

market and international relations based on economic justice) made by a distinguished group of intellectuals on the occasion of the inauguration of President Betancourt.

In Latin American democratic thought, liberalism is idealistic and romantic. It is also assertive and uncompromising, the exponent believing that only he knows what is good for his country. This extreme subjectivism has understandably provoked authoritarianism. In economic matters, the Latin American liberal believes that the state is not only the guarantor of the constitution and laws, but that it also has a purpose and a mission to achieve economic improvements and social justice for all the people.

In world affairs Latin America, realizing the importance of joint action, has voted with the West in the cold war, but it is also true that she is idealistically inclined toward pacifism, in some cases toward neutralism. In domestic affairs, Latin America is determined to progress and to progress rapidly. It hopes to do so democratically, but if this is not possible, it is willing to use revolutionary means, sacrificing, if necessary, the established order and the temporary well-being of a generation. Communism will undoubtedly try, and has already done so, to profit from this condition. In the Latin American political mind a non-Communist revolution is the major contemporary goal. It is crucial for the United States, in shaping its foreign policy, to distinguish this nationalistic revolutionary thought from communism.

C. LATIN AMERICAN ASPIRATIONS AS TO THE DIRECTION OF THEIR OWN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

For many years after independence, Latin American political thinkers were satisfied with the preservation of their freedom and the organization of the new states along traditional lines. It was the era of the liberalism of laissez-faire, of belief in the evolutionary progress that would come inevitably. Though they considered themselves masters of their own destiny, they placed their faith in the free play of economic laws and scientific progress.

With the advent of the 20th century, this passive attitude changed dramatically. The expected progress had not come. Control of the economy, in a large number of countries, had passed into foreign hands, while latifundia stifled development. A middle class had not developed. Political control remained in the hands of the native oligarchy or military groups.

Hence 20th century writers and thinkers rejected the evolutionary concept of change and advocated revolutionary nationalism instead. Again, though there are 20 Latin American Republics that differ greatly in their problems and the vigor with which they attempt to solve them, they possess one common mental characteristic: They are all determined to direct their own destinies, using their own methods. That is why the United States should never insist that mid-20th century Latin America pattern its political, economic, and social future along 19th century North American lines.