their accomplices to connect the movement to the anti-Soviet and anti-Afghan campaign around the 'Afghan issue,'" and noted that the Nicaraguan delegation had "refrained from voting on the resolution concerning the 'Afghan question'" at the 35th session of the U.N. General Assembly.[745] The Foreign Ministry characterized the position of Nicaragua as adhering to the "progressive wing of the Non-Aligned Movement," and noted positively the Nicaraguan delegation's "active" stance toward issues of decolonization.[746]

During the fall of 1980, with Reagan's campaign rhetoric heating up, the Soviets expressed anxiety about further regional and international destabilization, and concern about the continued Cold War politicization of the United Nations. The Latin American Department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry accused the United States of "violating military parity," causing "damage to international détente," intensifying the arms race, and "inflaming international tension." Soviet officials condemned the "partnership between imperialism and Peking's hegemonism," which was "dangerous for all of humanity." The United Nations had a crucial role to play in "creating an atmosphere of…constructive cooperation," and in "mobilizing state for the prevention of…war." The report emphasized the "decisive opposition" of the Soviet Union to "attempts to convert

[744] Participation of Nicaragua in the Non-Aligned Movement. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 23, papka 4, delo 3, p. 53.
[745] Material for talks with the Nicaraguan delegation – Non-Aligned Movement, November 25, 1980. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 23, papka 3, delo 3, p. 44.
[746] Material for Soviet-Nicaraguan discussions, November 25, 1980. Latin American Department of Soviet Foreign Ministry [hereafter, LAO MID]. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 23, papka 3, delo 3, p. 47.

the U.N. into an instrument of interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states [and] into an arena for leading slanderous anti-socialist campaigns."[747]

The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union convened in February, 1981, mere weeks after Reagan's inauguration. The congress was notable for the short shrift given to Latin America. Brezhnev's speech focused on the Reagan administration's apparent bid for strategic superiority, and presented a hierarchy of Soviet security interests that placed Latin America on the bottom rung. Brezhnev's only treatment of Latin America was brief; he stated that "the role of the states of Latin America in the world arena has increased considerably, notably that of Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, and Peru." He merely took note of "the development of mutually advantageous links between the Soviet Union and the Latin American countries" and expressed "willingness to continue this development."[748] No mention was made of Nicaragua or El Salvador. These statements underscore the degree to which support for national liberation movements had been subordinated to the pursuit of traditional diplomatic and political relations with the states widely considered to be emerging regional powerhouses.

In April 1981, the new Nicaraguan ambassador to the USSR, Jacinto Suarez Espinoza, informed the Soviets that his country was undergoing a "critical period." In a campaign of "economic aggression," the United States had cut off all forms of aid to Nicaragua, and preparations were being made for armed intervention. In talks with Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Georgi Kornienko and First Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet Vladimir Kuznetsov, Suarez emphasized that the

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[747] Ibid., pp. 48-49.
[748] Quoted in José Miguel Insulza, "Cuban-Soviet Relations in the New International Setting," in Varas, *Soviet-Latin American Relations in the 1980s*, p. 138.

Sandinista government was "counting on fraternal aid from the USSR and socialist countries."[749] Kuznetsov informed Suarez that the "support Nicaragua has given to new Soviet foreign policy initiatives" was "highly valued" and that in the current deteriorating international atmosphere, the responsibility for which was "carried by the imperialist circles, especially the United States," it was "especially important for all peace-loving states to work together to improve the international climate and lessen the threat of war."[750]

On November 15, 1981, the Soviet embassy in Nicaragua sent a report of recommendations for upcoming talks between Andrei Gromyko and Miguel D'Escoto. The report noted that "it would be beneficial" to "express our anxiety about the worsening of the international atmosphere as a result of the aggressive course of the Reagan administration." Therefore, the Soviet side should "acquaint Foreign Minister D'Escoto" with the essentials of Soviet foreign policy, "with the goal of drawing Nicaragua into more active support for the peaceful initiatives of the Soviet Union…against the aggressive policy of western imperialists."[751] It was recommended that Gromyko "express *complete* solidarity of the USSR for the Nicaraguan revolution."[752] Moreover, the embassy considered it expedient to "reveal our total support for Cuba…and note the importance of close cooperation between Nicaragua and Cuba." It was also recommended that Gromyko "express satisfaction with the firm anti-imperial course of Nicaraguan foreign policy," and to inform D'Escoto that "in its struggle with

[749] Memorandum of Conversation between V.V. Kuznetsov, G.M. Kornienko, and Nicaraguan ambassador to the USSR Jacinto Suarez Espinoza, April 30, 1981. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 3, p. 1.
[750] Ibid., p. 3.
[751] Soviet embassy in Nicaragua, November 15, 1981 – Briefing Note for Talks between A.A. Gromyko and M. D'Escoto. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 3, p. 25.
[752] Ibid., p. 26, emphasis in the original.

aggressive U.S. imperialism, Nicaragua can count on the firm political support of the Soviet Union."[753] Embassy officials thought that the "peaceful solutions to…the situation in Central America" proffered by Daniel Ortega at the 36th session of the U.N. General Assembly should be "especially emphasized." Predicting that D'Escoto would "be interested in the character of relations between the USSR and developing countries that have taken the path of socialist orientation," embassy officials considered it very important that "Nicaragua see the sphere of possibilities of political, economic, and other areas of mutual cooperation with the USSR."[754]

D'Escoto was on an official visit to the USSR from December 10 to 15, 1981. He informed Soviet officials of the "aggressive policy" of the United States and some Central American countries, which were "trying to destroy or deform revolutionary gains." The Soviets, for their part, "noted the growing role of Nicaragua in the international arena," and especially its "active participation in the non-aligned movement" and its "opposition to the aggressive plans of the U.S."[755] Both the Nicaraguans and the Soviets condemned the "attempts of imperialist circles" to equate "international terrorism" with the "peoples' liberation struggles," and repudiated the "pretensions of the imperialists" to thwart the national independence movements "behind the mask of the struggle against 'international terrorism.'"[756] Both sides also affirmed "the important role of the U.N." and "announced their intention to work together for the further strengthening…of the U.N. on the basis of observance of its charter."[757]

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[753] Ibid., p. 27.
[754] Ibid., p. 28.
[755] Embassy observations on the joint Soviet-Nicaraguan communiqué. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 3, p. 30.
[756] Ibid., p. 31.
[757] Ibid., p. 35.

The Soviet Foreign Ministry subsequently prepared a report on U.S.-Nicaraguan relations, which observed that the Reagan administration "justly" viewed the Sandinista government as an "enemy in the international arena," and had adopted the "goal of liquidating the Nicaraguan revolution."[758] The Sandinistas had declared the "cessation of U.S. military interference and…respect for the Salvadoran people's right to self-determination" as a pre-condition for normalizing relations with the United States.[759] The ministry also applauded the Nicaraguan use of the Organization of American States to "unmask the U.S. policy of economic pressure and blackmail," and noted that the Sandinistas had "achieved political support and economic aid for national reconstruction of the country." At the OAS meeting in Washington in November 1980, Nicaragua and several other Latin American countries had criticized U.S. policy in the hemisphere, and at the April 1981 OAS session, the Nicaraguan delegation "sharply condemned the blatant political pressure of the U.S….and expressed determination to rebuff any attempt at meddling in the revolutionary process."[760]

On May 30, 1981, the Soviet embassy in Nicaragua sent the Foreign Ministry a report about "anti-government, counter-revolutionary forces" being prepared "on U.S. territory and on U.S. military bases in the Panama Canal Zone" for "military provocations against the Sandinista Front."[761] In order to "compromise" the Sandinista government, "bourgeois" factions were using the mass media in a "propaganda campaign accusing the Sandinistas of conspiring with the USSR, Cuba, and the international

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[758] U.S.-Nicaraguan Relations. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 3, p. 61.
[759] Ibid., p. 62.
[760] Report on Nicaragua's participation in the OAS and other inter-American regional organizations. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 3, p. 66.
[761] Soviet embassy in Nicaragua, May 30, 1981 – Subversive Actions of Anti-Government, Counter-Revolutionary Forces in Nicaragua (report). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 6, p. 24.

communist movement." The report characterized such charges as "falsification, fabricated by the CIA."[762] The Reagan administration was "activating forces" in Honduras in fulfillment of its "plans to strangle the revolution."[763] The report noted that because an amendment to the Honduran constitution allowed foreign armed forces to cross through Honduran territory, "a constitutional basis has been created for open military intervention in Nicaragua."[764] The U.S. administration relied upon "the reactionary regimes of the Southern Cone" for support. The first secretary of the embassy predicted that "the fate of the Sandinista revolution will largely depend on the government's ability to resolve pressing socioeconomic problems, on the unity of…Nicaraguan society, and on the support and solidarity of all progressive forces of the world, particularly the socialist countries."[765]

A month later, the embassy prepared a report on Nicaragua's relations with its neighbors. Noting that the Sandinistas were "pursuing a flexible line to avoid worsening relations with the reactionary regimes of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador," embassy officials observed that "great attention" was being "devoted to strengthening relations with progressive democratic countries in the region, like Mexico, Panama, and Costa Rica."[766] The embassy also maintained that the Sandinistas viewed the revolutionary struggle in El Salvador as "a direct continuation of the Nicaraguan revolution."[767] On a positive note, relations with Panama were improving, as "in the U.N., OAS, and other international organizations, Panama evinces solidarity with

[762] Ibid., p. 25.
[763] Ibid., p. 28.
[764] Ibid., p. 29.
[765] Ibid., p. 30.
[766] Soviet embassy in Nicaragua, June 28, 1981 – Nicaragua's relations with the countries of Central America and Mexico (report). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 6, p. 38.
[767] Ibid., p. 41.

Nicaragua and Nicaragua supports Panama's demands for U.S. observance of the Panama Canal Treaty."[768]

In the latter half of 1981, Nicaragua strengthened relations with some countries of the socialist bloc, with the German Democratic Republic providing $55 million in credits and Bulgaria supplying $18.5 million for Nicaraguan purchases of technical equipment.[769] Nicaragua and Czechoslovakia signed a protocol establishing inter-party relations, with the Czechs agreeing to provide Nicaragua with $30 million of credit. Yugoslavia also agreed to provide Nicaragua with $800,000 "for the reconstruction of Managua."[770] Such socialist-bloc aid was far from sufficient for Managua's purposes, and the Sandinista leadership continued to emphasize the importance of economic support and development issues. At the 36th session of the U.N. General Assembly, Daniel Ortega delivered a speech emphasizing the failure of developed "imperialist" states to "regulate economic relations with developing countries on a fair and just basis," arguing that this failure "creates an explosively dangerous situation in the world."[771]

In November, 1981, the Latin America department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry prepared a report on Nicaragua's relations with the countries of South America. South America was described as in thrall to a "growing fear" of a "second Cuba," and as motivated by a "desire to prevent the spread of revolutionary influence in Central America and the Caribbean." The United States, moreover, was "exerting strong pressure" on the countries of South America in order to "draw [them] into active support

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[768] Ibid., p. 43.
[769] Soviet embassy in Nicaragua, August 24, 1981 – Nicaragua's relations with European socialist countries (report). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 6, pp. 83-84.
[770] 1 LAO MID, December 2, 1981, Nicaragua's Relations with socialist countries except Cuba and USSR (report). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 6, pp. 150-151.
[771] For talks with Minister D'Escoto – Nicaragua's position on major international problems. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 3, p. 87.

for U.S. foreign policy and for the political and economic isolation of Nicaragua in Latin America."[772] The report noted that despite worsening relations with the majority of South American countries, Ecuador had opposed an OAS resolution "that could have opened a path for direct military intervention," and that Ecuador and Nicaragua agreed to "combine forces" in the United Nations and the OAS "against foreign meddling in El Salvador."[773]

The Latin America department also prepared a report about Nicaragua's relations with the United States, in which the Reagan administration was charged with "launching a series of measures directed at undermining Nicaragua's position in Latin America." The CIA was accused of "coordinating practically all terrorist activity against Nicaragua," and department officials scoffed that the "Americans are not even hiding the fact that they are training and hiding Somocistas."[774] The U.S. administration was "trying to force the Nicaraguan government to cease military aid to the patriots of El Salvador [and] to reject the 'Cuban model' of development." The department took note of U.S. "promises to restore economic aid" and to respect the principle of non-interference in Nicaraguan internal affairs if demands for "political pluralism and a mixed economy" were met by the Sandinista Front.[775]

These reports were part of a series of briefings prepared by the Latin American department about Nicaragua. In December, it was noted that the Nicaraguan government "ascribes huge significance to strengthening relations with developing countries,

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[772] On the issue of relations between the countries of South America and Nicaragua (report), 2 LAO MID, November 12, 1981. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 6, p. 115.
[773] Ibid., p. 124.
[774] 2 LAO MID, November 13, 1981 – U.S.-Nicaragua. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 6, p. 127.
[775] 1 LAO MID, December 2, 1981, Nicaragua's relations with the USA (report). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 6, p. 167.

especially with governments of socialist orientation."[776] The primary "connecting link" between Nicaragua and the developing countries of Asia and Africa was described as "the anti-imperialist direction of their foreign policy, [and] common interest in defending and strengthening the revolutionary process."[777] Relations with Cuba were very close, with Cuba "rendering firm support to Nicaragua in the international arena." In July 1980, Castro had visited Nicaragua and announced Cuba's intention to support the Sandinista Front with "fraternal aid" and with "close cooperation in the U.N., Non-Aligned Movement, and other international organizations."[778] Both governments "agree that the defense…of the Nicaraguan Revolution will facilitate the activation of revolutionary movements in other Central American countries, including El Salvador, and will strengthen the positions of Cuba and Nicaragua in Latin America."[779] Noting that the Nicaraguan government was seeking broader cooperation in the international arena with the USSR and the countries of the socialist bloc, the Latin American Department warned that the Sandinista Front was "seriously concerned" about the "further worsening of the political atmosphere in Central America, particularly around El Salvador."[780]

In March, 1982, the Soviet embassy in Nicaragua prepared a report on Nicaragua's position at the 11th session of the OAS General Assembly, which occurred during a period in which the United States was attempting to "isolate the Nicaraguans

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[776] 2 LAO MID, December 2, 1981, Nicaragua's relations with the developing countries of Asia and Africa (report). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 6, p. 136.
[777] Ibid., p. 139.
[778] 1 LAO MID, December 2, 1981, Nicaragua's relations with Cuba (report). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 6, p. 153.
[779] Ibid., p. 154.
[780] 1 LAO MID, December 2, 1981, Nicaragua's position on major international problems (report). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 24, papka 4, delo 6, pp. 162-163.

diplomatically with the help of the OAS."[781] Nicaraguan Foreign Minister D'Escoto had delivered a speech characterizing U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig's anti-Nicaraguan "exhortations" as "actual terrorism" and declared that the OAS "continues to be used in the interests of the U.S. for interference in the affairs of other countries." D'Escoto called upon the members of the OAS "not to allow the conversion of this organization into an instrument of U.S. interventionism," and argued that the OAS could "play a positive role only when it serves the interests of Latin America countries."[782] The embassy observed that the resolution in support of general elections in El Salvador gave the United States "the opportunity to ascribe 'legality' to the military junta in El Salvador, with the aim of rendering political support." Nicaragua, Mexico, and Grenada had voted against the resolution, which the Nicaraguan delegation denounced as a "warning sign that the U.S. is striving to use the OAS…against the revolutionary-democratic forces of El Salvador." The embassy described the general feeling in Managua toward the OAS session as one that "the U.S. succeeded…with the help of pressure and intimidation to achieve diplomatic cover for their aggressive plans in El Salvador." The U.S. delegation had tried to include Nicaragua on a list of hemispheric human rights violators, but "a majority of participants" failed to support this effort.[783] Overall, the embassy concluded, the United States "did not succeed in enlisting the support of Latin American countries in its aggressive actions against Nicaragua."[784]

But the Organization of American States was not the only venue in which the United States was having difficulty selling its agenda. The U.S.A. Department of the

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[781] Soviet embassy in Nicaragua, March 4, 1982 – Nicaragua's position at the 11th session of the General Assembly of the OAS (brief survey). AVPRF, fond 11, opis' 25, papka 5, delo 6, p. 11.
[782] Ibid., p. 12.
[783] Ibid., p. 13.
[784] Ibid., p. 14.

Soviet Foreign Ministry noted that during the April 1982 session of the U.N. Security Council, "the Americans were practically isolated" and that "all representatives present at the meetings to one degree or another supported the validity of Nicaragua's complaints." In order to avoid an explicit condemnation of U.S. policy toward Nicaragua, the U.S. delegation used its veto to present the resolution from going to a vote.[785] In November, 1981, D'Escoto had sent a letter to the chairman of the U.N. Security Council, expressing "alarm and anxiety" about U.S. aggression, which "contradicts the basic values of the U.N." In March, 1982, a special session of the Security Council was held in connection with "the sharp escalation of armed interference of American imperialism in Central America." Daniel Ortega had exhorted the U.N. member-countries "to refrain from direct, indirect, overt, or covert application of force against any country of Central America or the Caribbean basin and to observe such principles of the U.N. charter as rejection of interference in internal affairs of state, self-determination of peoples, etc." Of the fifteen members of the Security Council, twelve had voted for the resolution, two had abstained, and the United States had rejected the proposal and used its veto power.[786]

In May, a Nicaraguan delegation headed by Daniel Ortega traveled to Moscow for talks about "cooperation…and development of political, economic, trade, scientific-technical, and cultural relations." [787] During the visit, Brezhnev repeatedly emphasized the "vast oceanic expanse" that separated the Western Hemisphere from the USSR.[788] Despite such indications of caution, during this visit the most substantial aid package yet

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[785] U.S.A. Department of Soviet Foreign Ministry, April 20, 1982. USA-Nicaragua (report). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 25, papka 5, delo 6, p. 40.
[786] 1 LAO MID, July 8, 1982, Nicaraguan-U.S. Relations (report). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 25, papka 5, delo 6, p. 130.
[787] 1 LAO MID, August 24, 1984, Soviet-Nicaraguan Relations (brief survey). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 27, papka 7, delo 3, p. 6.
[788] Paszyn, *Soviet Attitude to Political and Social Change in Central America*, p. 38.

offered by the Soviets was signed. The agreement was largely centered on technical assistance, and crucially, did not contain subsidies for Nicaraguan exports or the hard currency of which the FSLN was so desperately in need.[789] Another indication of Soviet caution was Moscow's refusal to supply the FSLN with offensive weaponry, despite repeated requests. The Soviets agreed to provide only defensive weaponry – a clear signal to Washington that they were not seeking to inflame the situation in Central America. The Reagan administration, however, interpreted any Soviet involvement in the region as a prelude to communist control.[790] Soviet arms shipments to Nicaragua corresponded to the escalation of U.S. threats but were restricted to what was considered necessary for the defense of the revolution.[791]

In September 1982, the Soviet embassy in Nicaragua reported that Managua had used the June meeting of the Non-Aligned Coordinating Bureau to announce in connection with the Falklands crisis "that Latin America at the present time is being subjected to aggression from the United States and Great Britain." D'Escoto "emphasized that the participation of Great Britain in the conflict is viewed by the majority of Latin American countries as aggression against the entire continent."[792] Observing that the Falklands crisis had aggravated tensions in the Organization of American States, the Soviets crowed that the "Nicaraguan leadership was able to use the Anglo-Argentine conflict in order to…strengthen anti-imperialist sentiments in the very system of inter-

[789] Ibid., p. 45.
[790] Ibid., p. 46.
[791] Ibid., p. 47.
[792] Soviet embassy in Nicaragua, September 24, 1982, Nicaragua's position in relation to the armed conflict between Great Britain and Argentina over the Falkland (Malvinas) Islands (information). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 25, papka 5, delo 6, p. 173.

American relations."[793] By November, the Latin American Department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry was reporting that the Sandinista leadership, "as a result of the intensifying aggression of imperialist circles in the United States and the reactionary Central American regimes," viewed the USSR as "the moral [and] political guarantor of the Nicaraguan revolution."[794]

In March, 1983, following the NAM summit in Delhi, Daniel Ortega traveled to Moscow to conduct negotiations on further military aid.[795] The Reagan administration had stepped up its covert war against the Sandinistas and the contras were seeking to provoke an open conflict between Nicaragua and Honduras that could serve as a convenient pretext for open U.S. intervention. In the months after Ortega's visit, Soviet arms shipments to Nicaragua escalated.[796] By March, 1983, the Latin American Department was warning of "the emergence of large-scale armed formations of former members of Somoza's National Guard." The counter-revolutionaries, "trained by American instructors and outfitted with modern American weapons…terrorize the civilian population." The Sandinista government "intends to turn to the U.N. Security Council" with the express purpose of "assigning to Washington direct responsibility for this dangerous military adventurism."[797] In April, the department reported on the success of Nicaraguan efforts in the Security Council, noting that the Nicaraguan delegation "succeeded in drawing the attention of the U.N. and international society to the

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[793] Ibid., p. 174.
[794] Soviet-Nicaraguan Relations (brief survey), 1 LAO MID, November 3, 1982. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 25, papka 5, delo 3, p. 1.
[795] 1 LAO MID, August 24, 1984. Soviet-Nicaraguan Relations (brief survey). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 27, papka 7, delo 3, p. 6.
[796] Paszyn, *Soviet Attitude to Political and Social Change in Central America*, p. 49.
[797] 1 LAO MID, March 23, 1983, On the armed incursions of counter-revolutionary bands in Nicaragua. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 26, papka 6, delo 7, p. 1.

aggressive actions against Nicaragua [and] in assigning direct responsibility for the tense atmosphere in the region to the United States."[798] At the NAM summit in Delhi in March, the representatives of some Latin American countries "spoke out against viewing these problems in the context of East-West relations, and emphasized the socioeconomic causes." The foreign ministers of Honduras and El Salvador had, "as expected," acted on behalf of the United States in the U.N. Security Council, "practically repeating Jeanne Kirkpatrick's lies about the threat from Nicaragua to neighboring countries [and] human rights violations."[799] The department characterized Honduran President Roberto Suazo as "a marionette in the hands of the local oligarchy and the Reagan administration," and noted that the "real power in the country belongs to the head of the armed forces, General Gustavo Álvarez Martinez, [a] reactionary leader [who] takes an even more openly pro-American position than the president."[800]

Reagan had appointed Jeane Kirkpatrick, an academic, as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. Kirkpatrick subsequently became notorious for drawing a distinction between authoritarian governments, such as those of the Southern Cone, and totalitarian states, like those of the communist bloc. She argued that the former could transition to democracy, whereas the latter could not. Though her views won plaudits from the country's conservatives, her hectoring and confrontational speeches at the United Nations did not win her many friends in the international organization. Her tenure as ambassador to the U.N. coincided with a period during which a substantial proportion of the U.S. public had taken a dim view of the organization. Much of U.S. ill-will toward the U.N.

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[798] 1 LAO MID, April 20, 1983, On the results of discussions in the U.N. Security Council on the issue of armed intervention in Nicaragua (information). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 26, papka 6, delo 7, p. 30.
[799] Ibid., p. 33.
[800] 1 LAO MID, July 13, 1982, The role and place of Honduras in the anti-Nicaraguan policy of the USA (report). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 26, papka 6, delo 7, p. 52.

had been the result of the infamous Resolution 3379 declaring Zionism racism, and more broadly, the hijacking of the U.N. agenda by the combined forces of the Third World and the Soviet bloc that the resolution reflected.[801] In late 1983, Republicans in the Senate passed a bill cutting U.S. funding for the U.N.; President Reagan had to personally intervene to request that the bill be shelved. Public opinion polls showed that only thirty-six percent of Americans held a favorable view of the United Nations.[802]

In November 1983, the United States invaded Grenada. This was a major source of anxiety for the Sandinistas, who feared that a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua would be forthcoming. The Soviets also worried that the Reagan administration would move quickly to stamp out the FSLN. Soviet arms transfers to Nicaragua were stepped up as a direct result of the U.S. invasion of Grenada.[803] Kirkpatrick had to use the U.S. veto in the Security Council to head off a resolution condemning the invasion. She was unable, however, to prevent the General Assembly from demanding the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. personnel from the island.[804]

In December, the Soviet embassy in Nicaragua noted that the Sandinistas, along with Cuba and "other progressive developing countries," spearheaded "a struggle in the Non-Aligned Movement, where some countries under the influence of China tried to impose…a line directed against the interests of the socialist countries and the world liberation movement." The Soviets charged that "Chinese propaganda has recently joined the wide imperialist propaganda campaign directed against Cuba, Nicaragua, and

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[801] See Gil Troy, *Moynihan's Moment: America's Fight against Zionism as Racism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).
[802] George J. Lankevich, *The United Nations under Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, 1982-1991* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2001), p. 34.
[803] Paszyn, *Soviet Attitude to Political and Social Change in Central America*, p. 50.
[804] Lankevich, *The United Nations under Javier Pérez de Cuéllar*, p. 35.

Grenada," and noted that after the election of Nicaragua as a temporary member of the U.N. Security Council in 1982, contacts between representatives of Nicaragua and China "in the international organization have become more frequent."[805] With the entrance of Nicaragua and Grenada into the non-aligned movement, the Soviets had begun to contemplate the emergence of a "Latin American stage" of NAM and to call for the restructuring of the inter-American system to facilitate genuine independence.[806] One scholar has argued that the entrance of Nicaragua into the NAM essentially subsumed U.S.-Nicaraguan bilateral issues into the movement, while conferring international legitimacy on the Sandinista government.[807] The special meeting of the Non-Aligned Coordinating Board in Managua in January 1983 demonstrated that the radical influence of Cuba and Nicaragua had prevailed in the absence of a "counterbalance to the radical litany of U.S. aggression and imperialism."[808] Soviet assessments of Latin American leadership within the movement reveal the extent to which the Chinese were still viewed as a threat to Soviet influence in the Third World.

Also in December, the Soviet embassy in Peru noted that despite Peruvian President Fernando Belaunde's repeated statements emphasizing his commitment to the principles of non-interference and self-determination, "Peru's dependence on the U.S….in the economic sphere exercises significant influence on Lima's approach to the Central American problem." As a result, the Peruvian delegation to the United Nations had introduced a resolution in March 1983 – "the so-called 'peace plan for Central America.'" The resolution, which was introduced "not without prompting from

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[805] Soviet embassy in Nicaragua, December 9, 1983, Nicaraguan-Chinese Relations (information). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 26, papka 6, delo 7, p. 107.
[806] Allison, *The Soviet Union and the Strategy of Non-Alignment in the Third World*, p. 192.
[807] Jackson, *The Non-Aligned, the UN, and the Superpowers*, pp. 78-79.
[808] Ibid., pp. 221-222.

Washington," sought to transfer the entire issue from the U.N. to the OAS, "where the anti-Nicaraguan approach to the resolution of the situation is more assured."[809]

On February 15, 1984, at the funeral of Yuri Andropov, Daniel Ortega met with the Secretary General of the CPSU, Konstantin Chernenko. Ortega informed Chernenko of the "steps the Sandinistas are taking in connection with the complication of the atmosphere surrounding Nicaragua." In turn, Chernenko expressed "sincere solidarity" and a "readiness to deepen cooperation" between the Soviet Union and Nicaragua. As a result of the meeting, "it was decided to render Nicaragua additional economic aid." The Latin American department noted approvingly that the Sandinista leadership "supports the peaceful initiatives put forward by the USSR at the 38th session of the U.N. General Assembly."[810] Indeed, at the 38th session, "practically all the resolutions introduced by the USSR and other socialist countries were supported by Nicaragua."[811]

In March, 1984, the Soviet embassy in Managua noted that "our Nicaraguan friends" were seeking to expand relations with the Andean Pact countries in order to "facilitate peaceful settlement of the Central American crisis and the growth of 'Latin American solidarity' with the Sandinista Revolution." It was hoped that the strengthening of ties with these countries would "counter the U.S. policy of economic and political isolation of Nicaragua."[812] Embassy officials believed that "the fact that the Nicaraguans refrain from contacts with FARC and M-19…facilitates good relations between

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[809] Soviet embassy in the Republic of Peru, December 30, 1983, Peruvian-Nicaraguan Relations in 1983 (information). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 26, papka 6, delo 7, p. 127.
[810] 1 LAO MID, August 24, 1984, Soviet-Nicaraguan Relations (brief survey). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 27, papka 7, delo 3, p. 6.
[811] 1 LAO MID, October 10, 1984, Nicaragua's position on major international problems (report). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 27, papka 7, delo 5, p. 122.
[812] Soviet embassy in Nicaragua, March 30, 1984, Nicaragua's relations with the Andean Pact countries (information). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 27, papka 7, delo 5, p. 38.

Nicaragua and Colombia."[813] The Soviets had experienced difficulties with other Latin American states as a result of Cuban support for armed guerrillas in the hemisphere, and clearly sought to avoid becoming associated with such support in the case of Nicaragua.

In September 1984, the Latin American Department reported on the internal situation in Nicaragua on the eve of general elections. The Sandinistas, "realizing that the issue of elections is one of the main arguments in the anti-Sandinista campaign," had agreed in December to hold general elections in November 1984 as part of "the creation of positive internal and external conditions for the further acceleration of the process of progressive transformation in the country." The Soviets anticipated that the elections would "weaken outside pressure, especially from the United States."[814] However, the United States was "carrying out a plan to wreck the elections by organizing the political isolation of the FSLN."[815]

A delegation headed by the deputy chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet visited Nicaragua from the 7th through the 12th of January, 1985. The Nicaraguans informed the Soviets that their government was "ready to support the USSR in international forums, including the U.N. and the Non-Aligned Movement" and was "interested in further…consultations and exchanges of opinion with Soviet representatives at all levels."[816] Due to the recent election of Daniel Ortega as president and the "institutionalization of the Sandinista government," the Sandinistas had received the "very necessary international recognition" as well as "wide support inside the

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[813] Ibid., p. 41.
[814] 1 LAO MID, September 28, 1984, On the internal political situation in Nicaragua on the even of general elections (report). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 27, papka 7, delo 5, p. 109.
[815] Ibid., p. 113.
[816] 1 LAO MID, January 22, 1985, Summary of visit of Soviet delegation to Nicaragua from January 7 to 12, 1985. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 28, papka 8, delo 4, p. 3.

country."[817] Nicaraguan representatives informed the Soviets that the government felt that it had successfully "rebuffed U.S. attempts to isolate the country in the international arena and above all in Latin America."[818] The Nicaraguans reported that they "intend to turn to the countries of Latin America, the Non-Aligned Movement, and…democratic international organizations…with a call to strengthen pressure on the U.S. Congress and U.S. public opinion in order to cut off funds for the support of counter-revolutionaries."[819] The Soviet embassy in Nicaragua reported that a total of fourteen Soviet delegations had been sent to Nicaragua in the first quarter of 1985, and that "the majority of the delegations worked actively on a plan for conducting foreign policy propaganda in the country."[820] The delegations apparently held talks with the leadership of the Agitprop Department of the FSLN on "the development of cooperation in the realm of foreign policy propaganda."[821]

In sum, although the Soviets and the Nicaraguan leadership quickly developed good relations, the amount of aid that Moscow provided Managua was contingent upon the Reagan administration's continued hostility to the FLSN and its funding of the contras' efforts to overthrow the Sandinistas. Had the Reagan administration adopted a more hands-off approach to Central America, it is quite possible that the levels of Soviet aid and weaponry to the FSLN would have much lower. Moreover, even in the early 1980s, when the Reagan administration's rhetoric about the Soviet Union was at its fiercest and most confrontational, the Soviets were less interested in expanding their

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[817] Ibid., p. 4.
[818] Ibid., p. 5.
[819] Ibid., p. 6.
[820] Soviet embassy in Nicaragua, April 26, 1985 – On the activities of Soviet delegations that visited Nicaragua in the first quarter of 1985 (information). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 28, papka 8, delo 4, p. 20.
[821] Ibid., p. 21.

presence in Central America than they were in using their own power to combat U.S. interventionism. This resulted in greater provision of material aid to the FSLN, and in robust political support of the Nicaraguan government in international organizations.

GORBACHEV'S "NEW THINKING" AND CENTRAL AMERICA

With the ascendance to power of Mikhail Gorbachev, a major re-evaluation of both domestic and foreign policy was launched. In tandem with *perestroika*, which envisioned economic reforms aimed at introducing market forces, "the new thinking" in foreign policy entailed a fresh look at Soviet national interests and an increased emphasis on East-West negotiations to resolve regional conflicts in the Third World, reduce international tensions, and improve relations with the United States. Gorbachev's reform program was put forth at the 27th CPSU Congress in February 1986. In his speech at the congress, Gorbachev called for a "world security system" that would reject the bipolarity of the Cold War international system and incorporate the legitimate security needs of all world actors.[822] The emphasis on international security was accompanied by a focus on domestic economic revival. Gorbachev's economic team hoped to reduce military spending, expand opportunities for international trade, and invest much more heavily in the civilian sector.[823] Thus, the prior emphasis on strategic parity, which had governed Soviet military doctrine, gave way to the concept of "reasonable sufficiency" and the Soviets accepted asymmetric reductions in nuclear weapons.[824]

In the months after the congress, this platform was expanded upon, and Gorbachev pushed out the old foreign policy elite and brought in a team of "new

[822] Duncan and Ekedahl, *Moscow and the Third World under Gorbachev*, p. 50.
[823] Ibid., p. 52.
[824] Ibid., p. 59.

thinkers." Gorbachev's re-assessment of international relations involved a further diminution of the significance of ideology, a commitment to the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts, and the firm opposition to the export of revolution.[825] His most influential foreign policy advisers, Aleksandr Yakovlev and Edvard Shevardnadze, advocated the subordination of class interests to national interests, leading to a further weakening of ideology as a factor in policy formation.[826] This fundamentally altered the Soviet approach to the Third World. Whereas the 1970s had witnessed the zenith of Soviet influence and prestige in the global South, Gorbachev explicitly sought to scale back Soviet commitments and to prevent them from draining further resources from the domestic economy. During the 1970s, moreover, the Soviets had rejected the linkage between support for Third World regimes and détente. However, under the new thinking, linkage was embraced, and Gorbachev tied the improvement in East-West relations with the paring down of commitments to the Third World.[827]

A key element of the Gorbachev team's "new thinking" was the political settlement of regional disputes. Thus, the Soviets unilaterally withdrew from Afghanistan and scaled back their presence in Southeast Asia and Africa. They also supported negotiated settlements to the regional conflicts in the Middle East and Central America.[828] On December 7, 1988, Gorbachev delivered a speech at the United Nations announcing that the USSR would cut its military forces by 500,000 men and 10,000 tanks, and pull back its presence in Eastern Europe and China.[829] Moreover, the Soviets pressured the Vietnamese to withdraw from Cambodia and the Cubans to withdraw their

[825] Paszyn, *Soviet Attitude to Political and Social Change in Central America*, p. 65.
[826] Ibid., p. 69.
[827] Duncan and Ekedahl, *Moscow and the Third World under Gorbachev*, p. 71.
[828] Ibid., p. 60.
[829] Ibid., p. 64.

forces from Angola. The process of phased withdrawals from both countries began in early 1989.[830] The Soviets did not, however, revoke their commitments to Cuba and Nicaragua; in 1988, Cuba received $5 billion in aid, while the Sandinistas received $1.2 billion.[831] Then, in April 1989, Gorbachev visited Havana, where he signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation pledging Moscow's continued support for Cuba.[832]

At the same time, however, the Soviets encouraged Cuba to pursue better relations with the United States, and the emphasis of Soviet policy toward Latin America was on expanding ties with large industrial states like Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil.[833] Castro was not thrilled about Gorbachev's embrace of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, and the two leaders clashed over continued support to the Sandinistas.[834] Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister Raúl Roa argued that continued provision of U.S. military and material aid to the contras necessitated the continuation of support for the FSLN, while Gorbachev insisted upon the immediate cessation of all foreign intervention in Nicaragua.[835] During the late 1980s, with the advent of summit diplomacy between Reagan and Gorbachev, and the drawdown of Cold War tensions, the Soviet Union and Cuba once again found themselves at loggerheads. Castro was not at all keen on the "new thinking," and resented Soviet efforts to improve relations with the United States at what was perceived as the cost of selling out the revolutionary forces in Central America.[836]

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[830] Ibid., p. 86.
[831] Ibid., p. 88.
[832] Ibid., p. 198.
[833] Ibid., p. 191.
[834] Howard J. Wiarda, "USSR-Cuba Alliance and Regional Conflicts: Trust but Verify," in Valenta and Cibulka, *Gorbachev's New Thinking and Third World Conflicts*, p. 113.
[835] Duncan and Ekedahl, *Moscow and the Third World under Gorbachev*, p. 205.
[836] Paszyn, *Soviet Attitude to Political and Social Change in Central America*, p. 105.

The evolution of the Contadora peace process shows, however, that Latin American leaders were not content to allow the East-West conflict to determine the outcome of events in Central America. In January, 1983, the foreign ministers of Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela had gathered on Contadora Island off the coast of Panama to discuss "Latin American solutions to Latin American problems."[837] While the foreign ministers disdained unilateral U.S. intervention in Latin American affairs, they also sought to keep the region free from the taint of the East-West conflict, and thus desired to prevent further Cuban and Soviet encroachment into Central America. In July, 1985, a support group composed of Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Uruguay formed around the permanent members of the Contadora group, which in addition to the countries listed above included the five Central American countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua).[838] The support group sought to prevent the East-West conflict from dominating the region, and joining the peace process was envisioned as a show of Latin American solidarity.[839]

Though the Sandinistas welcomed the Contadora group's negotiating strategy, they were hemmed in by the Reagan administration's continued support of the contras, and concerned about the possibility of direct U.S. intervention in Nicaragua.[840] From the beginning, the process was plagued by the conflicting interests of the United States and the Central American countries, and by accusations of bad faith. In the case of U.S. diplomats, these charges were at least partly true, as the Reagan administration sought to bog down the peace process in the hopes of creating a fait accompli by means of the

[837] Bruce Michael Bagley and Juan Gabriel Tokatlian, *Contadora: The Limits of Negotiation* (Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies, 1987), p. 1.
[838] Ibid., p. 5.
[839] Ibid., p. 17.
[840] Ibid., p. 37.

contra war against the Sandinistas. Many of the Contadora group's members, moreover, faced domestic pressure to exhibit foreign policy independence from Washington.[841] President Reagan himself was opposed to any settlement that left the FSLN in power.[842] The administration repeatedly sunk negotiations by demanding preconditions unacceptable to the Sandinista government.[843]

In a letter to the Contadora group, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega accused the United States of pursuing a "brutal war of aggression" and a "policy of state terrorism" against his country and expressed his fears of "the dangers of direct military intervention."[844] The conditions created by U.S. support for the contras made it impossible for the Nicaraguan government to commit to reductions or monitoring of weapons, which would "place [Nicaragua's] national security at risk."[845] Ortega condemned Reagan's speech at the U.N. General Assembly, in which Reagan had discussed the Central American conflict in the context of negotiations with the Soviet Union, as "a clear demonstration of contempt for the search for peace for the region which has been promoted by the Contadora Group on behalf of Latin America."[846] Ortega also censured the Reagan administration's failure to "bring its conduct into line with the norms of international law."[847] The government of Nicaragua would not enter into any

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[841] Ibid., pp. 61-62.
[842] Ibid., p. 75.
[843] William M. LeoGrande, "Roll-back or Containment? The United States, Nicaragua, and the Search for Peace in Central America," in Bruce Michael Bagley, ed. *Contadora and the Diplomacy of Peace in Central America, Volume I: The United States, Central America, and Contadora* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987), p. 92.
[844] "Position of the Government of Nicaragua in Response to the Draft Contadora Act of September 12, 1985" (Managua: Office of the President, Republic of Nicaragua, 1985), pp. 12 & 19.
[845] Ibid., p. 13.
[846] Ibid., p. 15.
[847] Ibid., p.16.

treaty commitments until Central America was "free from any foreign military presence."[848]

Nevertheless, the existence of the Contadora peace process, and the overwhelming international support for it, constrained the ability of the Reagan administration to act unilaterally vis-à-vis Central America. The Soviet bloc, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the majority of member states of both the Organization of American States and the United Nations all supported the Contadora group.[849] The Reagan administration could simply not afford to flout international public opinion by pursuing a unilateral solution to the regional conflict.

In May, 1985, the Latin America Department reported on the positions of Latin American leaders on the Nicaragua issue. The president of Argentina had announced that the situation in Central America could only be settled "on the basis of the principle of non-interference," while the Brazilian foreign minister came out against sanctions on Nicaragua, and Bolivia's minister of information declared that the United States was violating the norms of the inter-American system.[850] Several Latin American leaders expressed their commitment to the Contadora group, with the Venezuelan foreign minister anxious that Ortega's recent trip to Moscow could complicate the Contadora group's work, and the Colombian foreign minister emphasizing his country's "intention to continue efforts within the framework of the Contadora group." The Mexican government also stated that U.S. actions were in direct conflict with the goals and principles of the Contadora group, and expressed opposition to U.S. attempts to turn

[848] Ibid., p. 17.
[849] Bagley and Tokatlian, *Contadora: The Limits of Negotiation*, p. 84.
[850] 1 & 2 LAO MID, May 17, 1985, On the reaction to U.S. trade/economic sanctions against Nicaragua (information). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 28, papka 8, delo 7, pp. 63-64.

Central America into an "additional element of the East-West confrontation."[851] Officials of Peru, Uruguay, Ecuador, Trinidad and Tobago, Surinam, Barbados, Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Honduras all made statements in various degrees of opposition to the U.S. embargo against Nicaragua.[852] Only El Salvador supported U.S. sanctions. The Permanent Council of the OAS passed a resolution condemning U.S. political interference and economic sanctions.[853] The U.N. Security Council also passed a resolution reiterating the "sovereignty and right of Nicaragua and other states to freely choose their own political, economic, and social systems, and to develop their international relations…without foreign interference."[854]

Despite Nicaragua's "political triumph" in the Security Council, and despite the "worldwide condemnation of the U.S. embargo," Soviet officials reported that the "political positions of Nicaragua in the framework of the Contadora process are now weaker than they were in January of this year."[855] The Contadora countries were reported to be "leaning toward the U.S.-suggested use of…a 'dialogue' between the FSLN and the armed counter-revolution, which the Sandinistas decisively reject." Though the Soviets felt that the resumption of the Manzanillo talks would be a "positive development" in the effort to "relax tensions around Nicaragua," they also warned that it could "serve as a cover for a U.S. dictate, for the preparation of intervention and consolidation of the rightist opposition and…as a means to further sabotage the Contadora group." Nevertheless, the Soviets considered that it would be "beneficial for Nicaragua to achieve

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[851] Ibid., p. 64.
[852] Ibid., pp. 65-66.
[853] Ibid., p. 67.
[854] Ibid., p. 69.
[855] 1 LAO MID, June 7, 1985, Nicaraguan-U.S. negotiations in Manzanillo and perspectives on their continuation. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 28, papka 8, delo 7, p. 77.

normalization of bilateral relations with the United States and removal of U.S. trade/economic sanctions."[856] In June, Daniel Ortega had informed a visiting Soviet delegation of his "decisive rejection" of U.S. accusations of the Nicaraguan government's "participation in terrorist acts," and expressed his "readiness to immediately sign the Contadora Act."[857]

By September, the Soviet embassy in Washington was reporting that the July vote of Congress to allow humanitarian aid to the Contras was "a sharp turn from its earlier position, having voted at the end of 1984 against any form of aid to the Contras."[858] Embassy officials attributed the shift in the position of the U.S. Congress to be a result of the Reagan administration's "active propagandizing in order to create a more hostile attitude toward Nicaragua," specifically citing the distribution of a State Department pamphlet on the "Sandinistas and Middle East radicals," which charged the Nicaraguan government with "participating in international terrorism."[859] The embassy warned that the Reagan administration "hopes to create an atmosphere conducive to the resumption of military aid to the Contras."[860] During a July visit of a Soviet delegation to Nicaragua, Ortega had informed the members of the delegation that U.S. was "determined to strengthen military pressure on Nicaragua and to isolate it from Soviet and other socialist aid."[861] Ortega also warned that the Reagan administration was attempting to "subvert the

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[856] Ibid., pp. 77-78.
[857] Summary of the visit of Soviet delegation to Nicaragua, June 18-22, 1985. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 28, papka 8, delo 4, p. 33.
[858] Soviet embassy in Washington, September 10, 1985, USA-Nicaragua (survey). AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 28, papka 8, delo 7, p. 97.
[859] Ibid., p. 98.
[860] Ibid., p. 99.
[861] 1 LAO MID, September 29, 1986, On the visit of a Soviet delegation to the Republic of Nicaragua from July 19-20. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 29, papka 9, delo 3, p. 17.

Contadora process" and would "not allow a peaceful settlement of the Central American conflict."[862]

In August, 1986, the Soviet Foreign Ministry prepared a report on Moscow's position regarding the situation in Central America. Soviet concerns were concentrated on the Reagan administration's continued interventionism in the region, and its impact on international and regional stability. On April 2, Gorbachev had told an Algerian journalist that "our sympathies are fully on the side of peoples struggling for freedom, national independence, and social progress." He pledged to continue to provide Nicaragua with political, moral, and material support, and swore that the Soviet Union was "not looking for any advantage or profit for itself in this endeavor."[863] At the request of the Nicaraguan government, the Soviets had provided "some forms of defensive military weaponry" in order to help the country with "strengthening its defense capabilities." The Soviet policy was based on "the fact that the United States is leading an undeclared war against the Nicaraguan people, [and] armed bands of American mercenaries are committing acts of terror and attempts to overthrow the legally elected Sandinista government."[864] The Soviets accused the United States of "trampling on the U.N. charter [and] elementary norms of international relations, and violating U.S. domestic legislation." The Soviets also declared U.S. actions "intolerable from the standpoint of the OAS charter."[865] The Soviet Union had "many times subjected to sharp criticism U.S. attempts to mask its interference in Nicaraguan affairs with the hackneyed theses of 'extension of international communism, 'hand of Moscow,' and 'threats to U.S. national security

[862] Ibid., p. 19.
[863] August 13, 1986, On the Soviet position in relation to the atmosphere around Nicaragua and the situation in Central America. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 29, papka 9, delo 3, p. 11.
[864] Ibid., p. 12.
[865] Ibid., p. 13.

interests.'" The Soviets pledged that they would continue to "decisively reject" Washington's efforts to portray events in Central America "in the context of the East-West confrontation."[866]

As the Esquipulas peace process, spearheaded by Costa Rican president Oscar Arias and built upon the Contadora process, gained traction, the Esquipulas II Accords were signed on August 7, 1987, by the presidents of Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. The accords provided for a drawdown of hostilities, an end to armed support for the various factions involved in the conflict, and measures for democratization and elections in Nicaragua.[867] In October 1988, the Soviets announced the temporary suspension of heavy weapons delivery to Nicaragua, partly in response to the Reagan administration's decision to cut off military aid to the contras.[868]

By 1989, the Nicaraguans were praising *perestroika* and actively supporting the Soviet Union's "new approach to international relations," which was evaluated as a "positive development" and a spur to the growth of "the international authority of the USSR." The Nicaraguan delegation had "expressed support for the concepts and concrete proposals put forward by Gorbachev at the U.N. in December 1988." The USSR promised to "continue to render the country political support" but material support was restricted to "whatever it can [afford]."[869]

On February 9, 1990, Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze signed a joint communiqué in Moscow vowing to accept the results of the

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[866] Ibid., p. 14.
[867] Procedure for the Establishment of a Firm and Lasting Peace in Central America (Esquipulas II). Permanent URL: http://peacemaker.un.org/centralamerica-esquipulasII87.
[868] Paszyn, *Soviet Attitude to Political and Social Change in Central America*, p. 81.
[869] Summary of official visit of a delegation of the National Assembly of the Republic of Nicaragua to the USSR from September 10-14, 1989. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 32, papka 12, delo 4, pp. 9 & 11.

elections in Nicaragua, to formally recognize the new government, and to respect political pluralism in the country.[870] On March 3, Baker sent Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze a letter expressing "hope" that the Soviet government would "encourage a peaceful transfer of power" in Nicaragua. "Clearly," he wrote, "any attempt by the Sandinistas to retain power would draw the certain condemnation of the international community and only worsen the damaging confrontation that has marked Nicaragua's relations with its neighbors and with the United States."[871] Baker observed that "the ability of the Nicaraguan government to hold free elections and transfer power to its democratically elected successor will mark a milestone in U.S.-Soviet cooperation on regional conflicts. Indeed, it may well mark the turning point in the search for peace throughout Central America."[872]

On April 25, in internationally monitored elections, Violeta Barrios Torres de Chamorro, running as head of the National Opposition Union, a coalition of anti-Sandinista parties, unseated Daniel Ortega. Gorbachev sent a personal message to Chamorro, who had apparently averred that she "fully agrees with the words of the Soviet leader about the necessity of de-ideologizing international relations."[873] Chamorro stated that she "firmly intends to demobilize the Contras and demilitarize the country" and that her government would "strive for constructive mutual relations with the Sandinista leadership." In the realm of foreign policy, Chamorro pledged to respect political and parliamentary contacts with the USSR and to "develop relations with all states, regardless

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[870] Paszyn, *Soviet Attitude to Political and Social Change in Central America*, p. 85.
[871] Letter from Baker to Shevardnadze, March 3, 1990. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 33, papka 13, delo 3, p. 8.
[872] Ibid., p. 9.
[873] Report on the participation of a Soviet delegation in measures connected with the transfer of presidential power in Nicaragua, April 23-28, 1990. AVPRF, fond 114, opis' 33, papka 13, delo 3, pp. 16-17.

of socioeconomic system."[874] Despite Chamorro's statements, the Soviets felt that she was planning to "reorient Nicaraguan foreign policy toward the Western countries."[875]

CONCLUSION

The resolution of the conflict in Nicaragua set a precedent for the United Nations. The FSLN had requested the presence of U.N. Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar to monitor the presidential elections, and on July 27, 1989, the Security Council adopted Resolution 637, which called for the secretary-general's "good offices in the region." It was the first time that the United Nations sent observers to oversee the purely domestic affairs of a member-country.[876] The impact of the Contadora peace process, and the subsequent Esquipulas process, on U.S. policy toward Central America had been a limiting one. The mere fact of the Contadora group's existence constrained the Reagan administration's attempts to act unilaterally in the region.[877] Moreover, the group's efforts underscored the degree to which Latin American leaders were unwilling to allow the region's destiny to remain in thrall to the East-West conflict, and the determination of these to adopt Latin American solutions to Latin American problems.

The Soviets, for their part, were avid supporters of regional peace efforts, and throughout the period of the Nicaraguan revolution had taken care to provide the Sandinista government with only as much material support as Moscow deemed necessary for the revolution's survival. Though the FSLN had consistently pressed the Soviets for offensive weaponry, Moscow did not seek to inflame tensions in the region, but

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[874] Ibid., p. 17.
[875] Ibid., p. 18.
[876] Lankevich, *The United Nations under Javier Pérez de Cuéllar*, p. 102.
[877] Bagley and Tokatlian, *Contadora: The Limits of Negotiation*, p. 84.

continued to provide material and political support to its regional allies. This support was envisioned not as a means of expanding Soviet influence throughout Central America, but merely as a counter-weight to U.S. aggression and the Reagan administration's support of the contras. As U.S.-Soviet relations improved, and the summit diplomacy of Gorbachev and Reagan yielded substantive achievements in reducing East-West tensions, the Soviets were more than happy to curtail their support to the Sandinistas in the hopes of stabilizing the situation in Central America.

Conclusion

While Marxist-Leninist ideology certainly conditioned the worldviews of Soviet leaders, the ideological predisposition of any given Latin American regime was not an accurate indicator of Soviet support for that regime. Though the Arbenz administration was sympathetic to both domestic communists and to Soviet Russia, and though the Guatemalan communist party and other regional communist leaders petitioned the Soviets for aid to Arbenz's government, the Soviets took a cautious approach. It is notable that this occurred during the early Cold War period, before the Sino-Soviet split, when the United States was the clear number one enemy. Though Moscow refused to provide Arbenz with significant material support, the Soviets were quick to capitalize on regional opposition to the U.S.-backed coup, and to use the United Nations to score a blow against the Yankee imperialists and register sympathy with the small banana republic struggling under the weight of U.S. hegemony. By the time of the Cuban revolution, Moscow had already launched the Soviet Economic Offensive, designed to pry Latin America away from its economic dependence on the United States, and had begun laying the groundwork for an expansion of Soviet influence in the region.

The Cuban revolution transformed both Soviet-Latin American and U.S.-Latin American relations. Even during the honeymoon phase of the relationship between Moscow and Havana, the Soviets and the Cubans moved cautiously so that Castro had time to strengthen his domestic support and consolidate the revolution before attracting the ire of Washington. Rather than driving Castro into the arms of the Soviets, Washington's increasingly confrontational stance drove the normally cautious Russians into the arms of the Cubans. As warm personal relations between Castro and Khrushchev

developed, the Soviet premier was driven by a variety of factors – ideological solidarity, the quest for strategic parity, and a desire to strengthen Soviet legitimacy and credibility in the face of the radical challenges posed by the Chinese communists and the *fidelista* groups sprouting up all over the Western Hemisphere – to take one of the most daring risks of the Cold War. The Cuban missile crisis quite literally brought the world to the brink of a nuclear holocaust, and Khrushchev wound up giving away the store, offering concessions that Kennedy had not even pressed for. In the process, he revealed that when push came to shove, the Soviets were more comfortable selling out their Cuban allies than pressuring the United States to make concessions on their behalf. The Cuban-Soviet relationship, as a result, suffered from a breach of trust and confidence that was only repaired by a massive infusion of Soviet economic aid. This gave the Soviets enough leverage to bring Castro into line, and though the *jefe máximo* never truly abandoned his support for the armed struggle, he did adhere to the Soviet foreign policy line and defend Moscow in the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Soviets learned important lessons from the alliance with Cuba; among the most important was to avoid extending similar security guarantees to another Latin American country. Thus, although the election of Salvador Allende in Chile confirmed the veracity of the Soviet doctrinal emphasis on the peaceful path to power, Moscow was unwilling to underwrite the Popular Unity government. Castro had proven an unruly ally; the Soviet economic commitment to the Cuban revolution had not yielded a proportionate increase in Soviet influence or prestige. On the contrary, Castro and the *fidelista* movements he inspired frequently challenged the Soviets for their perceived lack of revolutionary zeal. Especially after Allende had evinced difficulties imposing discipline

on his own governing coalition, the Soviets were hesitant to provide him with the same guarantees they had given Castro. Yet, as with Arbenz's Guatemala, the Soviets were quick to capitalize on the coup that overthrew Allende. Becoming active participants in the transnational solidarity campaign that emerged to pressure Pinochet, the Soviets worked through front groups and international organizations to isolate Pinochet's government and protest its human rights violations. This activism was not driven by a genuine concern for human rights, but was aimed more at appeasing the Chilean communists and improving Moscow's position in the Third World. The Chilean communists in exile in the socialist bloc were at the forefront of efforts to reshape the narrative of the coup and to push for the resumption of the armed struggle in Latin America.

As the Sandinistas waged a violent struggle to depose Somoza in Nicaragua, a new cycle of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary violence was inaugurated. The Reagan administration came to power promising not just to contain communism in the Western Hemisphere, but to roll it back; the centerpiece of this effort was support for the contras. Reagan was personally convinced that Cuban-Soviet aggression was inflaming tensions in the region; the Soviets were equally convinced that U.S. interventionism was to blame. As such, the Soviets sought to provide just enough support to the Sandinistas to provide a counter-weight to U.S. aggression. With the rise to power of Mikhail Gorbachev, ideology as a policy factor was basically jettisoned. Karen Brutents, the first deputy chief of the International Department of the Central Committee, wrote in 1992 that "we have effectively banished from our political and diplomatic practice those elements that only recently were inseparably linked with the image of a superpower:

ideological messianism, global confrontation with the United States and its allies…and the view that force was central to the conduct of international relations."[878] As U.S.-Soviet relations improved, Moscow supported regional peacekeeping efforts and scaled back support to the Sandinistas.

Even at the height of Soviet involvement in Latin America, the region still occupied the lowest place in the Soviet hierarchy of strategic interests. Interestingly, it seems that because of this, regional and local actors exerted more influence on Soviet policy than did their counterparts in areas of greater strategic interest to the USSR. Kiva Maidanik, a senior researcher at the Soviet Institute for International Relations and the World Economy (IMEMO), has noted that the "pluralism of ideas and the richness of debate about Latin American in the Soviet Union" is "irrefutable evidence of the absence of real Soviet interests in Latin America." This is because "open discussions could not have taken place about areas such as Eastern or Western Europe where the Soviets had true national security interests."[879] Of course, the Soviets clearly had an interest in maintaining their credibility and saving face in the Third World; moreover, Soviet prestige would have been adversely affected by a failure to support the USSR's putative allies.[880] This was tacitly acknowledged by the maintenance of support for Cuba, even after Marxist-Leninist ideology had been nearly totally abandoned by Soviet leaders. Nevertheless, it is indisputable that Latin American communists and others ideologically sympathetic to the USSR played a major role in shaping the Soviet approach to the region.

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[878] Karen Brutents, "A New Soviet Perspective," in Smith, *The Russians Aren't Coming*, p. 74.
[879] Kiva Maidanik, "On the *Real* Soviet Policy Toward Central America, Past and Present," in ibid., p. 90.
[880] Sergo Mikoyan, "The Future of the Soviet-Cuban Relationship," in ibid., p. 133.

THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE COLD WAR

In the early Cold War period, the United States actively used the U.N. as a tool for achieving certain foreign policy goals and marshalling world public opinion behind its international policy agenda. In the early 1960s, however, the influx of decolonizing states into the world body irrevocably transformed its composition and functioning. As developing nations solidified into the largest single voting bloc in the U.N., they began to determine the organization's agenda. From the beginning, the United States was on the wrong side of the so-called "colonial question." In December 1960, the U.N. General Assembly, at the behest of the Third World bloc, voted to implement the "Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples." The United States did not vote for the resolution.[881] The fiscal crisis that the U.N. suffered during the 1960s, combined with U Thant's aggressive efforts to bring a peaceful end to the war in Vietnam, convinced many U.S. officials that they had lost all control over the U.N. agenda.[882] By 1975, in the words of one scholar, "Turtle Bay no longer symbolized American glory but reflected America's eclipse."[883]

The Soviet view of the utility of the United Nations in waging the Cold War underwent a major shift after Stalin passed from the scene. According to Victor Israelyan, a former Soviet diplomat who served at the U.N., "the members of the Soviet mission recognized that the U.N. was the main stage for playing out the political and ideological confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States."[884] As such, Soviet

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[881] Firestone, *The United Nations under U Thant*, pp. 46-47.
[882] Ibid., pp. 61-62.
[883] Gil Troy, *Moynihan's Moment: America's Fight against Zionism as Racism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 38
[884] Victor Israelyan, *On the Battlefields of the Cold War: A Soviet Ambassador's Confession* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), p. 127.

actions in the international organization reflected the "fundamental immorality of Cold War diplomacy," in that "its goal was often little more than to impose damaging decisions on political adversaries instead of seeking mutually acceptable solutions to real problems."[885] The United Nations was also viewed as an ideal venue for espionage. Israelyan recalls that "all Soviet diplomats at different stages of their careers, in one form or another, have assisted the KGB."[886] Indeed, there were more KGB agents in the Soviet mission in New York than there were in the Soviet embassy in Washington![887]

With the development of the Non-Aligned Movement, the USSR moved to capitalize on the emerging Third World political bloc. Tellingly, Moscow never recognized the NAM as truly non-aligned, believing that its member countries "tilted" toward one superpower axis or the other; the Soviet line has emphasized that the origins of the movement lie in the struggle against colonialism and imperialism, and that therefore, the USSR and the socialist camp are the natural allies of the NAM.[888] Though relations between Cuba and the USSR were rife with tensions, the Cubans consistently and spiritedly defended the Soviets in the NAM, and suffered from a corresponding loss of credibility among more moderate members who recognized that an acceptance of the natural ally thesis would effectively destroy the non-aligned nature of the movement.

The United States did not have a similar ally within the movement. NAM statements and declarations were consistently replete with harsh criticisms of the United States; in the rare case that the Soviet Union was even mentioned, it was usually approvingly. This was the case until the Soviet invasion of a non-aligned member

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[885] Ibid., pp. 196-197.
[886] Ibid., p. 212.
[887] Ibid., p. 213.
[888] See Gouré and Rothenberg, *Soviet Penetration of Latin America*, p. 195.

country, Afghanistan. Even after the invasion, the condemnations of the USSR in NAM and the United Nations were not of a piece with those that had been lobbed at the United States for its various ill-conceived Third World interventions. The Non-Aligned Movement became hugely influential in determining the agenda of the United Nations; indeed, by the mid- to late 1970s, many in the United States were complaining that the combined forces of the Third World and the Soviet bloc had effectively hijacked the international organization. Such complaints reflect the failure of U.S. policy both toward the Third World and in the United Nations.

IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY

The primary debate over the nature of U.S. policy toward Latin America has been whether the most significant policy determinants have been economic or geopolitical. The phrase "economic imperialism," while inadequately defined, is usually understood to occur when the United States harnesses political and diplomatic means to achieve economic ends. Several scholars of U.S.-Latin American relations have contended that U.S. interventionism in Latin America has been in pursuit of economic and financial dominance rather than national security interests. These scholars have explicitly denied that U.S. national security interests were ever at stake in Latin America.[889]

However, such evaluations are premised on an overly narrow definition of U.S. national security. Other scholars have recognized that official U.S. perceptions of national security have tended to be much more expansive. Thus, although the Cuban missile crisis was the only episode of Latin America's Cold War during which the

[889] Lubna Qureshi is a stellar example. See *Nixon, Kissinger, and Allende: U.S. Involvment in the 1973 Coup in Chile* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009).

Soviets posed a military – indeed, an existential – threat to the United States, Arbenz in Guatemala, Allende in Chile, and the FSLN in Nicaragua all challenged other vital components of U.S. national security. One scholar has argued that "except in situations of direct military threat, security is a state of mind." Thus, a broad definition of U.S. national security interests in Latin America recognizes that "it is in the United States national interest that there exist in the hemisphere friendly, prosperous states, with stable responsive governments that permit the free movement of goods and services through the region, that respect the political integrity of their neighbors and that offer no support to the United States [sic] global political rivals."[890] Indeed, ever since the proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine, U.S. presidents have considered the prevention of extra-continental powers establishing a foothold in the Western Hemisphere to be in the national interest.[891] Thus, although Arbenz, Castro, Allende, and the FSLN nationalized industry and directly challenged U.S. corporate influence in their countries, they also pursued friendly relations with the United States' Cold War superpower rival and conducted independent foreign policies that explicitly sought to undermine U.S. leadership of the hemisphere. Successive U.S. administrations were antagonized by all of these developments.

Thus, it would seem as though the "economic imperialism" school adheres to an over-simplified narrative of the motivations for U.S. interventionism in the Western hemisphere. Regardless of whether the United States faced a military or existential threat from the Soviet presence in Latin America, U.S. officials clearly perceived national

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[890] Margaret Daly Hayes, "U.S. Security Interests in Central America," in *Contadora and the Diplomacy of Peace in Central America, Volume I: The United States, Central America, and Contadora*, edited by Bruce Michael Bagley (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987), p. 4.
[891] Ibid., p. 5.

security interests to be at stake, and those perceptions matter. Whether U.S. policy toward Latin America served perceived U.S. national security interests is an entirely different question, and it seems quite clear that the answer is "no." The United States repeatedly engaged in politico-military interventionism that undermined stability in the Western Hemisphere, and thus transgressed the very goals they hoped to achieve. When viewed in the context of the Soviet approach to Latin America, it becomes clear that U.S. policy blunders did encourage the Soviets to advance a more active agenda in the region. Had the CIA never attempted to overthrow Arbenz, the Soviet Economic Offensive might never have been launched. Had the United States not provided Castro with tangible proof of the threats to the revolution that he used to increase both his own domestic legitimacy and Soviet material support to his government, the course of the Cuban-Soviet relationship might have been much different. Of course, this is a case of hindsight being twenty/twenty, and it is unfair to hold the cold warriors of the past to the standards of the present or to expect that they should have known what we know now.

How should we evaluate the oft-repeated claim that successive U.S. administrations grossly exaggerated the communist threat emanating from Latin America, and the charge that U.S. officials failed to distinguish between "international communism" and homegrown nationalism? It seems that the more pragmatic U.S. presidents clearly did distinguish between nationalism and communism, while the more ideologically driven administration of Ronald Reagan did not. For Reagan, this was at least partly due to the rigidity of his worldview, which did not frequently appreciate subtlety and nuance. Moreover, U.S. threat perceptions focusing on Moscow's search for opportunities in the region got it exactly backward: it was not the Soviets who sought to

extend their control over the Western Hemisphere, but Latin American communists and Soviet sympathizers who petitioned Moscow for its support. That the Soviets needed convincing in most cases suggests that U.S. analyses should have focused more on the indigenous roots of discontent in the hemisphere and less on the goals and ambitions of Moscow.

In the case of Guatemala, the Eisenhower administration viewed the threat posed by Arbenz's government as primarily regional in nature. Though the media frenzy around Guatemala focused on the machinations of "international communism," administration officials were aware that the ties between Moscow and the Guatemalan communist party were tenuous at best. Propaganda intended for domestic and regional audiences, however, bruited the threat of Soviet penetration of the Western Hemisphere.

As had been the case since the advent of the Cuban Revolution, it was the Cubans who were most active in supporting Latin American armed insurgents and guerrilla movements. In this endeavor, Castro was not acting at the behest of the Soviets; indeed, Cuban radicalism frequently jeopardized the attainment of Soviet goals in the region, especially as those goals shifted from encouraging national liberation to establishing and expanding traditional diplomatic relations with the countries of Latin America. Moreover, Cuban support for the armed insurgent groups in Central America in the 1980s threatened to complicate Soviet efforts at détente with the United States.

In the case of Chile, it seems clear that the Nixon administration did not view Allende's UP government as an isolated threat, nor did it detect an alarming degree of Soviet influence. The Nixon administration viewed Allende as a regional threat, and the danger was clearly seen to be internal and regional developments, not Soviet penetration.

The administration notably did not over-estimate or exaggerate the Soviet menace in South America; to the extent that it did, it was intended for domestic consumption, not for internal distribution.[892] Covert actions involved "playing up" Soviet involvement in Chile; thus, the propaganda line promoted by the administration did not correspond to its own internal evaluations of the threat that Chile posed.[893] It seems safe to say that although the CIA does not bear the primary responsibility for Allende's overthrow, it certainly contributed to creating the conditions that made the coup possible. The CIA has been subjected to fierce criticism for its covert operations aimed at destabilizing the Allende regime; this is at least in part due to the brutality of Pinochet's thuggish regime. Though the precise numbers are still disputed, the military junta is estimated to have executed at least three thousand Chilean citizens, with several thousand tortured and tens of thousands forced into exile or imprisoned without trial.[894] Yet, as one scholar has opined, "there is no reason to assume that the virtues of a vanished regime increase in direct proportion to the iniquities of its successor."[895]

In the case of Nicaragua, it seems clear that the Sandinistas' ties to the Soviet Union, especially in the realm of military cooperation, developed in direct proportion to the escalation of U.S. aggression.[896] Moreover, the Reagan administration seemed determined to portray the upheaval in Central America as the direct result of Soviet and Cuban meddling, rather than accept that the revolutionary ferment was driven by domestic and regional factors.[897] There is no small irony in the fact that by this stage of

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[892] Harmer, *Allende's Chile*, p. 9.
[893] Ibid., pp. 70 & 93.
[894] Hawkins, *International Human Rights and Authoritarian Rule in Chile*, p. 2.
[895] Mark Falcoff, quoted in Davis, *The Last Two Years of Salvador Allende*, preface *xiii*.
[896] Paszyn, *Soviet Attitude to Political and Social Change in Central America*, p. 51.
[897] Ibid., pp. 91-92.

the Cold War, the U.S. administration was far more ideological in its outlook than was the Soviet Union. However, just because the prospects for Soviet armed aggression in Central America were slim does not mean that the Reagan administration did not perceive U.S. national security interests to be at stake.[898]

It is clear, though, that U.S. support for the contras did not contribute to the vital U.S. interest in hemispheric stability, but instead undermined it. Not only were the contras a profoundly disruptive force in the region, but their involvement in drug trafficking directly conflicted with the Reagan administration's counter-narcotics policies. Moreover, Reagan himself found it difficult if not impossible to envision a scenario in which U.S. national interests could be preserved while the Sandinistas remained in power. For Reagan, the two were mutually exclusive. The Nixon administration had learned the lessons of Cuba; administration officials took care not to be so overtly hostile to the UP government as to provide it with a convenient foreign target for domestic discontent. Reagan, however, seemed not to have learned this lesson, and the contras were constantly invoked by the FSLN as the reason for continued economic and political turmoil.[899]

Ultimately, because U.S. threat perceptions were incongruent with both Latin America's realities and the extent of Moscow's capabilities and goals in the region, they led to heavy-handed politico-military interventions that proved counter-productive to the long-term U.S. interest of stabilizing the Western Hemisphere.

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[898] Wayne S. Smith, "Bringing Diplomacy Back In: A Critique of U.S. Policy in Central America," in *Contadora and the Diplomacy of Peace in Central America, Volume I*, p. 71.
[899] Ibid., p. 74.

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