

The June 1954 shipment of Soviet-bloc arms to Guatemala gave the ousted pro-Araña army exiles, now led by Col. Carlos Castillo Armas, their opportunity to return. The shipment also provoked the U.S. Government, which saw its vital strategic interests in jeopardy, to counter the Russian move by sending armaments to Nicaragua and Honduras—armaments which apparently found their way into the hands of Castillo, whose liberation army promptly ousted Arbenz and the Communists.

For 3 difficult years Castillo's middle-of-the-road regime tried to restore a semblance of order and moderation to the disturbed country. It was a difficult matter for him to uphold, even to a limited extent, the liberal principles of the October 1944 revolution in the face of the oligarchy's desire to make a comeback. Castillo's assassination in the summer of 1957 did little to resolve the moderate-rightist struggle for power. When a moderate civilian candidate won the October 1957 election, the conservatives stirred up so much resistance that the armed forces felt obliged to nullify the victory. Then in early 1958, Gen. Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, a moderate conservative, won the elections.

The Guatemalan political situation is far from stable, for although a substantial cross section of the middle and lower income groups still cling to many of the principles of the 1944 popular revolution, the conservatives appear determined to restore the old social and political order.

HAITI

Haiti is one of the poorest countries in the world, and throughout its independent national history it has been plagued by near political and economic chaos. After the U.S. Marines ended their occupation (1915-34), the educated mulatto elite governed the country, with the backing of the army, down through World War II. However, the failure of mulatto leadership to improve the miserable lot of the Negro masses brought irresistible pressure for political change. In the face of a general strike, the army in 1946 ousted mulatto President Elie Lescot, whereupon Dumarsais Estimé, an anti-mulatto Negro, was elected to the presidency.

Corruption soon became rife inside the Estimé regime, and the President responded to the deepening economic crisis by decreeing martial law. His undoing was his expanded political ambitions. When he attempted to amend the constitution to provide for his continuation in office, the palace guard, led by the same group that installed him 4 years previously, ousted him in 1950.

Thereupon, army strong man, Col. Paul Magloire, was elected to the presidency. The Magloire administration (1950-56) soon turned into a military dictatorship. This despotism was, for a time, useful in bringing about a modicum of material progress, but Magloire ultimately ran afoul of the same difficulties that plagued his predecessor—economic problems, graft and corruption on public projects, and attempts to continue in power beyond his constitutional term of office. The political upshot in 1956 was a general strike and the collapse of the Magloire dictatorship.

During the course of the following year several provisional governments rose and fell because of the intense rivalry among various candi-