

C. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In order for the U.S. Government to deal with Latin America intelligently, it must gear its programs to the probable future of the area. The policy recommendations that follow are accordingly based upon the following three fundamental assumptions about that future:

(a) That the social revolution now in progress will not only continue but will accelerate, regardless of any domestic or international policies designed to halt it or slow it down, for the people of Latin America are determined to catch up with the more advanced nations of the world.

(b) Because this social upheaval will offer new opportunities for the Communists to exploit, the Soviet Union will place increased energies into turning this "revolution of rising expectations" to their own imperialistic advantage.

(c) The United States, whose security interests will thereby be increasingly threatened, will have to intensify its efforts to resist this challenge, and, as a result, the prospect is for an indefinite period of cold war tension in the Latin American area.

1. Collective security

U.S. security policy in Latin America is based generally on the purpose of obtaining and maintaining the cooperation of all the American republics in meeting any threat to the independence or security of any one of them. The assumptions upon which our military assistance programs to Latin America are based,³⁰ however, are open to serious question. Inasmuch as Latin America is more isolated than any other area in the world from the East-West struggle, Communist aggression from without is not currently a real danger. Also, the nature of the Communist threat from within is in all Latin American countries a police problem rather than a military problem, and accordingly has little relation to military assistance upon which our present collective security system is based.

Also, U.S. policy assumptions to the contrary, the Latin Americans do not consider the Communist threat from without as a common responsibility, for only Colombia responded to U.S. requests for military cooperation in the fighting in Korea. Anyway, the actual military and warmaking potential of Latin America's armed forces is so limited, despite our military assistance programs, that they are incapable of making a significant contribution to the security of the hemisphere. As a purely military proposition, the hemispheric concept of collective planning and defense has no practical application. Justification for military assistance to Latin America makes sense only in political terms, if at all. The importance of military assistance in securing Latin America's political cooperation flows principally from the political role of Latin America's armed forces and their continuing desire for more arms. Military assistance apparently has the added political objective of promoting internal stability in Latin America.

³⁰ U.S. security policy officially rests upon the three following fundamental assumptions: (1) That the hemisphere is threatened by Communist aggression both from within and without, (2) that the security of strategic areas in the hemisphere and of inter-American lines of communication is vital to the security of every American republic, (3) that the protection of these strategic areas and communications is a common responsibility. See U.S. Department of State Bulletin, Mar. 30, 1954, pp. 463-464.