

revealed serious discontent among the junior officers, but from the brief internecine struggle for power the generals under Salvador Castañeda Castro, emerged triumphant. Castañeda Castro held power for 4 years by harsh, arbitrary rule under a near constant state-of-siege.

Initially, the December 1948 revolution, spearheaded by radical-talking majors and colonels and backed by reform-minded middle group intellectuals, appeared to signal the beginning of the end of militarism and feudalism in El Salvador. For the revolutionary junta announced plans for honest government, the conversion of the army into a faithful defender of the constitution, and sweeping social reforms.

The young officers who led the popular, liberating revolution of December 1948 soon turned their backs upon fundamental political change and social reform. They refused to give up political power. Revolt leader Maj. Oscar Osorio, who had assumed the provisional presidency a month after the revolt, was "elected" to the presidency in 1950, and when his 6-year constitutional term of office ended in 1956, the presidency was transferred to his colleague, Col. José María Lemus, the present ruler of El Salvador. Though the army at first introduced modest welfare measures, in the face of firm planter resistance, they forgot about land reform and social changes. Urban labor, but not rural, was authorized to organize and bargain collectively, but only under strict government tutelage. Thus the 1948 "revolution" has not turned out to be a revolution in any fundamental sense. The colonels merely replaced the generals.

GUATEMALA

During the summer of 1944, while the rest of the world watched the Allies crush the Fascist tyranny in Germany, the attention of Guatemalans was focused upon crushing their local military despotism. The beginning of the end of the ancien régime came in June 1944, with the ouster of dictator Jorge Ubico. Four months later, in October of 1944, young officers and popular elements drove out the old generals. Dr. Juan Arévalo, a left-of-center intellectual, became the triumphant revolutionaries' choice for president.

The October 1944 revolution began as a true social revolution. It was a movement of the nation's hitherto-neglected lower and middle-income groups. In response to their demands, the new administration quickly passed a rash of reform legislation directed toward expansion of education, protection of organized labor, social welfare, industrialization, and agrarian reform.

The increasing political and social tensions arising from Arévalo's radical reform program gave rise to two distinct army factions—a leftist group led by Col. Jacobo Arbenz and a moderate faction led by Col. Francisco Javier Arana. The assassination of the latter and the silencing and exile of his supporters in 1949 made Arbenz an easy victor in the 1950 presidential campaign. Soon after his inauguration, the revolution veered decidedly leftward; the energetic Communist minority influenced the new president and rapidly began to usurp control of the movement. Essentially agents of the U.S.S.R., they sought to destroy U.S. influence, to provoke a violent class struggle, and to spread communism into neighboring republics.