

control of Congress. Popular, liberalizing revolutions occurred in Costa Rica and El Salvador during 1948, in Panama and Bolivia in 1952, and in Colombia in 1953. Chile, Uruguay, and Mexico had broken the traditionalists' political hold early in the century and consolidated their democratic, representative traditions during World War II and postwar years. Thus, the only Latin American Republics which did not see the modern pressures of economic and social change reflected in popular political upheavals were Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Paraguay, which countries contained only about 6 percent of Latin America's total population.

The emergence of popular reform governments was an unsettling political phenomenon. Such governments, reflections as they were of broad economic and deep social tensions, ran into severe problems in their attempts to destroy the traditional order and carry out their revolutionary reform programs. Those who expected a sudden democratic upsurge to result from the emergence of these new popular political forces were often disappointed. Once in power, the new groups frequently felt it necessary to be most undemocratic, in order to maintain themselves in power against the intransigent oligarchy and to carry out basic reforms. Perhaps it was impossible for genuine democracy to take root until the gulf between rich and poor had narrowed, until education had overcome illiteracy, until the masses of the people had become conscious of their political rights, duties, and responsibilities, and until the various groups struggling for political control had compromised their differences and worked out a compatible concept of national aims and aspirations.

Then too, the new reform-minded governments soon ran into severe difficulties as they attempted, often overhastily, to implement their revolutionary economic programs. Determined to end their colonial economic status, they launched broad, state-sponsored industrialization schemes, generally accompanied by elaborate social welfare and pro-labor programs. A high degree of nationalism and a tendency on the part of the state to play an ever-increasing role in the development process characterized the drive for economic independence. Between 1945 and 1952, most Latin American economies prospered and expanded, but afterward problems began to accumulate. Factors contributing to this situation included the exhaustion of international reserves amassed during World War II, price declines in foodstuffs and minerals, shrinkage in export markets, and the slacking off of new investment. In this situation, the insistence of most Latin American governments upon maintaining high levels of consumption discouraged badly needed investments in basic power and transportation enterprises as well as in agriculture and industry. In addition, the adverse shift in the terms of trade after 1952 created serious balance-of-payments problems for most of the South American countries, and their economic woes were compounded by chronic inflation, particularly in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Bolivia.

The manifold political and economic problems encountered by these reform-minded governments set in motion a reaction by the traditionalist groups. Also, the rising middle groups in some countries began to lose enthusiasm for reform before the threat of leftist demagogery, violence, and extremism. Concurrently, the ardor of the armed forces for continued cooperation with the left began to cool.