CHAPTER 32

*Latin America: Revolution and Reaction into the 21st Century*

**CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In Latin America, much of the 20th century witnessed a struggle between the forces of revolution and reaction. The focus of this chapter and the next is on third world nations, which display great diversity and cultural emphasis. In the second half of the 20th century, Latin America took an intermediate position between the nations of the North Atlantic and those of Africa and Asia. Investments often came from the West, and Latin America was vulnerable to the world financial system. Throughout the 20th century, it grappled with issues of social justice, cultural autonomy, and economic security. Workers’ organizations emerged as a political force. Explosive urban growth and emigration were often key concerns. Overall, the economy and politics were subject to broad shifts. Although much of Latin America was subject to the rhetoric of social and political change, remarkable little change actually occurred. At the same time, significant transformations took place in education, social services, women’s rights, and the role of industry.

**Latin America After World War II.** The end of World War II was not a critical event since the region was only modestly involved. Brazil helped the U.S. steel industry during the war and that sector grew to compete directly with the U.S. by the 1970s. A new round of political agitation occurred after the war. Several authoritarian regimes were challenged; one key example was Argentina.

**Mexico and the PRI.** Mexico continued to be controlled by the PRI but by the end of the 20th century its hold began to loosen. In 2000, Vicente Fox of the PAN party, won national election. A guerrilla movement popped up in the 1990s; meanwhile, the government joined NAFTA in an effort to spur economic growth.

**Radical Options in the 1950s.** The most important development in the decade after World War II was a surge of radical unrest, often of a socialist nature, and the cold war framework came into play. Of note were events in Bolivia, Guatemala, and Cuba.

**Guatemala: Reform and United States Intervention.** This nation had some of the region’s worst problems, including illiteracy, poor health, and high mortality. Its economy depended almost exclusively on bananas and coffee. When leaders challenged the hegemony of U.S. economic interests with radical proposals, the latter nation intervened and backed a pro-U.S. regime, which rose to power. A series of military governments failed to resolve the nation’s many woes.

**The Cuban Revolution: Socialism in the Caribbean.** Although the island had periods of prosperity, the world market for sugar, Cuba’s main export, revealed the tenuous nature of its economy. A growing disparity between middle and lower economic classes underscored the nation’s problems. Batista’s rule delivered little on promised reforms, and opposition rose in various sectors. One of his opponents was Fidel Castro, who pledged real democracy, justice, and prosperity for all. Castro and Che Guevara gained support from many sides and overthrew Batista. Castro established collective farms, confiscated property, and set up a Communist
system of repression supported by the U.S.S.R. A U.S.-sponsored intervention failed and the Cuban Missile Crisis became one of the most important events of the Cold War. Since the fall of Communism in Europe, Cuba has become one of the last bastions of that system, but the model of revolution and successful resistance to U.S. pressure was attractive to rebels in other Latin American nations.

The Search for Reform and the Military Option. A common theme in Latin America in this era was the political influence of the Catholic church. Liberation theology combined Catholic and socialist concepts to promote change, but this system was criticized by Pope John Paul II. The church did play an important role in the fall of Paraguay’s dictator in the 1980s.

Out of the Barracks: Soldiers Take Power. The success of the Cuban Revolution impressed and worried those who feared revolutionary change in a Communist mode. Military officers often saw themselves as above politics and best equipped to solve their nation’s ill. Many times these leaders had the support of the U.S. In Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, and Peru, governments were taken over by military-based rulers with repressive authoritarian inclinations. All these regimes were nationalistic but approached economic problems differently; however, the result—little or no growth—was a common theme.

The New Democratic Trends. The 1970s and 1980s witnessed an increase in democratization in many Latin American countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Panama, but not without problems. Leftist rebel groups continued to agitate in some of them, as in Colombia and Peru. Cuba remained Communist, but under what appeared to be fewer restrictions. Economics continued to struggle, with inflation as a common problem. Despite difficulties, by the 1990s it appeared democratic trends were well established.

The United States and Latin America: Continuing Presence. After World War I, the U.S. was clearly the dominant power in the Western Hemisphere. In South America private investments by U.S. companies and loans from the government were the chief means of influence. Military intervention became a common means of protecting U.S. interests in Latin America—more than 30 occurred before 1933—and contributed to nationalist reaction. The grounds for these interventions were economic, political, strategic, and ideological. The U.S. Good Neighbor Policy of the 1930s and the Alliance for Progress of the 1960s sought to ameliorate tensions. In the 1970s, the U.S.-built and operated Panama Canal was ceded to the Panamanian government. In 1990, that country’s dictator was overthrown by U.S. forces.

In Depth: Human Rights in the 20th Century. Human rights violations occurred in Latin America in the 1960s and later mirrored actions in other parts of the world. The concept of human rights may go back to the ancient Greeks. Belief in natural law led to the protection of minorities in the 19th century in Europe and the United States. In the 20th century, the United Nations issued a Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but included little power of enforcement. What seemed obvious to Western sensibilities was less so in other regions, partly because of economic and/or cultural differences. One big argument had been over what exactly constitutes human rights. Differing political ideologies place different priorities over protecting human rights and employ different strategies to do so.

Societies in Search of Change. Societal relations changed slowly in Latin America. Women’s status was, however, closer to those of western Europe than Africa. There were many changes, but discrimination continues.
CHAPTER 32

TIMELINE

*Insert the following events into the timeline. This should help you to compare important historical events chronologically.*

- Cuban Missile Crisis
- Allende overthrown
- Sandinistas lose power in Nicaragua
- Falkland Islands war
- Good Neighbor Policy
- Castro takes over Cuba

__ 1933
__ 1959
__ 1962
__ 1973
__ 1982
__ 1989

TERMS, PEOPLE, EVENTS

*The following terms, people and events are important to your understanding of the chapter. On a separate sheet of paper, define each one.*

- Bay of Pigs
- Che Guevara
- Dom Helder da Camara
- Falkland Islands
- Fidel Castro
- Fulgencio Batista
- Jacobo Arbenz
- Juan Peron
- Manuel Noriega
- Pablo Neruda
- Falkland War
- Grenada
- U.N. Declaration of Human Rights
- Cuban Revolution
- PRI
- Archbishop Oscar Romero
- United Fruit Company
- Zapatistas
- Sandinistas
- 26th of July Movement
- Good Neighbor Policy
- Lula
- Jimmy Carter
- Zapatistas
- Banana republics
- Fr. Camilo Torres
- Getulio Vargas
- Sendero Luminoso
- Salvador Allende
- Alliance for Progress
- liberation theology
- barbudos
- Hugo Chávez
- populist nationalism
- third world
- spiritual socialism
- National Action Party

503
MAP EXERCISE

The following exercise is intended to clarify the geophysical environment and the spatial relationships among the important objects and places mentioned in the chapter. Locate the following places on the map.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panama</th>
<th>El Salvador</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>Cuba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>Haiti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What economic and political reasons did the United States employ as rationale for intervening militarily in the above nations?
MULTIPLE CHOICE: Choose the one alternative that best completes the statement or answers the question.

1. The islands disputed between Great Britain and Argentina were the
   A) Falklands.
   B) Easter.
   C) West Indies.
   D) Antilles.
   E) Bahamas.

2. The U.S. corporation that yielded great power in Latin America in the banana industry was
   A) American Banana Corporation.
   B) Fruit Company of California.
   C) United Fruit Company.
   D) Bananas “R” Us.
   E) Fruit, Incorporated.

3. He worked with Castro in the Cuban Revolution:
   A) Batista
   B) Arbenz
   C) Arevalo
   D) Guevara
   E) Allende

4. The socialist president of Chile who was overthrown by the military in 1973 was
   A) Peron.
   B) Romero.
   C) da Camara.
   D) Allende.
   E) Batista.

5. Internal military forces did NOT overthrow governments in the 20th century in which of these nations?
   A) Peru
   B) Mexico
   C) Brazil
   D) Argentina
   E) Uruguay
6. Which of these nations did NOT experience direct U.S. military intervention in the 20th century?

   A) Haiti
   B) Nicaragua
   C) Dominican Republic
   D) Cuba
   E) Peru

7. What was the name of the U.S. policy toward Latin America that promised to deal more fairly with Latin America and stop direct intervention?

   A) Good Neighbor Policy
   B) Alliance for Progress
   C) Peace Corps
   D) NAFTA
   E) Pan American Conference

8. Comparatively speaking, the status of Latin American women was in many ways closer to which other region?

   A) Western Europe
   B) East Asia
   C) South Africa
   D) North Africa
   E) Central Asia

9. In Latin American, women made up what percentage of the legislators by the mid-1990s?

   A) 1
   B) 4
   C) 9
   D) 22
   E) 44

10. Which Latin American country was NOT a major source of immigration to the United States?

    A) Cuba
    B) Haiti
    C) Mexico
    D) Venezuela
    E) Nicaragua
SHORT ANSWER. Write the word or phrase that best completes each statement or answers the question.

1. The developing nations are often referred to as the ________________.

2. In the 1990s, the U.S., Canada, and Mexico formed an economic agreement called ____________.

3. The U.S. governmental agency known as the ____________ trained dissidents to invade Guatemala and later Cuba.

4. The authoritarian leader of Cuba before the Castro-led revolution was ______________.

5. An economic, social, and political movement in Latin America that fused Catholic theology and socialism was known as ________________.

6. The Marxist government in Nicaragua that was removed in an election in 1990 was led by the ____________ party.

7. Corrupt governments led by strongmen and funded by export of tropical products were known as ________________.

8. In 1948, the United Nations listed basic liberties to all people with the publication of the ________________.

9. Inequalities based on ____________ continued in some places in Latin America into the 21st century.

10. The Argentine dance made popular worldwide in the early 20th century was the ____________.

TRUE/FALSE. Write “T” if the statement is true and “F” if the statement is false.

1. In Mexico in 1994, a rebel movement that called itself Chiapas showed that key social issues remained unresolved.

2. In Latin America, successes in political democratization, economic development, and social reforms led to consideration of radical solutions to national issues.

3. Cuba’s efforts to industrialize in the 1960s were largely unsuccessful.

4. The United States invaded Panama and ousted its dictator Manuel Noriega.

5. After World War I, the United States emerged as the dominant power in Latin America.

6. The Alliance for Progress was Jimmy Carter’s policy for cooperation in the Latin America.
7. Population growth, urbanization, and worker migration continued to challenge political leaders in Latin America during the late 20th century.

8. The role of women in in Latin America changed slowly in the 20th century.

9. Latin America stands in an intermediate position between industrial and developing nations in terms of social and economic conditions.

10. During the 20th century there was little movement in Latin America from rural to urban areas.