

A New Approach To Latin America?

Last Saturday night NBC-TV's "The Nation's Future" carried a debate on the relationship of the U. S. to the revolutionary ferment sweeping Latin America. Speakers were Adolph A. Berle Jr., former Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, and Rep. Charles O. Porter (D-Ore.), a close observer of developments in that area. The moderator was John K. M. McCaffrey. During the second half of the program, the speakers answered questions from studio audiences in New York and Miami. Excerpts from the discussion follow:

PORTER: I think we ought to change our Latin American policy drastically and dramatically, and immediately.

I think that Cuba should be included in our aid programs. I think that we ought to be giving aid to the poor people in Cuba in terms of technical assistance.

Guantanamo Bay—I think we ought to ask Castro does he want us to get out. If he does, we should get out. We do not need it from a military point of view. I think that we ought to instead—we have about \$75,000,000 worth of property there—we ought to set up a school, a vocational and agricultural school, there for all Latin Americans, not only for Cubans, and in cooperation with the Cuban government.

You know, we pay \$2,000 a year in gold for that lease, which was made, I think, in 1903 under conditions which can only be called duress. It is about time we cleaned up that situation, and this would be one way for us to take the aggressive in a place where I think we are in a very bad situation.

As far as Latin America as a whole [is concerned] I think we ought to get special help in Venezuela and special attention to Trujillo. We ought to say that he is a torturer, a murderer and a pirate. We ought to expedite his retirement, as we can do. We should have no more patrols in the waters of the Caribbean, throwing our weight around like that.

We should have a new hemispheric defense plan and we should not approve \$2,500,000, as we are doing right now, for 15 jet planes to Peru, where there are 7,000,000 people starving right now.

BERLE: A dramatic change in American policy is something that I cordially agree with, and I think you will agree that in many years when I have been out of the government I have argued this in season and out, and I think there is a possibility of doing it now.

McCAFFREY: Do you believe in such a dramatic step as the abandonment of Guantanamo?

BERLE: I do not think that would help a bit. I do not think that is even where you begin. For one thing,

I think that has its relevancy or irrelevancy depending on other situations.

I think the first thing to do is actually to make it clear that the government of the U. S. stands for and stands willing to help the democratic, progressive forces in Latin America. And it was they and not the class war boys that made the revolution in Cuba and won it.

PORTER: On Guantanamo, were you in office now, I would be asking you to reconsider your position. We do not need it as a base; that is true. We do not need it to protect the Panama Canal. I think the admirals and generals like to have it because the sun is warm and it gives them a feeling of the old days of imperialism. We should ask Castro does he want us to get out. If he does, we should make an orderly withdrawal.

BERLE: May I ask a question? Do we ask him before he has had a free election or afterwards?

Deal With Trujillo?

PORTER: I yield to no one in adhering to free elections, but I think you still have to deal with these people.

BERLE: Trujillo, for example?

PORTER: Whether it is Trujillo, Mao, or anybody else, you live in a world today where you have to deal with these people and you try to deal with their people, too, as well as their governments.

BERLE: They might not give you much help at that.

PORTER: We still have to deal with the Cuban people, who we do not blame for whatever excesses—and there have been plenty—of the present government.

BERLE: I cordially agree with you about that. My own feeling is that the arrangements that will finally resolve the Cuban situation will be made with a free Cuban people. Castro promised his government promised, and 20,000 Cubans died for a program which included a free choice for the Cuban people. As Americans pledged to Cuban freedom, which need not be necessarily a property form of freedom, we are entitled to ask for that freedom.

PORTER: I think our difference is, I say we should go ahead and try to work in direct with a country even though it is under a dictator. We should keep recognizing them, keep all the lines of communication open we can, because there will come a day when that dictator will be gone, and we can spend the day when there will be free elections if we work for our own ideals as best we can.

BERLE: You raised a square point and I am glad you did, because one of the difficulties I have had in encountering dictatorships is that they do their best to prevent the intercourse by our people and people in the area. I think it is good to have channels, some channels to their own advantage.

The object of American policy should be to en-

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