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THE COROLLARIES TO THE MONROE DOCTRINE AND THEIR EFFECT
ON U.S. FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD LATIN AMERICA
1965 - 1988

A Thesis
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degree of
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By

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ABSTRACT

The principal problem confronting the United States in its relations with Latin America has been that of whether and when to recognize the governments as expression of political self-determination. It was so in 1823 when the Monroe Doctrine was formulated; it was so in 1845 and 1904 when Presidents Polk and Roosevelt, respectively, reinterpreted Monroe's principles; and it is so even today.

Each presidential administration has had its own overall foreign policy in dealing with Latin America, but the foundation has remained virtually unchanged for over 165 years: to keep non-U.S. ideology, presence and action out of the Western Hemisphere. Since the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the United States sought to keep out Europe. In the latter half of the twentieth century, after the Cold War was declared and, especially, after the Cuban missile crisis, the United States has strived to suppress the seed of Soviet expansionism in Latin America, whenever and wherever it unilaterally perceived it.

In today's world of interdependent and sovereign nation-states, within Aristotle's definition of the responsible citizen, a prudent nation should apply moral reasoning and practical wisdom --aiming at the right mark through the right means-- to advance its domestic well-being as well as that of the nations on
which its security depends and in which it has much at stake. Hence, it is imperative for the United States not to continue to regress to obsolete policy principles concerning the right of its Southern neighbors to achieve political self-determination and equality. The Johnson Doctrine (1965) and the Reagan Doctrine (1983) are such a regression. Regardless of their different ad hoc justifications, contemporary U.S. interventions in Latin America are a regression from the nonintervention protocol subscribed by the United States at the Seventh Pan-American Conference, in Montevideo (1933).

Instead of applying power politics to inevitable social changes in Latin America, the United States should take deliberate steps to develop a greater ability of dialogue with Latin American governments. It should include in its definition of national self-interest a diminution of its historic hemispheric great power role. It should practice modes of self-restraint in the threat or use of force as one of the few alternatives to resolve conflicts of interest in the region. It should commit itself to promote social justice and peace in the hemisphere by consistently and in good faith participating in multilateral structures. In essence, the United States should undergird the use of power with morality in policies toward Latin America.

I am aware that in the foregoing I may be calling for an extraordinary burden of sophisticated moral reasoning and calculated prudence on the leaders of the United States. I also recognize that the opportunities to exercise these policy alternatives present themselves in asymmetrical patterns. Never-
theless, the great moral responsibility, embodied in the spirit of the American mission -- promotion of democracy, justice, equality and freedom for all -- calls for a consistent exercise of multilateral hemispheric dialogue, consensus and action.

Foreign intervention in another nation is not morally justified except as a collective act of nations to preserve and enhance the capacity of individuals to live in justice, equality, and freedom.

The nations of the Western Hemisphere must share a common interest: the fundamental right to political self-determination. In such a common interest lies the potential for peace and order at the hemispheric level, for public justice at the national level, and for human freedom at the individual level.
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INTRODUCTION

The principal problem confronting the United States in its relations with Latin America has been that of whether and when to recognize the governments as an expression of political self-determination. It was so in 1823, when the Monroe Doctrine was formulated, and it is so even today -- one current example is the Sandinista regime of Nicaragua.

After Castro's Marxist victory in Cuba in 1958, the United States began to pay increasing attention to its foreign policy toward Latin America. In 1965 the old question of Washington's policies toward Latin American dictators was revived by the crisis of the Dominican Republic. Latin American military elements appeared to be taking a more active political role than ever in the Southern Hemisphere. Also, the region's problems of poverty, illiteracy, slums, and other conditions contributing to human suffering, made the area a caldron of economic and political instability.¹

These deep-rooted problems were exacerbated by a growing unwillingness on the part of many Latin American nations to play a subordinate and dependent role in their relations with the United States. A period of successive acute crises ensued as of

the 1960s to date and, therefore, the need arose for U.S. foreign policy to be re-examined and reevaluated through another prism than that of the East-West confrontation and national security considerations.

Each presidential administration has had its unique overall foreign policy in dealing with Latin America, but the foundation has remained virtually unchanged for over 165 years: to keep non-U.S. ideology, presence and action out of the Western Hemisphere. Since the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the United States has sought to keep out Europe. After President Harry S. Truman declared the Cold War (1940s), after the Cuban missile crisis (1960s) and, especially, after the Vietnam War (1970s), the United States has strived to suppress the seed of Soviet expansionism in Latin America.

Before I continue, I wish to explain that for the sake of convenience and simplicity, I will refer to "Latin America" as that area of the Western Hemisphere south of the United States. This suggests that Latin America comprises a homogeneous region, sharing common geographic or economic problems, bound by a common cultural and political tradition, and exhibiting a unified outlook toward problems inside and outside this hemisphere. I admit that such a view of Latin America is untenable because great disparities exist, for example, between the political structures of Venezuela and Cuba, or the disparities between modern cities like Buenos Aires and semifeudal conditions existing in Ecuador or the Stone Age culture of Amazon tribes. But due to the limitations of my thesis project, I re-
luctantly will refer to all the republics of the Caribbean, of Central America, and of South America as "Latin America".

Also, my thesis is based on two presuppositions of which the reader must be aware:

First, no single thesis can pretend to adequately explain a subject as complex as the behavior of the United States and Latin America within the context of global affairs and interaction. What I define as "foreign policy" is but one expression of human relations. No matter how often reference is made to "the state" or "the nation" it remains true that these entities have no existence apart from human beings. These political structures are forms, but one among many forms of human organization. The real action behind the stage of international relations are people, acting individually or collectively.

Second, no one can possibly understand the viewpoints and policies of the United States as to the rest of the Western Hemisphere if there is a lack of familiarity with this nation's religious heritage, its ethnic composition, its demographic tendencies, and its economic cycles. If the behavior of the United States in foreign affairs is something more than merely an extension of certain domestic forces to the international scene, it is no less true that U.S. foreign policy is inextricably related to its national mood -- a fact true of all nations today to a greater or lesser extent. When I make reference in my thesis to the "national mood" I avail myself of this presupposition.
I have structured the thesis project in three chapters and a conclusion. Chapter I explains one of the most important influences on U.S. policy toward Latin America: the Monroe Doctrine, together with two of its most significant corollaries: the Polk corollary and, particularly, the Roosevelt corollary. Chapter II dwells on contemporary expressions of the principles set forth by Monroe, Polk and Roosevelt; and the influence of the national mood combined with the effects of the East-West contest for global supremacy, on policy decisions involving Latin America: the Johnson and the Reagan Doctrines. In Chapter III, I explain and argue from a moral perspective, the need for self-restraint in U.S. use of force and the need for hemispheric collective dialogue, consensus and action -- not on the basis of political ideology but on the development of mutual interests. In the Conclusion, I express my personal vision of what should be the role of U.S. policy in Latin America to help the region emerge from the continuous social crises which have aborted major steps toward human development within a framework of lasting peace and social justice.
I. THE PURPOSE OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

The main purpose of American foreign policy is the security of democratic America. The balance of power, however defined and whatever its military ingredients, is not an end in itself, but the means to preserve security. From the early nineteenth century, successive administrations felt that this end required the maintenance of an international environment congenial to the survival of democratic societies. America's open society is its best insurance that, by and large, the nation remains true to its values; otherwise, its leaders had better have a convincing rationale for straying.

The principal thrust of American policy today is still the preservation of a balance of power that would safeguard international democratic social order from hostile expansionism of the Right or of the Left. Freedom in the world, in short, is intimately tied to American power and the economy that sustains that power.

**Bases of Present U.S. Policy Toward Latin America**

The Monroe Doctrine (1823)

How did the basic foreign policy principle of security of democratic America evolve? The Monroe Doctrine was the result of early American policy. The United States felt its freedom threatened by the ambition of European powers trying to stifle the struggle for independence of South American colonies,
and felt deep sympathy for its southern neighbors that were fighting bitterly to avoid being reconquered.

This was the situation when President James Monroe delivered his annual message to Congress on December 2, 1823.

President Monroe set forth the doctrine in two paragraphs of his message. Although at the time it grew out of the question of Russian claims on the north-west coast of North America, the message contained a warning to all European powers: the non-colonization principle. Monroe stated:

"The occasion has been judged proper for asserting as a principle in which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintained, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers."  

The other paragraph of President Monroe's message related to the situation of the nations to the south of the United States; the non-interference principle, which in essence states:

"The political system of the allied powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America. . . . We owe it, therefore, to candour, and amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers, to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. . . . It is impossible that the allied powers should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness; nor can anyone believe that our southern brethren, if left to themselves, would adopt it of their own accord. It is equally impossible, therefore, that we should behold such interposition, in any form, with indifference."  

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3 Ibid., pp. 391-392.
Today the Doctrine remains the same in its essentials: it remains opposed to any non-American action encroaching upon the political independence of nations of this hemisphere under any guise, and it remains opposed to the acquisition in any manner of the control of additional territory in the Western Hemisphere by any non-American power.

It is worth commenting that as the policy embodied in the Monroe Doctrine was distinctively the policy of the United States, the Government of the United States has reserved to itself at all times its definition, application and responsibility.

"From the time the Doctrine was first enunciated the other nations of the Americas tried to associate themselves with it and make it a principle of inter-American law. They were convinced by both Monroe's declaration and by other factors that their interests coincided with those of the United States."\(^4\)

When South American nations sought offensive and defensive alliance with the United States on the basis of Monroe's principles, they were rejected and explicitly told that each must defend itself through its own efforts and that the United States would not apply the Doctrine unless its own interests were in danger.\(^5\)

The numerous corollaries which were in time attached to the Monroe Doctrine alone testify to its continuing evolution and adaptation to changing circumstances. They are too nume-

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\(^5\) Ibid., p. 10.
ous to discuss here. However, there are two corollaries which will be the focus of my attention, the Polk and the Roosevelt corollaries, especially the latter which in the eyes of Latin Americans, has wrought much damage to relations between the United States and themselves.

The Polk Corollary or the Non-Transfer Principle (1845)

After the 1823 pronouncement by President Monroe, there was almost no other mention of this message. It was not until December 2, 1845 that President James K. Polk revived and re-affirmed Monroe's principles in his annual message to Congress. The so-called Polk corollary prohibits "even the voluntary transfer of territory by an American state to any European power."\(^6\) He also warned the Europeans against any "diplomatic intrigue to maintain balance of power in America."\(^7\) Polk had in mind with special force the North American continent rather than the whole Western Hemisphere.

The immediate circumstances attending Polk's message were the zeal of the United States to expand to Texas, to Oregon and to California. Oregon was within the Northwest territory still administered under a joint Anglo-American agreement of 1818. There was demand for settlement of the boundary line because of the increasing numbers of Americans thronging to that region. Mexico's authority over California in the early 1840s was distant and weak. It was obvious California would not remain for long part of Mexico. "Its future was of vital concern

\(^{6}\) Ibid., p. 5.  \(^{7}\) Ibid.
to the United States. She wanted it." And so did England. Texas had already separated from Mexico in 1836 by decision of the majority of American settlers there.

Polk saw the need to invoke a strengthened Monroe Doctrine against foreign colonization which was threatening the American dream of a nation reaching from the Atlantic to the Pacific. His message to Congress, according to Dexter Perkins, "is probably one of the most thoughtful . . . most complete, expressions of the spirit of Monroeism." Polk's message stated an explicit American veto on European action in the New World, whether it be by force of arms or, as Polk amplified the Doctrine, by diplomatic intrigue or any meddling with nations of the New World in their relations with one another. He also was emphatic on the prohibition of the United States of ceding any territory in the Americas to a European power. All in all, the Polk corollary binds aptly together Monroe's prohibition on colonization and reconquest, and the non-transfer of territory to a European power.

After Polk's interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine, succeeding Presidents and Secretaries of State often reiterated "that the interest of the United States demanded that no territory in the New World be transferred from one European power to another, or from an American power to a European." Each


10 Ibid., pp. 79-80. 11 Ibid., p. 371.
one of these successive interpretations found widespread, indeed almost unanimous support in American public opinion; none were effectively refuted or put down; and the growing power of the nation and its widening interests were reflected in the evolution of the principles of 1823.

After President Polk's reassertion of the Monroe principles, these became known as the "Monroe Doctrine" and almost coincidental with its new title, the public attitude toward it became a "somewhat mystic patriotic dogma,"\(^{12}\) from which much American foreign policy was to flow.

By 1898, at the time Congress was debating justification to intervene in favor of Cuba's struggle for independence from Spain, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations briefly referred to Monroe's dogma to strengthen the intention of the United States to "intervene under certain circumstances . . . to be effected in certain contingencies in furtherance of national policies."\(^{13}\) This constitutes a clear announcement that the United States would be willing to intervene in certain circumstances in the affairs of any Latin American state.

The foregoing U.S. policy announcement can be said to be an inevitable outgrowth of the Monroe Doctrine built up by the Polk corollary, and an immediate antecedent for the famous Roosevelt corollary. In relation to the consequences of Monroe's and Polk's national policies, Dr. Isidro Fabela, a noted Latin American historian, is of the opinion that Polk indeed establish—


\(^{13}\) Ibid., p. 117.
ed a new Pan-American rule as to what the United States considered convenient to its national interests, but, Fabela argues, Polk did not sustain that to veto European colonization or intervention, the United States should take upon itself to gain control over its South American neighbors. Fabela concludes that from the misinterpretation of Polk's message the United States has come to believe that America is for North America.\textsuperscript{14}

The Roosevelt Corollary or "Big-Stick Diplomacy" (1904)

"Chronic wrongdoing . . . may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power."\textsuperscript{15}

Theodore Roosevelt believed the strength of the Monroe Doctrine lay in the ability of the United States to enforce it. That strength lay in speaking softly as a nation yet build and maintain an efficient and powerful naval force to assure peace in the Western Hemisphere.

Roosevelt steered foreign policy formulation toward ways through which to reach national strength. From the language of the Monroe Doctrine he deduced the right of the United States to interfere in the affairs of independent nations. This positive right to interfere has come to be known as "Big-Stick

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\textsuperscript{15} Excerpt from President Theodore Roosevelt's message to Congress on December 6, 1904, as reproduced in Frank Donovan's Mr. Monroe's Message. The Story of the Monroe Doctrine. pp. 147-148.
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Diplomacy or the Roosevelt corollary—with all its imperialistic connotations of colonial expansionism.\textsuperscript{16}

Dexter Perkins is of the opinion that the Roosevelt corollary has not been supported historically by the American people because it shows elements of national selfishness which go against the spirit of equality in democracy for all. Exerting tutelage over the Latin American republics and/or justifying interference in the economic and political affairs of Latin American states in time were adopted as elements of a Caribbean doctrine for the sake of the ever-important creed of U.S. national security.\textsuperscript{17}

As of the Roosevelt corollary the United States assumed on its own responsibility a binding moral obligation toward other nations of restoring peace and order, and of preventing situations which threaten human dignity. American intervention was seen as good because the marines brought law and order, multiplied schools, hospitals and miles of road in those countries in which the United States intervened. Moreover, America felt self-righteous because it was freeing those southern peoples from the "bloody barbarity of corrupt political leaders and evil scheming foreigners"—Europeans and Japanese.\textsuperscript{18} Although these republics benefited from U.S. intervention in terms of education,


\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., pp. 372-374.

\textsuperscript{18}In Frank Donovan's \textit{Mr. Monroe's Message. The History of the Monroe Doctrine} the reader will find details of the far-reaching consequences of the Roosevelt corollary. pp. 158-164.
health and up-graded welfare, what can be said of their inde-
pendence as nations? The Roosevelt corollary led directly to
the loss of independence of the very countries it was intended
to protect. 19 The Monroe Doctrine, that initially had aimed to
avoid European intervention, had become a means for U.S. inter-
vention.

In addition to the right of intervention, Roosevelt ex-
tended the scope of the Monroe Doctrine to all non-American
powers, not just European. He put forth a prohibition on the
acquisition by foreign governments or corporations of harbors
or other sites on the hemisphere which might threaten communica-
tions or the safety of the United States. He also prohibited
Latin American nations to contract loans from European nations. 20
The unilateral and determined enforcement of these measures soon
assured the United States to be the most influential country on
the continent, and its power to be law over all the New World.

The general reaction from Latin America to the Monroe
Doctrine, the Polk corollary and, especially, the Roosevelt co-
rollary, was anything but friendly. "From all the republics
together came pleas addressed to the United States to give its
adhesion to the concept of nonintervention." 21 Finally, in
1933, Secretary of State Cordell Hull consented to the noninter-
vention resolution embodied in the Seventh Pan-American Confer-

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19 Ibid., 166.
20 Dexter Perkins. Hands Off! A History of the Monroe
Doctrine, p. 346.
21 Ibid., 271.
ence held in Montevideo, which was ratified unanimously by the U.S. Senate the following year.

As far as that treaty of nonintervention was effective, the United States had put behind it not only the principles of the Roosevelt corollary, but also the pretension to intervene by force of arms in the affairs of other nations of the hemisphere.

Again, in 1936, the United States signed a new protocol ratifying and strengthening the one of 1933. It was also ratified by the Senate in 1937. In order for the reader to grasp the historical importance of the Johnson and Reagan Doctrines discussed in the following chapter, below is a summary made by Dexter Perkins of the significant elements of the Protocol of 1936:

"This protocol declared 'inadmissible' the intervention of any American state in the affairs of another; 'directly or indirectly, and for whatever reason.' Moreover, it stated that 'the violation of the provisions shall give use to mutual consultations, with the object of exchanging views and seeking methods of peaceful adjustment.' Finally, it provided that 'every question concerning the interpretation of the present additional Protocol, which it has not been possible to settle through diplomatic channels,' should be submitted either to conciliation or to arbitration, or to judicial settlement."22

When the United States subscribed to methods of peaceful adjustments, as outlined in the protocols of 1933 and 1936, it strengthened the platform of the Good Neighbor Policy. When President John F. Kennedy implemented the Alliance for Progress in the 1960s, he sought to give U.S. policy toward Latin America

22Ibid., 347.
a means other than force—economic cooperation. But when President Lyndon B. Johnson decided to intervene with marines in the crisis of the Dominican Republic (1965), or when President Ronald Reagan began funding the contra forces in Nicaragua (1980s), they were relying on the principles expressed by President Monroe in 1823, but as these had been reinterpreted, expanded and clarified throughout more than a century of American foreign policy experience. Monroe's message was only the foundation of a national policy, its superstructure consists of a multitude of policy statements, principles and precedents greatly broadening (and in some cases considerably altering) the meaning of Monroe's principles—especially the Polk and Roosevelt corollaries.
II. CONTEMPORARY U.S. POLICY TOWARD LATIN AMERICA

Influence of National Mood on Policy-Making

Although the United States has been principally concerned with maintaining the balance of power since the Vietnam War, and has "behaved as other great powers have done in the past, its role has been shaped not only by the state system but also by American national style."¹

Power politics have been justified in terms of an anti-Communist crusade to arouse and mobilize public support for foreign policy. Areas of vital and secondary interest to U.S. security have been especially important to identify and act upon.

This manner of policy decision-making led Presidents John Kennedy to launch the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba (1961), Johnson to land troops in the Dominican Republic (1965), and Reagan to invade Grenada (1983) to prevent another Cuba from being established.

The implementation of politics fostered by anti-Communism made the United States pay a high price: official overreaction, diplomatic rigidity, and overt or covert intervention in Latin American states that might otherwise not have occurred after the adoption of the nonintervention protocols of 1933 and 1936.

Before the Vietnam War, the United States had viewed its power as justifiable because its participation in two world wars had made the "world safe for democracy". However, the Vietnam experience put doubt in the minds of Americans about the morality of the use of that power. The United States had "intervened in Vietnam on the side of an undemocratic regime, and the conduct of war, particularly the massive bombing, was for the most part . . . immoral to many Americans."3

The pride in U.S. morality was shaken by feelings of self-accusation, disillusionment and cynicism. The U.S. government was viewed as responsible for right-wing regimes in the Third World, which were supported in the name of anti-Communism. For example, the Nixon administration helped bring to power the right-wing regime of General Pinochet in Chile (1973) by covert assistance in the coup that overthrew the popularly-elected Marxist administration of Salvador Allende.

President Jimmy Carter's policymakers saw that the best course was to revert to domestic affairs and withdraw from the international scene, renew and purify the country in an effort to build national consensus. The administration hoped that the example of a fully free and just society would once again guide other nations. Foreign policy was projected to the world through domestic-social politics.

The national mood imposed a policy of isolation that was perceived as an anti-national security mood by foreign powers.

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 356.  \(^3\)Ibid.
Spanier states: "Iranian and Soviet actions in late 1979 angered and aroused public opinion once more." The United States rallied in defense of its vital security and economic interests. National and world opinion criticized Carter's early restraint and accused the United States of losing the will to protect itself.5

If the Vietnam lesson was to avoid foreign intervention, Iran's was that the United States could be pushed around. National impotence was bound to lead to national humiliation.

This was the national mood when Ronald Reagan was elected President in 1980. The United States was swaying between post-Vietnam and post-Iranian moods, and, in a hemispheric context, it was swaying between what policy to follow: the model of overt intervention in Grenada on one hand, and the model of covert war in Nicaragua on the other.

Contemporary Statecraft and Latin America

Thomas Franck and Edward Weisband in Word Politics argue that two determinations underlay each of the instances in which unilateral force was used by the United States within what it considers its area of influence: unilateral finding of fact and a unilateral decision about how that fact would affect its national self-interest.6

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4Ibid.  
5Ibid., p. 357.  
It appears that the more dangerous to U.S. interests hemispheric communism is seen to be, the more hemispheric communism is likely to be perceived lurking behind each Latin American crisis. It cannot be implied that policy-makers knowingly distort the truth of events that precede an intervention, but that, like all of us, they perceive through their own subjectivity, which predisposes them to expect and perceive the worst where Latin American social movements are concerned. Franck and Weisband give as examples the interventions in the Dominican Republic and Grenada, and in recent times the covert intervention in Nicaragua. But can subjectivity be an adequate substitute for perceptive genuineness of policy-makers? A unilateral perception of fact should be compared and combined with those of others with different perceptions in order to gain perspective and more objectivity.

The Johnson Doctrine (1965)

"'The American nations cannot, must not, and will not permit the establishment of another Communist government in the Western Hemisphere. . . . This is and this will be the common action and the common purpose of the democratic forces of the hemisphere. For the danger is also a common danger, and the principles are common principles.'"  

In the Johnson Doctrine, as reproduced above, we find the Monroe Doctrine mirrored and amplified. Almost 142 years elapsed between the two, but their essence is the same. Monroe

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stated that the United States would view "as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition" the interference of any European power in the hemisphere. 8 Polk stated that the non-transfer principle "will apply with greatly increased force should any European power attempt to establish any new colony or dominion." 9 Theodore Roosevelt stated the intervention principle: "'Our interests and those of our southern neighbors are in reality identical . . . . we would interfere with them [if they] violated the rights of the United States or had invited foreign aggression to the entire body of American nations.'" 10 The Johnson Doctrine is in fact a paraphrased statement of his predecessors' non-colonization, non-transfer and right to intervention foreign policy principles. Where Monroe, Polk and Roosevelt uttered the policies from a viewpoint of U.S. unilateral action to defend its national interests, Johnson unilaterally committed all the American nations to common action against any action that the United States could perceive as a danger to its self-interests.

The Charter of the United Nations (1945) contains a treaty endorsed by all its signatories that obliges every member to refrain from threatening or using force in their relations with each other and allows for the use of armed forces

9Ibid., p. 65.
only in self-defense against an armed attack or, when duly authorized, collective enforcement action by the United Nations itself.\textsuperscript{11}

It remains clear that the use of unilateral armed force is prohibited by the United Nations in all instances other than in response to an armed attack. It is this limitation that was done away by the Johnson Doctrine.

Under the principles set forth by this Doctrine, the U.S. self-interest and self-defense call for the existence of an allowed perimeter beyond its borders to include the whole of its region of influence. Within the perimeters of that area of influence, the U.S. perception of events in another country are fact and its self-interest is law.

To Franck and Weisband, the implications of the new set of principles structured by the Johnson Doctrine are that: "When the superpower determines that events in another state threaten its regional predominance or the orthodox homogeneity of the region, then it may put down the deviation, acting alone or with its regional retinue."\textsuperscript{12}

When this argument is applied to the crisis of the Dominican Republic, the principles can easily be grasped in action, as well as the problems they originate.

The United States compiled facts on its own initiative and, on this basis, it proceeded to justify its unilateral use

\textsuperscript{11}The transcript of the this section of the Charter of the United Nations is reproduced in Thomas M. Franck and Edward Weisband's Word Politics: Verbal Strategy Among the Superpowers. p. 71.

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid.
of force. However, most of the other democratic Latin American states -- Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela -- did not perceive the facts in the same way as did the United States. They did not share the perception of the nature and extent of communist danger in the revolution that overthrew the Dominican right-wing dictatorship. What they perceived was an effort to achieve political self-determination in place of the military junta.

The formal justification delivered by President Johnson to the Organization of American States was to the effect that a communist conspiracy against the Dominican Republic and, by extension against the hemisphere, gave the United States the right to use military force to ensure a democratic process in a Latin American nation. Johnson's initial humanitarian justification for intervention had yielded to another unilateral finding of fact and unilateral course of action to deal with the perceived event. Of special interest is that the Monroe, Polk and Roosevelt principles had been modernized, amplified and actively incorporated into contemporary statecraft.

The immediate implication of the so-called Johnson Doctrine is that U.S. policy toward Latin America for the last twenty-three years has assumed the inherent justice of dispatching U.S. troops to a sovereign country if that country seems to the United States to be slipping its moorings; and the possibility of intervening whether such action is requested by the threatened government or not. From these two immediate implications it would follow that the form of regime in a Latin American
country would no longer be a matter of interest solely for the people of that country; that if a domestic political process produces another type of government, other than that unilaterally perceived by the United States as not dangerous to its self-interests, the people of that foreign nation can be deemed to be foreign aggressors --even in their own country!; that it is sufficient justification for unilateral intervention that the United States find facts that elements seeking a change in government are inspired, in whatever way, from abroad; that the United States claims the right to intervene simply and directly, whenever necessary, to defend its self-interests; and, finally, that it is the leaders of the United States who in any instance will determine whether such a hostile take-over is occurring.

One fact that remains clear is that it is the opinion held by the United States that will prevail as to what constitutes a sufficient danger of subversion in a small state to call for superpower intervention. The policy principles of the Johnson Doctrine toward Latin American social movements have been of great importance in systemic relations between the United States and Latin America.

If fact-finding is unilateral and tinged with an anti-Communist perception, then the United States has forfeited all beneficial influence it could exert on revolutionary movements and the demands for social change which are continuously sweeping Latin America. Moreover, the United States has inadvertently committed itself to support oligarchs who are engaged in a vain attempt to preserve the status quo and who often recur to the
term "communist" in a calculated effort to rally the United States into supporting their selfish and discredited objectives. Therefore, as it is the right of the U.S. government to stomp-out any "communist" seed anywhere, any time, to guarantee hemispheric security, could it not also be presumed that the practice of this policy principle should at least be corrected to act on the side of political self-determination and against oligarchs?

The Johnson Doctrine is the broadest net the United States could have thrown to extend unlimited superpower supremacy in the Southern Hemisphere. Like its remote predecessor, the Monroe Doctrine, and like the corollaries to that doctrine, it is a purely unilateral policy formulated by the United States on its own responsibility and going against the sovereign principles of self-determination of peoples, which lie at the foundation of democracy and equality.

The Reagan Doctrine (1983)

The military action carried out by the United States in Grenada in 1983 offered a model to Latin American republics --and a warning shot aimed at the Sandinista government of Nicaragua-- of future U.S. intervention. Ronald Reagan's policy of intervention was shaped by the principles set forth under the Johnson Doctrine, but also structured to use military force only if it was clear in advance that its use would be quick, effective and low-cost. Indeed, under the banner of anti-Communism, the United States invaded, suffered few casualties, and withdrew in a matter of days from Grenada.
Nicaragua was at the opposite end of the spectrum of intervention models. Spanier aptly describes the dilemma of the Reagan administration:

"The fact that Reagan could say that Nicaragua was a threat to U.S. security and yet promise not to send U.S. forces—and resort instead to clandestine means and a covert war against the Sandinista regime—was a symptom of the reluctance of the United States to use force in situations where the fighting might be prolonged and costly." 13

The Reagan administration further expanded previous administration's commitments to contain Communism. In no foreign policy area was Reagan's traditionalism more apparent than in Central America and the Caribbean.

Under the influence of unilateral perception, Reagan consequently deplored the Sandinistas as an instrument of Soviet expansionism in Central America. He committed the United States to support the efforts of the Nicaraguan people to establish a free and independent government. He went further. Lacking the support of most Latin American countries abroad, and a reluctant Congress at home, Reagan initiated a covert war through economic pressure, Central Intelligence Agency subversive tactics, and support of the contra insurgents.

Despite the continued pledges of the Sandinistas to confine the revolution within their own borders, Reagan was unmoved to change from covert warfare. The administration was convinced by its unilateral fact-finding that the Sandinistas constituted a threat to the region and, therefore, to U.S. interests. The

13 John Spanier. American Foreign Policy Since World War II. p. 358.
popular nationalistic revolution of Nicaragua, which sought political self-determination, was effectively misinterpreted, undermined and consequently radicalized by a persistent misguided U.S. foreign policy based on realpolitik.

The Reagan Doctrine, as it has come to be known, is in essence a course of action "to undo the results of Soviet expansionism, not only in Nicaragua, but also in Angola and Afghanistan."\(^{14}\) In other words, the Reagan Doctrine carries the extension of the Johnson Doctrine outside the borders of the Western Hemisphere, to include the world. It also expresses a belief in the necessity for the use of force in advancing democracy and U.S. interests. So far, in practice, it has amounted to little more than bleeding the targeted government. If that government wishes to stop the hemorrhage, it would have to negotiate a political solution with the insurgents. In the case of Nicaragua, the Sandinistas would have to negotiate with the contra insurgents about what would constitute a genuine political expression of the Nicaraguans. But to this date, the Reagan administration has not been willing to accept any political solution that would imply that the Sandinistas could retain power.

The Reagan Doctrine has put the prestige of the United States in a dubious situation by pledging support to a weak insurgency which lacks loyalty and devotion of those it is supposed to represent — the people of Nicaragua. One of the rea-

\(^{14}\) Ibid., p. 317.
sons for this local lack of support is that the populace believes the contras are unrepented somocistas because a number of the rebels' commanders were former National Guard officers under the dictatorship of the much-hated Anastasio Somoza. The lack of popular support, consequently, has been an important factor as to why the insurgents have been unable to exploit the growing alienation of Nicaraguans from the Sandinista regime. The foregoing is strong evidence that the contras do no represent or constitute a revolution pursuing purely pro-Nicaraguan interests.

Not only have the Reagan principles compromised the prestige of the United States worldwide, they have also weakened the presidency in the eyes of the Americans by often funding the covert war illegally (for example, the Iran-Contra scandal) to advance a one-sided effort despite the limitations imposed by Congress and the national mood. I draw again on Spanier to clarify this position:

"When U.S. security is clearly at stake, when the rebels are worthy of support and have some hope of success, where other states approve and support the insurgency, and diplomacy in likely to fail, a president can expect the country to support him. Otherwise, if the president persists, like Reagan, he may find that the attempt to justify covert anti-Soviet intervention ends up in scandal and undermining of the cause itself."

If the contras gained power, would that improve the lives of the Nicaraguans and at the same time protect U.S. national interests? Do other Latin American nations, allies and friends approve Reagan's support of the contra insurgents?

\footnote{\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.}
The issue in this instance of U.S. foreign policy is not so much the advancement of democracy and the reversal of Soviet expansionism in Central America, as the likelihood of success in the field and the identification of the United States with a widely condemned course of action under the premise of superpower unilateral fact-finding and unilateral decision.

As mentioned before, for the past twenty-three years, successive administrations have unilaterally and subjectively perceived social movements in Latin America under the conviction that regional problems are the result of and have to be dealt with through the prism of the East-West global struggle for power. For the most part the U.S. government has not given due importance to the more complex realities of the instability of many Latin American governments, the proliferation of regional conflicts, the increasing use of terrorism, the burst of intense nationalism, and the economic stagnation of many of these countries, some of which are being asfixiated by the burden of the foreign debt.

Spanier states that the Monroe Doctrine historically considered the Western Hemisphere as the sphere of influence of the United States, but that, if anything, this doctrine and its subsequent corollaries were only a Caribbean doctrine to make that area a buffer zone for the United States.\textsuperscript{16} Since the 1960s the United States has come to perceive in the Caribbean-Central American area its "back-yard", and has increasingly committed itself to stop what it has judged Cuban-Soviet direct-

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 311.
ed actions in the area. The end-products of this policy commitment are the amplified principles of Monroe, Polk and Roosevelt: the Johnson and Reagan Doctrines that today influence forcefully U.S. foreign policy.

The mood for the use of military force has been strong in the Reagan years, just as it was in the years of Theodore Roosevelt when the United States was in an expansion process. Perhaps Richard Allen, one of Reagan's security advisers, captured best the mood of the 1980s when he said: "U.S. military power has always been the basis for the development of a just and human foreign policy. . . . What we need is another Teddy Roosevelt." 17

III. MORAL AND POLITICAL VALUES IN U.S. POLICY TOWARD LATIN AMERICA

It would seem evident from the preceding chapters that contemporary U.S. policy toward Latin America, as it gradually evolved from the Monroe Doctrine into the Polk and Roosevelt corollaries, and was later modernized and amplified by the Johnson and Reagan Doctrines, is no longer substantially based on moral values combined with U.S. security interests. Only the security concern has remained as the guiding principle in formulating foreign policy.

In my opinion, this lack of moral values in U.S. policy toward Latin America is one of the factors contributing to the social crises that have dominated the region for the past twenty-three years. Unless these pervasive, long-term, and unilaterally formulated foreign policy principles are re-examined and re-evaluated, Latin American social institutions will continue to fail to achieve stable and just social, economic and political structures necessary for the well-being of the individual within those societies, and for the collective well-being of the Western Hemisphere as well.

U.S. Policy makers should steer away from the emphasis on ideological factors that heretofore have shaped policy toward Latin American social changes. Instead, they should structure Latin American relations within an approach that balances
"the relationships and interconnection between competing moral and political principles."¹ That is to say, U.S. security interests, as well as hemispheric well-being, can effectively be strengthened and substantially guaranteed through multilateral structures and development of mutual binding interests; not through continued unilateral U.S. perception and action alone. There is an urgent need to reinstate in policy decisions the nonintervention protocol subscribed by the United States at the Seventh Pan-American Conference, Montevideo, in 1933 and reinforced in 1936.

Multilateral cooperation for hemispheric security and well-being entails the need for regional understanding. The United States would do well to come to terms with the fact that no nation in our world today is totally independent from others. We live in a world of interdependency --what one nation does or fails to do, affects other nations as well. This is significantly more true in the case of the United States and Latin America. One eloquent and current example is the foreign debt crisis affecting Latin American countries. This crisis is not a problem from which the United States can immunize itself. To the degree that the debt crisis steps up social unrest and sets in economic stagnation in Latin America, U.S. export markets, financial system, and national security are correspondingly weakened.

In giving content and objectivity as to what should constitute a morally desirable and politically possible reconstruction of U.S. policy toward Latin America, I have interviewed three experts in differing fields of knowledge and from different parts of the world. I consulted Professor Thomas Dodd, Ph.D., of the History Department of Georgetown University, who specializes on Central America. For a diplomatic opinion, I interviewed Ambassador Val McComie, Deputy General Secretary of the Organization of American States (O.A.S.). And for a religious (Roman Catholic) perspective, I met with Monsignor Giovanni Tonucci, Counsellor of the Apostolic Nunciature in Washington, D.C.

In addition to their professional expertise, these gentlemen also reflect, in the order their names appear above, a U.S. perspective, a Latin American perspective, and a European perspective on U.S. policy toward Latin America.

To each I presented the same format of hypotheses and questions. For the sake of simplicity I have divided these into three sections containing the essence of the various hypotheses and will group in each section their corresponding opinion.

Should U.S. Policy Toward Latin America Have a Moral Purpose?

The question of whether U.S. policy toward Latin America should in reality have a moral purpose should be complemented by asking by what right a nation in its relations with other nations undertakes the actions that it does; and, also, if there is an inherent contradiction between morality and national security interests.
The opinion of Ambassador McComie was that no country or person can claim the right to intervene in the internal affairs of another country. He stated that "one of the most important contributions that Latin America has made to the codification of international law has been the promotion and eventual acceptance by the world community that the principle of non-intervention is a sacred plank in international affairs."\(^2\)

As to by what right a nation in its relations with other nations undertakes the actions that it does, the Ambassador thought that unilateral rights, usually assumed by the mighty powers, within the framework of ethics, have to be considered in relation to the rights of others. He explained this through the example of the relationship between the rich and powerful, and the poor within a national society.

"The powerful assume certain rights over other persons in society. The question is whether or not those persons can resist -- hopefully within a legal framework-- those rights assumed by the others. If such a judicial system does not exist, then there are many instances where those whose rights have been trampled resort to violence in defense of those rights."\(^3\)

The Ambassador went on to say that fortunately in most societies mechanism have been set up for collective bargaining to work out satisfactory resolution of the conflicts between the owners of capital and the workers. In his opinion, mechanisms for collective bargaining are a formal recognition of the inter-

\(^2\)Ambassador Val McComie, Deputy General Secretary, Organization of American States (O.A.S.), Washington, D.C., interview held on February 24, 1989.

\(^3\)Idem.
dependency of the rich and the poor at a national level. He
then applied that example to international relations:

"If you take the question of security, which the
United States says is its major concern hemispherically,
such security has got to be done collectively, within a
multinational or multilateral mechanism. Security is
only as valid as the weakest member in the link will
make it. The most powerful country in the hemisphere
has to recognize its power alone is no guarantee."\(^4\)

The possible policy guideline that could resolve the
inherent contradiction existing between morality and U.S. na-
tional security interests, according to Professor Dodd, lies
basically on one fundamental premise that, he said, exists and
has worked: mutual cooperation in security interests through an
inter-American judicial system. Dr. Dodd believes that "when
its principles come to be applied more often than U.S. security
interests or U.S. economic interests, then a sense of values,
such as human rights, social justice, and economic development
will flow."\(^5\)

From the viewpoint of Monsignor Tonucci, mutual coopera-
tion and solidarity are the keys to policies that would promote
hemispheric peace and justice. The Monsignor was very firm as
to the reality of interdependency between the United States and
Latin America. "As nations closely tied geographically, what
affects one also affects the rest of the continent."\(^6\) He used

\(^4\) Idem.

\(^5\) Professor Thomas Dodd, Ph.D., History Department of
Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., interview held on
February 24, 1989.

\(^6\) Monsignor Giovanni Tonucci, Counsellor, Apostolic
Nunciature, Washington, D.C., interview held on February 27, 1989.
the term solidarity in the sense that it is above interference and has the moral connotation of something done in justice and toward peace. But he added:

"The way in which U.S. foreign policy has been applied until now is something completely separated from moral doctrine. We have an interdependency. The United States cannot take unilateral decisions or act upon unilateral perceptions. Latin American countries have social problems and social solutions, not military, should be applied."  

It appears to me that the statements of Messrs. McComie, Dodd, and Tonucci confirm that the apparent contradiction between moral action and U.S. national security interests can be resolved substantially through mutual cooperation in security interests by means of an inter-American judicial system. The resolution of conflicting interests can be addressed through a hemispheric multinational mechanism — such as the blueprint embodied in the protocols of 1933 and 1936. Hemispheric well-being could be advanced through mutual cooperation and solidarity in many fields. The formal recognition of interdependency among all nations of this hemisphere — especially on the part of the United States — appears to be the prerequisite to return to the moral values contained in the Good Neighbor Policy and the Alliance for Progress. In other words, a return to the initial efforts toward collective inter-American platforms of dialogue, consensus and action to promote a balance between moral and political principles.
Can U.S. Intervention in Latin America Be Justified?

The type of intervention that the United States has widely practiced in Latin America is through indirect imperialist rule, or preventive intervention. It closely resembles a form of colonialism known as indirect rule. The United States has intervened to impose rulers who promise to be totally anti-Communist, but these rulers are left free to follow any domestic policy they please. Indirect rule has caused the United States more harm than good because it produces the very dangers it most feared when first applying such intervention.

As examples of misguided interventionist U.S. policy in Latin America there are the bitter fruits of Guatemala, Cuba and Nicaragua. The C.I.A.-sponsored overthrow of the pro-socialist government of Jacobo Arbenz (1954), put into power the pro-U.S. oligarquic regime of Colonel Castillo Armas. After Arbenz fell, Guatemala has experienced intermittent political repression, coups and the ever-present destabilization produced by the pro-Soviet guerrilla movement which threatens to turn the country into another Cuba.

The fact that there are relatively few top U.S. policy makers who understand or sympathize with Latin American social changes make it relatively easy for the United States to adopt an antagonistic and mistaken official line which only contributes in the end to the rise of the pro-Soviet forces it initially wished to avoid. Guatemala, Cuba and Nicaragua, among others, seem to point to a significant fact: the United States can be its own worst enemy, because when it intervenes in the internal
affairs of another nation, "it undermines the institutional and legal foundations of national sovereignty and jurisdiction, and the equality of independent states on which its own existence rests."  

Dr. Thomas Dodd seems to the same pattern of thought:

"When any American state invades or subverts a neighbor it really affects the security of every state. It is weakening its own security and the inter-American system. The United States does have to act in its own national self-interest, which could and does coincide with its neighbors, to preclude aggression. The invasion, incursion by subversion or direct military force of any American state in the internal affairs of another should be responded to collectively by the American states in the inter-American system. Multilateral sanctions should be applied."  

Just as the United States underwent, and perhaps is still undergoing, a moral ordeal because of its role in Vietnam, now it should re-examine its role in Latin America. It should begin by challenging traditional, yet misguided, policies that appear to be founded on fairness, justice and the avoidance of suffering on others, but which reflect the sense of the American mission gone perverse. According to Charles Frankel, the United States has relied on the supposition that it is a special country with a unique relationship to higher moral laws and, therefore, constitutes the best example of goodness against evils of the outside world. This affinity to moral laws would suggest that the U.S. government has responsibilities to the rest of the world to promote what is moral, and should formulate and execute foreign pol-

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9 Professor Thomas Dodd, Ph.D., interview of February 27, 1989.
icy from considerations of moral purpose. Nevertheless, I would like to add to Frankel's observation that what is needed is not the jettisoning of the ideal of the American mission, but rather a modest application of it. The United States ought to accept its limited right and ability to control social changes in Latin America and it ought to reject the temptation to recoil in frustration when it is disappointed by developments in the region.

In light of the foregoing, what does the United States stand for in Latin America today? Does it stand for a force that intervenes against Communism expanding abroad, but takes milder measures against more present evils, so that it seems to become champion of the status quo while the Soviet Union makes itself the champion of racial equality and the abolition of poverty and exploitation? Does the United States stand for democracy, justice, freedom, and equal opportunity for all?

Ambassador McComie stated very strongly that democracy is not an export product. In fact, to him, democracy means the rule of the people. He said:

"What is basic and what must be basic is that it is the people who will determine what their form of government will be. No country has a right to arrogate to itself the power to determine what is good or right for the rest of the world."

The Ambassador is convinced that the great attraction of the United States to the vast majority of the world is not ne-

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cessarily its economic or military power, but the ideas it pur-
ports of freedom and justice. These values have inspired people 
all over the world to seek to adapt their own system in accord-
ance with those ideas. Nevertheless the Ambassador manifested: 

"Unfortunately I am not sure that the citizens of 
the United States understand this responsibility. That 
is the problem. The extent to which the United States 
lives out the values of its Declaration of Independence 
will determine the kind of moral strength that it will 
occupy in the rest of the world." ¹²

Monsignor Tonucci also expressed a negative attitude 
on the question of U.S. interventionism in Latin America. The 
Monsignor stated:

"When the United States tries to interfere or to 
impede on another country a behavior in accordance with 
U.S. interests, it is unacceptable interference, not 
only in moral terms, but unpractical and useless in 
political terms. The only possible moral justification 
for intervention is a consensus of all the countries, 
in a formal or informal alliance, to act upon a specific 
country where something is happening beyond every pos-
sible understanding and acceptance. Otherwise there is 
no moral justification for intervention." ¹³

Can U.S. intervention in Latin America be justified? 

None of the three experts condone it. From a historical point 
of view, U.S. interventionism is an unacceptable political ac-
tion in the sense that it weakens the foundation on which U.S. 
security and the inter-American system rest. From a diplomatic 
perspective, it undermines the values the United States supports 
in its Declaration of Independence. And from a religious point 
of view, there is no moral justification.

¹² Idem.
¹³ Monsignor Giovanni Tonucci, interview on February 27, 
1989.
The fact that strongly comes through, once again, is that collective action -- multilateral action -- of the nations of the hemisphere is the only means to guarantee security and well-being.

The history of U.S. responses to social changes in Latin America suggests what is both good policy and good morals, namely, that the U.S. government should not use military or paramilitary forces against its Latin American neighbors, most of whom are largely weak and defenseless. If the United States, given its immense economic and political power, cannot achieve its goals through bilateral negotiations and/or multilateral cooperation of Latin American states, then it would be unwise to achieve them by the use of force. Interventionism is possibly the worst way to resolve conflicting interests because an imposed settlement is inherently unstable in the long term -- the example of Guatemala given earlier substantially confirms this assertion.

Should U.S. Policy Toward Latin America Seek to Promote Political Self-Determination in the Region as a Means to Achieve Social Justice and Hemispheric Security?

This section suggests criteria that should guide U.S. relations with Latin America; mainly balancing U.S. competing national security interests with political, economic and social concerns of the Southern Hemisphere.

Although the United States has scarcely begun to develop theories of social change that would allow us to understand the
fundamental revolutions now in progress in the world --especially in Latin America-- and, hence, to develop doctrines relevant to the politics of modernization, the United States is not entirely without knowledge of the problems of social transformation in Latin America. Through almost a century of intervention the United States must have realized that it cannot, even if it tries, use force effectively to intervene in a revolution that is transforming what men believe, how they live, and how they relate to each other. According to Manfred Halpern, the nationalistic revolutions in Latin America are to build social institutions that would put the people in command rather than leave them at the mercy of the forces of modernization.¹⁴

The pressures of sheer needs, new aspirations, the pain of backwardness, the virtual dependency on U.S. great economic power, and the powerlessness in the face of U.S. power politics make nationalistic revolutions seem the quickest way to escape from an unbearable situation. However, the United States has not been able to benefit --itself or Latin America-- from the little knowledge it has gained in the field of social change because it has been thus far investing more into power politics than in knowledge on which the prudent and effective exercise of power must be based.

The use of realpolitik, or power politics, toward Latin America has usually been justified as a measure against foreign intervention, mainly that of the Soviet Union. Realpolitik has

sought to demonstrate U.S. strength and resolve. I do not deny that the United States has to keep its defenses strong and be prepared to use force, for example, against the Soviet Union. That is good policy which does require a demonstration of strength. But it is not good policy or good morals to use military or paramilitary forces against its Latin American neighbors.

The failure to invest in knowledge of social change and problems of regional stability has often forced the United States to adopt policy positions without foresight as to the adverse consequences of those positions. If the United States capitalized on regional understanding, there would be a world of difference in the range of choices and decisions U.S. policymakers can make. Being aware of the forces and trends of Latin America would position the United States to put emphasis on overcoming its historical ignorance and preconceptions about regional social changes, and about the relevance of U.S. action in Latin America.

Furthermore, knowledge bears an effective relationship with morality in that for lack of a controlling sense of morality in U.S. policy toward its Southern neighbors, there is also lacking a single structure of knowledge, values and sanctions. It is a moral deficiency that expresses itself in the perpetuation of misguided policies that tend to produce weak inter-American relationships, continuous social crises, and political instability.

A current expression of this moral deficiency is characterized by relations between the United States and Nicaragua, as
described by Cole Blasier in *The Hovering Giant*. According to Blasier, the Sandinistas wished to avoid dependency on any particular group. In fact, they were "adamant about maintaining independence with respect to their domestic system and foreign policies."¹⁵ When the new Reagan Administration came into office it sought for the United States to "project an image of unmitigated suspicion, hostility and belligerence against the Soviet Union and the international Communist movement."¹⁶ Reagan chose Central America, and especially Nicaragua, as the region to show his anti-Communist credentials and produce victories in the East-West struggle. "Reagan sought to punish [the Sandinistas] and set the stage for their overthrow."¹⁷ Cole describes the rhetoric of the Reagan administration as one which "closely followed that of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles toward Guatemala in the early 1950s."¹⁸

Ultimately Washington's support for the contras, the trade embargo and, perhaps, assassinations put the United States virtually at war with Nicaragua. In an effort to survive, the Sandinistas were forced to turn increasingly to their best supporters, Cuba and the USSR."¹⁹ Reagan's punitive policies only guaranteed Nicaragua's hostility to the United States and vulnerability to Soviet overtures. They also made Latin America more sensitive to and more determined in deterring U.S. unilat-


¹⁶Ibid., p. 292. ¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid. ¹⁹Ibid., p. 303.
eral interventionism. Again the United States further distanced itself from the Southern Hemisphere by persisting on realpolitik principles. Instead of seeking to influence the Sandinistas by participating in good faith in the various multilateral initiatives which Latin America advanced (for example, Contadora and the Central American peace proposals), the Reagan administration entrenched itself in a stance of non-cooperation, while appearing to welcome the efforts of Latin America to find diplomatic solutions to the problem of Nicaragua. As the situation stands now, because of lack of understanding and inept handling of the Sandinistas' persistence on self-determination, the United States has weakened even more the ties with Latin America on which its own security also depends.

Within the context of the urgent need for regional understanding, I asked Messrs. Dodd, McComie and Tonucci for their comments on whether U.S. policy toward Latin America should seek to promote political self-determination as a means to achieve social justice and hemispheric security in general.

Dr. Dodd responded that, as a historian, he perceived the key issues in the promotion of structures for social justice and economic development in Latin America are fair trade agreements and resolution of the question of the foreign debt which, in his opinion, Latin American countries cannot pay. Dr. Dodd stressed that the United States should "no longer be concerned with the ideological baggage that has been important in the rhetoric of nationalism."  

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20 Professor Thomas Dodd, Ph.D., interview of February 24, 1989.
Below I quote in full Dr. Dodd's statements because I think they are very informative on the issues of regional understanding, self-determination, and social justice.

"Our interests should be focused on finding ways to bring dissident groups in these countries back to the mainstream of their political process, however contentious. Some kind of structure is more important than dealing with the ideological baggage, because there are bigger issues at stake. The United States should be promoting, through an emphasis on mutual interests:

"the integration and incorporation of political, economic and social groups into the mainstream of national life;

"policies to deal with the problems stemming from a vastly growing population, urbanization, and the horrendous effects of modernization; and

"policies for economic development and for resolving the problem of foreign indebtedness . . . so that they can have a chance to trade, to reduce essentially their foreign debt, and to permit them to deal with pressing domestic problems."21

Ambassador McComie and Monsignor Tonucci share the opinion that dialogue among nations, fair terms of trade and extensive cooperation are the essential building blocks for peaceful co-existence in the Western Hemisphere.

Nevertheless, the Monsignor showed pessimism that the foregoing can be achieved. From his point of view it is unfortunate that foreign policy appears to be the least important issue to the United States in general. He commented that he has met some State Department officials responsible for relations with Latin America that thave shown "an incredible ignorance about the mentality and situation of those countries."22

21Idem.

22Monsignor Giovanni Tonucci, interview of February 27, 1989.
The Monsignor does not see how meaningful dialogue and fair relations can be achieved if such lack of knowledge persists. He concluded that what is needed is a practical change in the mentality of the United States to overcome both the general indifference toward foreign policy and the general conviction that "Latin Americans are not so clever. On the other hand, Latin Americans also need to rid themselves of the poor cousin mentality in which all naught that befalls them is the fault of the rich cousin --the United States,-- which may be true." 23

Summary

Combining the opinions of Professor Dodd, Ambassador McComie, and Monsignor Tonucci, the master guidelines to balance moral values and political principles in U.S. policy toward Latin America appear to be the reinstatement of multilateral cooperation and action to resolve conflicts of interest among nations of the Western Hemisphere. The prerequisites for this equilibrium are basically a practical mindframe to structure relations founded on regional understanding, peaceful co-existence freed of ideological nationalistic rhetoric, prompt resolution of the foreign debt crisis, and fair trade agreements.

23 Idem.
CONCLUSIONS

In preceding chapters I have referred to the "prudent" exercise of the American mission, and to "knowledge" as to the problems and mentality of Latin American nations. Prudence and knowledge are basic virtues needed more than ever in our contemporary world because of the pressures that interdependency and the East-West confrontation bear upon international relations.

In *The Nichomachean Ethics*, Aristotle defines prudence, or practical wisdom, as "a true and reasoned state or capacity to act with regard to the things that are good or bad for man."1 A person who is prudent, therefore, acts for his own good and also for the good of his fellow citizens. Since the authority to act for others lies in the realm of the political, prudence is the first virtue that a political leader, legislators, and self-governing citizens should possess. Also, because prudence concerns itself with what is good and with action, it is the virtue which bridges knowledge with action. Aristotle states: "The work of man is achieved only in accordance with practical wisdom as well as with moral virtue; for virtue makes us aim at

the right mark and practical wisdom makes us take the right means."² Therefore, a good political system is that which tends to produce and be ruled by prudent men.

Within the context of the reasoning of Aristotle, if men are social beings, they are, because of this, moral animals unable to free themselves from moral judgments and estimates of what is right and what is wrong in their interaction with society. Would it be likewise true that the nation-state cannot free itself from moral judgments and estimates of right and wrong in its international relations? It seems to be true from the preceding chapters that, with regard to Latin America, U.S. policy has lacked an international counterpart for the domestic values of democracy, justice, freedom, equality, and self-determination. As to a rational foreign policy toward Latin America, moral values seem to float in a limbo vis-à-vis national security values, and principles revered in domestic affairs seem to be transformed substantially when the United States turns toward relations with Southern republics and makes no pretense of camouflaging Theodore Roosevelt's principle that might makes right.³

Morality in international relations would seem to be only a crusade for national self-righteousness or an ideological warfare between East and West that in practice seems ruled over by "calculation, rationalization, and self-justification concealing

²Ibid., p. 155. (The italics are mine.)
³For discussion of the bearing of classic philosophic-moral questions which our civilization has raised about the obligations of individuals to the state and to higher law (God), see Charles Frankel's Morality and U.S. Foreign Policy. pp. 3-11.
the taint of self-interest." The fact seems to be that U.S. morality applied to Latin American policies underscore the former's subordination to the imperatives of superpower politics and war.

Despite the realities and limitations of morality imposed by the need of a superpower to come out victorious and to survive the global nuclear threat under which it exists, the work of modern man, on the basis of Aristotle's concept, is still bound by his individual responsibility to society and must continue to strive for self-realization in relation with others by aiming at the right mark through the right means. Since individual well-being cannot be achieved unless it assumes moral responsibility for the well-being of other nations, particularly of those in which it has much at stake. This touches, consequently, upon the practical wisdom of understanding and respecting values dear to other nations -- such as different moral values, cultural values, and the aspiration to self-determination. This, in essence, is regional understanding.

Michael Joseph Smith, in "Moral Reasoning and Moral Responsibility in International Affairs," argues that the responsibility of government foreign policy rests on the leaders of a nation, as distinct from responsibilities of its citizens, because the leaders hold greater power and their acts are of greater consequence. Nevertheless, Smith recognizes, even with their greater power, leaders are not entirely free. Their moral beha-

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Behavior is limited within a world of states in a world of conflicting demands and loyalties. The leader must consider the possible consequences of his action, even though he operates under uncertainty as to how his action will turn out. Under these limitations pure moral action is very difficult.  

On the other hand, Smith states that leaders are rightfully held accountable by the citizens for the decisions they make because, although the citizens operate under different circumstances, it is they who pay for and bear the brunt of their leader's acts. This implies that "the circumstances in which we act affect our judgment of the act's morality." How then are the moral responsibilities of national leaders to be defined under these limitations and the subjectivity of morality to circumstances? Smith reasons that one approach taken is political moralism of the Left where Capitalism, and especially American imperialist capitalism, is perceived as the root of all evil in the world, and its policies are impediments to a just and peaceful world. It must, therefore, be overthrown as a prerequisite to achieve social justice anywhere. The other approach is from the moralists of the Right. Like President Reagan, these believe in "the rectitude of the struggle against Communism and relentless Soviet expansionism to solve all moral dilemmas."

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6 Ibid. p. 36.

7 Ibid.
For these moralists the unquestionable good of their ends serves to permit otherwise questionable means --covert actions, military aid to supposedly benign authoritarian regimes, internal violations of civil liberties, and so forth. Virtually anything they do that can be justified as opposing Communist expansion is excusable --even moral-- because it serves a higher moral end.\footnote{Ibid.}

It is my opinion that the attitude of the moralists of the Right shuns moral judgement. It appeals to the necessary use of force in any situation --whether or not force is appropriate. The line of reasoning of these moralists defends any action taken as moral, insofar as it will end with the surrender of the Soviet Union or its conversion to the principles of Capitalism. This seems a highly unlikely event, but it is precisely this attitude that has underlaid the Johnson and the Reagan Doctrines.

The conviction of U.S. leaders of being morally right in resisting Soviet expansionism --wherever and whenever they perceive it-- has pushed the United States all too often to support repressive, but loyal to U.S. interests, oligarchs in Latin America, to support a not very covert war against Nicaragua, and to identify with the regime of El Salvador whose basic legitimacy is highly suspect, with little consideration of the wider costs of such actions.
To sum up, the overall position of U.S. policy toward Latin America has fallen mistakenly within the context of international opposition to Soviet expansionism. The moralism of leaders of the Right employed for Latin America effectively short-circuits ethical analysis and hard political analysis as well. It leads to a dead end and hence should be resisted.

The ethical problems that must be faced by the United States in Latin America, and to the solution of which the former's foreign policy should address itself are: the abstention from the use of unilateral perception of facts and unilateral exercise of power to deal with those perceptions. Instead, the United States should strive to promote mutual interests and multilateral actions to counter threats to continental security and peace, as it began to do under the Good Neighbor Policy and the Alliance for Progress.

The United States should seek to promote with Latin America, structures that advance social well-being, fair trade agreements, and cooperation to narrow the economic gap between the rich Northern and the poor Southern Hemispheres.

The emphasis of my thesis is clearly on peaceful co-existence through multilateral consensus, cooperation and action. Now more than ever, is the time to let bygones be bygones; the Monroe Doctrine, the Polk and Roosevelt corollaries are no longer principles that apply in a modern interdependent society of nations. Unilateral mighty power politics and unilateral decision-making that seeks to control other nations are obsolete.

The foregoing calls for Aristotle's prudent regime tending to be ruled by and producing prudent men to practice self-
restraint in the calculation and application of the primary national security objectives of U.S. foreign policy in the rest of the hemisphere. The achievement of social justice and peace through multilateral hemispheric dialogue, consensus and action should be the consistent moral norm that shapes United States-Latin American policies, not the particular political objectives and opportunities of anti-Communism that have heretofore reigned.

A prudent nation applies moral reasoning and practical wisdom --aiming at the right mark through the right means-- to advance the inter-related well-being of its citizens and those of societies with which it interacts. It calls for the imperative of not continuing to regress to nineteenth and early twentieth centuries' tendentious interpretations concerning self-determination and respect for the national sovereignty and equality of others. The Johnson and the Reagan Doctrines are such a regression. Regardless of their different ad hoc justifications, contemporary U.S. interventions in Latin America are a regression from the nonintervention protocols of 1933 and 1936.

Moreover, if moral values and practical wisdom were applied by the United States to its relations with Latin America, rather than coercion and threat or use of force, alternate methods of conflict resolution would surely evolve. For example, the United States could make deliberate efforts to develop a greater ability to dialogue with Latin American governments. But any evolution toward meaningful communications would require that the United States work to include in its definition of national self-interest a diminution of its unilateral hemispheric
role, the practice of modes of national self-restraint of its use of coercion and force, and a commitment to effectively promote social justice and peace. Only if the United States puts aside the unilateral East-West perception of Latin American social changes; only if it participates in good faith in multilateral organizations and multilateral works for peace; and only if it can develop the capacity to recognize, respect, and adopt a set of shared human values --values that honor the rich diversity of the social structures and cultures that Latin America encompasses,-- can substantial hemispheric security and well-being come about. In short, the United States should undergird the use of power with morality in policies toward Latin America.

Having expressed what I believe should be the moral alternatives to coercion and force, and having described the requirements to evolve toward hemispheric social justice and peace, I return to the thoughts of Michael Joseph Smith and Aristotle on moral responsibility in international relations and the responsible society.

If, as Smith states, a nation's leaders are accountable to the citizens for the consequences of their actions, and if the Aristotelian citizens have a moral responsibility for the well-being of society in general, then it is ultimately the responsibility of a society within a functioning democracy --such as the United States-- to free itself of the apathy and lack in knowledge that blinds it when put before issues of foreign policy.

I am aware that all the above suggestions may mean a willingness of the United States to abstain from military in-
tervention in Latin America in opposition to the historic winds of the national mood. Furthermore, it may also mean taking risks of over-involvement as a mediator of explosive regional conflicts. Above all, it may demand studied efforts with Latin American nations to integrate measures of armed defense and self-restraint as two sides of the same interdependent-security coin.

I am also aware that I may be calling for an extraordinary burden of sophisticated moral reasoning and calculated prudence on the leaders of the United States as representatives of that society, and accountable to it for their actions.

Lastly, I realize that the opportunities to exercise these policy alternatives present themselves in asymmetrical patterns but, nevertheless, I think that in the willful promotion and consistent exercise of multilateral hemispheric dialogue, consensus, and action lies the greatest responsibility and wisdom of the United States toward its Southern neighbors. This is my interpretation of Aristotle's principle that the work of man is achieved only in accordance with practical wisdom as well as with moral virtue.

Foreign intervention in another nation is not morally justified except as a collective act of nations to preserve and enhance the capacity of individuals to live in freedom, dignity, justice and wisdom. If the United States has erred thus far in founding its policy toward Latin America on the misguided principles of the Polk and Roosevelt corollaries to the Monroe Doctrine, and more recently on the Johnson and Reagan Doctrines, it has also erred by ignoring the existence of concrete indivi-
dual human beings and long-term consequences which affect each one of them when justifying and acting out interventionist policies.

The nations of the Western Hemisphere must share a common interest: the fundamental right to self-determination. That right entails the freedom to establish foundations which will allow them to pursue responsibly independent foreign and domestic policies. In such a common interest lies the potential for public justice among nations and personal freedom, dignity, justice and wisdom among individuals within nations.

"We have been given the capacity to distinguish life that is based on loving one's neighbor from life based on killing him or being indifferent to him. This is the core of our knowledge and our guide to action: to act wisely, justly and with love."^9

BIBLIOGRAPHY


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