

### **Appendix III: US Involvement in Democratic Breakdowns and Transitions, 1945-2010**

This appendix provides documentation about US influence in all 27 democratic breakdowns (1945-2010) and 37 transitions to competitive regimes (1945-2010) listed in Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán (2013). This is the most comprehensive literature review on this subject, and it could be a useful bibliographical reference for future researchers. Our review is based on 165 secondary sources, a comprehensive review of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Department of State declassified documents, and interviews with diplomats who were deeply involved in the processes we describe.

Building upon this extensive documentary base, we provide short narratives of all 27 breakdowns and 37 transitions, focusing on US support for and influence on regime change. We use this coding in our qualitative comparative analysis (see Appendix II).

As a general rule, we use at least three secondary sources for each case to triangulate information and assess different interpretations. This allows us to get into enough historical detail to code the cases based on a solid knowledge base. To complement analyses of specific transitions, we also use interpretations and information provided by sources that discuss the role of the US in many of these transitions.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, we use two databases of US attitudes toward democracy in the region, which provide some context to our coding.<sup>2</sup>

One of the challenges in this appendix is providing evidence for some claims that the US sometimes had a decisive influence in an outcome. By decisive, we mean that it is very unlikely that a breakdown or transition would have occurred when it did without the US involvement. In some cases, this is evident; for example, the US helped organize the invasion/coup that overthrew the government of Guatemala in 1954, and US pressure pushed the Dominican authoritarian regime to allow a fair vote count that led to a transition to democracy in 1978. In most cases, the judgment about the magnitude of US influence is less clear cut. We looked for evidence that US influence led some actors to behave as they did and that this behavior was decisive in the outcome. We also used some counterfactuals: if the US had not done something, how would the outcome have changed?

We thank Ambassadors (ret.) Edwin Corr, Harry Shlaudeman, and Thomas Pickering. Corr was Chargé D'Affairs in Ecuador (1979), and then Ambassador in Peru (1980-1981), Bolivia (1981-1985), and El Salvador (1985-1988). Shlaudeman was Ambassador to Peru (1977-1980), Argentina (1980-1983), Brazil (1986-1989), and Nicaragua (1990-1992). Pickering was Ambassador to El Salvador (1983-1985). They provided several rounds of interviews that allowed us to better grasp the details of particular transitions, especially Ecuador (1979), Peru (1980), Bolivia (1982), Argentina (1983), El Salvador (1984). There they were in charge of coordinating regime promotion activities. We also thank David Scott Palmer and Benjamín Garcia Holgado for commenting on this Appendix.

#### **1. The US and democratic breakdowns in Latin America: 1945-2010**

There are several comparative studies of the role of the US in supporting authoritarian breakdowns.<sup>3</sup> An evaluation of the US role in these breakdowns suggests that the US did not act consistently in favor of coups against democratic governments in Latin America. Washington supported many military coups. Yet in our judgment, based on the extensive literature we reviewed, in only one democratic breakdown did the US have a decisive influence, meaning that the breakdown would not have occurred without the US involvement: Guatemala 1954. And in only one other case, Chile in 1973, did the US have a moderate to major influence in the outcome. There is solid evidence of active US involvement in only two other breakdowns: Brazil 1964 and Uruguay 1973.

US support also helped sustain many authoritarian regimes in Latin America over a long period of time too. Yet rarely did US intervention at a specific moment in time decisively alter the fortunes of a tottering authoritarian regime, with the sole exception of the intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965.

In general, US influence took the form of what we call “hierarchical demonstration.” Washington helped create an ideological environment in which conservative actors in Latin America believed that the US would not object to coups against left-of-center democratically elected governments, because the US was concerned with other strategic imperatives.<sup>4</sup> This was particularly true between 1948 and 1977, although in some periods such as during the John F. Kennedy administration (1961-63), the US more clearly favored democracy promotion.

### **1. 1. Costa Rica (1948)**

An episode of electoral fraud produced a brief civil war between the Social Democrats and rightist elements, on the one side, and President Calderón Guardia, leader of the National Republican Party, allied with the Communist Party, on the other.<sup>5</sup> The Social Democrats had tried to get the United States to see Calderón as a communist since the early 1940s but Washington did not interpret the Costa Rican leader in that light. US Ambassador Robert Scotten implied at times that Calderón was corrupt but never considered supporting a coup.<sup>6</sup> A crisis broke out after the February 8, 1948, elections, when opposition leader Otilio Ulate Blanco was declared victorious. Pressured by Calderón, Congress nullified the electoral results, triggering a civil war that pitted José Figueres against Calderón and his communist ally Manuel Mora, who were in control of the national army in San José.

The war lasted from March 12 to April 19. During its first phases US involvement was marginal although in the name of neutrality US diplomats adopted some measures that undermined the government’s position, such as blocking arms transfers to the Costa Rican government and thwarting Nicaraguan President Anastasio Somoza’s attempts to help Calderón.<sup>7</sup> Prompted by the Bogotazo – a series of protests in Colombia starting in April 9, 1948 – the US military organized an intervention force in the Canal Zone, which was never deployed but allegedly tilted the balance in Figueres’s favor.<sup>8</sup> This led to 18 months of authoritarian government – the first authoritarian interlude in Costa Rica since 1919. Famously, the Costa Rican army was disbanded before democratic rule resumed.<sup>9</sup>

In all other cases in this appendix, it is clear which the pro-democratic side was. This was not the case in Costa Rica in 1948. Lehoucq and Molina (2002: 218-222) argue that Calderón's claim of fraud that cost him the election might have merit. Hence it is not clear that Figueres rescued democracy by mobilizing against an unfair vote count and that US support for him favored the more democratic outcome. However, it is also not certain that Calderón was the democrat in 1948; even if there had been fraud, Calderón could have accepted the results.

US sympathized with the ouster: Yes  
US was actively involved: No  
US impact on outcome: Medium

### **1.2. Panama (1948)**

After the victory of Domingo Díaz Arosemena in the 30 July 1948 election, allegations of fraud led to the intervention of the National Police Commander José A. Remón, who would become an arbiter of elections in the years to follow. Remón benefited from a militarization of the police that took place after the violent protests in the Canal Zone in 1947. He was praised by Washington as a figure who could maintain order. A State Department cable indicates that he was seen favorably for his anti-communist and pro-US views.<sup>10</sup> Yet sources suggest the US did not favor a coup. No US agency or actor was directly involved in activities related to the coup. The deposed president Arosemena – like most of the Panamanian elite before and after Remón – was largely aligned with US interests as well.<sup>11</sup>

US sympathized with the coup: Yes  
US was actively involved: No  
US impact on outcome: None

### **1.3. Peru (1948)**

Lieutenant Colonel Manuel Odría pressed the democratic government of José Bustamante (1945-1948) to abandon its alliance with the leftist American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA). Although the president dismissed Apristas from his cabinet, he refused to ban the party, prompting Odría's coup on October 27, 1948 and two years of authoritarian rule. The US failed to strengthen Bustamante's democratic government. It was critical of Bustamante's economic policies and accommodated Odría. Since Washington did not sanction Odría in any particular way "US disinterest for democracy provoked a considerable popular backlash."<sup>12</sup> However, at the key moment of the coup the US did not intervene in any manner. Washington was not sympathetic towards APRA's anti-imperialist stances but did not directly oppose Haya de la Torre, who had toured the US in 1947 and 1948. Haya did not believe the US was involved in Odría's coup, and he "continued to view Washington as APRA's friend."<sup>13</sup>

US sympathized with the coup: Not clear  
US was actively involved: No  
US impact on outcome: Low

#### 1.4. Venezuela (1948)

The US accommodated Venezuelan dictator Marcos Pérez Jiménez (1948-58) after his coup against President Rómulo Gallegos. Yet it was far from Washington's first preference that the events unfolded in that way. All secondary sources suggest the US would have preferred Gallegos to remain in power and the coup had to be accommodated as a *fait accompli*. One author provides evidence that the US Embassy weighed the pros and cons of a call to general strike against the coup leaders, but besides being more sympathetic to civilians and democratization, "Washington apparently was prepared to accept a *golpe* both as inevitable and less harmful to US interests than any measures to assist Gallegos would have been."<sup>14</sup> While it is true that "Pérez Jiménez had no problem in gaining recognition from the Americans"<sup>15</sup>, none of the scholarship we reviewed alleges US involvement in the coup. Schwartzberg argues that Washington viewed the Venezuelan military negatively, just as it did the Peruvian coup led by Odría.<sup>16</sup>

US sympathized with the coup: No

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

#### 1.5. Colombia (1949)

On April 9, 1948, civil war broke out between Liberals and Conservatives in response to the assassination of the Liberal leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán. The assassination took place in the midst of the proceedings of the Ninth International Conference of the Organization of American States and with Secretary of State George C. Marshall himself in Bogotá. This episode showed restraint on the part of Washington. Other delegations asked the US to use its paratroopers to evacuate the diplomatic delegations, yet US officials evaluated that any direct intervention would play to the hand of communists and discarded intervention.<sup>17</sup>

Under the climate of generalized violence that followed, the Conservative government of Mariano Ospina Pérez closed Congress on November 11, 1949, starting a period of authoritarian rule that preceded the military dictatorship of Gustavo Rojas Pinilla (1953-57). No source indicates US involvement US in the November 11 coup. Yet Washington and Bogotá collaborated to reconstruct the incidents of the *Bogotazo*, investigated possible Soviet involvement, and collaborated with intelligence about communist groups in the country.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, the US did not object to the coup and saw it as a logical consequence of the domestic state of affairs. Nevertheless, it seems implausible that Washington would have encouraged the coup. The US perception of a communist threat was conservative at the time. One author says: "To the credit of American officials, after initial hysteria and hyperbole at the time of *Bogotazo* in 1948, they were relatively rational in distinguishing general political opposition to the Conservatives and the Rojas regime, and on the other hand, a communist labor and political sector."<sup>19</sup>

US sympathized with the coup: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: Low

### 1.6. Argentina (1951/1955)

The US initially opposed the Peronist regime in Argentina. Nationalism and anti-Americanism were factors in Perón's victory in the 1946 elections. US Ambassador Spruille Braden had published a "blue book" with the results of an investigation showing some evidence of Nazi links with Argentine officials during WWII, and Perón used this to his advantage in an advertisement campaign that asked Argentines to choose between him or Braden.<sup>20</sup> Tensions had diminished since then and some rapprochement had taken place, although Washington never fancied Perón's non-aligned foreign policy and growing relations with the Soviets. In 1951, when the Perón regime slipped into authoritarianism, the US was mildly opposed to Perón. Relations between the regime and Washington were distant and sometimes cold, partly due to the restriction of essential freedoms and the regime's slip into authoritarianism. The relations between Perón and the US improved marginally only by 1953 due to the Argentine leader's need to foster US investment in the energy sector and the application of orthodox economic policies. After that they remained relatively cold due to misunderstandings due to Perón's doctrine of non-alignment. Yet it is clear that Washington was not involved in the 1955 coup against Perón. The US ambassador met with Perón in the Casa Rosada on June 16, 1955 – the same day of the bombing of Plaza de Mayo, an indiscriminate massacre of 308 civilians that could have killed him too.<sup>21</sup>

US sympathized: No

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

### 1.7. Cuba (1952)

As was the case of the Peruvian 1968 coup, the US business community viewed the Carlos Prío government (1948-52) negatively. Prío's government had suffered the indirect pressure of international financial institutions, most notably the World Bank, before the Batista coup of 1952. However, the US was not directly involved in the coup. In fact the coup was such a surprise for Washington that General Batista had to send a diplomatic note to President Truman within a few hours of the coup to reassure him that his ideological orientation was pro-West.<sup>22</sup> Many US officials were favorably surprised by the event. One reportedly congratulated the Cuban military for the efficiency and timing of the coup and said it was "long overdue."<sup>23</sup> Support for the Batista dictatorship increased throughout the decade as the guerilla threat intensified, and he took specific measures – such as severing relations with the USSR and banning the Communist Party – that pleased Washington.

US sympathized: Yes with the coup (*post hoc*)

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: Low

## 1.8. Guatemala (1954)

The Guatemalan coup of 1954 is a clear-cut case of US decisive support for a coup. US government and corporate involvement was crucial in the military coup/invasion that ended Guatemala's period of competitive politics in 1954.<sup>24</sup> US officials saw Juan José Arévalo (1945-51) – the first president of the Guatemalan “revolution” that started in 1944 – as a communist. The FBI spied on him and the US ceased military aid to Guatemala in 1947. Ambassador Spruille Braden, Former Assistant Secretary of State under Truman, and then lobbyist for the United Fruit Company, among other officials, as well as CIA and military intelligence reports, all feared that his successor and winner of the 1950 elections would radicalize further.<sup>25</sup> These actors successfully pressured the World Bank into terminating loans to Guatemala in 1951. Then a series of economic reforms conducted by President Jacobo Arbenz (1951-54), the sub-regional spillover of Guatemalan “populism,” and the height of McCarthyism in the US all converged in the summer of 1954. The Eisenhower administration devised a plan to overthrow the left-leaning Arbenz government and undertook a propaganda campaign, accusing Arbenz of being under communist influence. The CIA recruited a retired Guatemalan colonel, Carlos Castillo Armas, to put together a militia and invade from neighboring Honduras in June 1954. The CIA also paid American pilots to fly air raids to support the coup. Fearing considerable bloodshed, President Arbenz resigned on June 27, 1954.<sup>26</sup>

The regime breakdown in Guatemala arguably had effects elsewhere in Central America. Schlesinger and Kinzer quoted an unnamed but experienced *Time* correspondent as stating that the Guatemalan coup had “an incalculable effect” on the rest of Central America, “If Arbenz had survived his term in office, it would have influenced and strengthened democrats in Honduras and El Salvador and isolated Somoza in Nicaragua.” His downfall, on the other hand, fortified reactionary forces in the area.”<sup>27</sup>

US sympathized with the coup: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Decisive

## 1.9. Argentina (1962)

The coup that overthrew Arturo Frondizi (1958-62) in Argentina in 1962 was primarily driven by domestic concerns in the armed forces related to the potential return of the Peronist Party to power. Frondizi tried to reduce tensions between Peronist and anti-Peronist factions and push forward a heterodox economic plan. Sectors in Washington and the military in Buenos Aires were critical towards some of his policies such as a series of meetings he had with Che Guevara, the famous revolutionary. Yet John F. Kennedy had lunched the Alliance for Progress in March 1961 and was cultivating a positive relation with Frondizi when the coup took place. Apparently Kennedy himself valued the role Frondizi was playing as a facilitator in the Cuban question, but opinions in the administration were divided.

Arthur Schlesinger, Special Advisor to Kennedy, suggested that the US should condemn the coup, but the opinion of Secretary of State Dean Rusk prevailed. Rusk

stated that: “what led to the overthrow of the Frondizi government was the direct consequence of the attitude of Frondizi towards Castro.”<sup>28</sup> It seems possible that some US officials suggested to the Argentine military that the Kennedy administration would not overtly oppose a coup. In an interview two years after, Frondizi said that some American reactionaries and military strategists had helped oust him in March 29, 1962. Yet he also recognized that the US Ambassador followed a “correct course” at that time.<sup>29</sup> Many American interests sympathized with his demise. However, no historical account that we know of has produced evidence of active official involvement of any US agency.<sup>30</sup>

US sympathized with the coup: Mixed

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: Low

### **1.10. Peru (1962)**

The most detailed account of the process suggests no prior US involvement of any kind.<sup>31</sup> Washington was evidently against the coup after it took place. “The reaction of the US government to the military takeover was immediate, although largely unexpected. On the day of the *golpe* Washington broke diplomatic relations and denounced the overthrow as a setback to the Alliance for Progress. On the following day, the Department of State suspended all but humanitarian aid to Peru.”<sup>32</sup>

Another source recalls “In 1962, following the military coup in July of that year, the Kennedy administration showed its dismay by making no development-loan commitment for the 1963 fiscal year and by deobligating \$5.8 million in existing loan authorizations.”<sup>33</sup> Although the American business community sympathized with the coup, Washington was overtly opposed.

US sympathized with the coup: No

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

### **1.11. Ecuador (1963)**

According to the best account of the facts, the removal of President Carlos Julio Arosemena (1961-63) from office on July 11, 1963 was triggered by four factors. The military considered the president inept, they were against the structural reforms undertaken, they saw a need for a more active repression of communism, and they intended to prevent the return of former president José María Velasco Ibarra to office.<sup>34</sup> Conservative elements in the US were sympathetic to these goals, but the Ecuadoran military thought the US government opposed the coup. In fact, the military was concerned that the same measures taken against Peru after the 1962 coup would be reenacted against their government, and that threat constrained them to some extent.

On July 10, a dinner was offered in the US Embassy. Arosemena said that there could be friendship between Ecuador and the people of the US but not between Ecuador and the US government. The episode acted “as a catalyst in crystalizing the views of the

service chiefs” who gathered that night and accelerated their plans for a coup. Initially the coup was going to take place in September, then late July, and in response to Arosemena’s speech, the military decided to take action the next day.<sup>35</sup> In our conceptualization this demonstrates clear hierarchical demonstration, but the narrative produced no evidence of active US involvement, and thus no evidence of hegemonic effects.

US sympathized with the coup: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: Low

### **1.12. Honduras (1963)**

In this instance the US Embassy made it clear that it would oppose a coup. Washington even dispatched high-ranking officers of the Southern Command deployed in the Canal Zone to convey this personally to the top command of the Honduran military. Closer to the date of the coup, Ambassador Burrows actively discouraged the coup and warned the chief of the military, Oswaldo López Arellano, that the US would cut military and economic aid. When the military ousted President José Ramón Villeda (1957-63) – whom Kennedy had considered one of his favorites in the region – the US withheld diplomatic recognition of the new government.

Despite having been warned several times, López still claimed that he misread the frequent complaints of the US Embassy about communist activities as “informally inspiring” his coup.<sup>36</sup> As during the coup in Peru 1962, where the US severed diplomatic relations and cut aid, the pro-democratic activism of the Ambassador and the deployment of the military in the Canal Zone in diplomatic missions conform a clear antecedent of the methods that were later used during the Carter years, and from then onwards, to support democracies.

US sympathized with the coup: No

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

### **1.13. Bolivia (1964)**

The Bolivian coup of 1964 took place at a time when the leader of the National Revolutionary Movement (MNR), President Víctor Paz Estenssoro, was working closer with the United States under the frame of the Alliance for Progress. His government received substantial US aid and moved in the direction of economic conservatism, which also led to a split of leftist elements of the governing party – most notably Vice-President Juan Lechin – and the loss of support from miners and peasants. After a period of social unrest that included the seizure of four US hostages by protestors, General René Barrientos took power in a coup and became leader of the MNR.

With the support of the US, he proscribed Lechin – who had supported him at the time of the coup. Most literature on this case suggests that the US consistently supported the center-right elements of the MNR, whether represented by Estenssoro or

later Barrientos, yet it does not indicate direct US involvement in the coup.<sup>37</sup> Some authors suggest that Washington debilitated the Estenssoro government by attaching denigrating demands to the release of aid in their quest to moderate the MNR.<sup>38</sup> The impact on outcome of US policies can therefore be interpreted as moderate, but the consequences – i.e. the coup itself – seem largely unintended.

US sympathized with the coup: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: Low/moderate

#### **1.14. Brazil (1964)**

The most detailed English language account of the coup suggests that tensions between the US and Brazil started to increase since the early Goulart government (1961-64) primarily because of heightened social tension and the fact that Brazil failed to realign with the US during the Alliance for Progress years.<sup>39</sup> According to one recent account of these facts “the likelihood of the *golpe* grew as the United States rolled out successive round of targeted sanctions against Goulart, including diplomatic pressures, threats of abandonment, support for opposition politicians, collusion with coup plotters, signaling future military support for the plotters in the eventuality of civil war, and the granting of immediate diplomatic recognition for the incoming authoritarian military leaders after the coup.”<sup>40</sup> As the Goulart government turned to the left in early 1964, Washington foresaw the possibility of a coup, sent signals that it would eventually recognize a military government, and deployed a military operation “Brother Sam” involving the shipment of petroleum and ammunitions.

Although the operation did not involve the deployment of troops, it seemed to be preparing the logistical support for such intervention in case the military coup provoked large scale violence. In the end, the US did not intervene in any important material respect. In their account of the facts, Parker and Spektor conclude that the United States sympathized with the military takeover and refrained from involvement only because it saw no need for it. A revealing and detailed telegram sent by Ambassador Lincoln Gordon to the Department of State provides evidence of clear although limited US agency on the ground that involved “covert support” for anti-Goulart demonstrations.<sup>41</sup>

US sympathized with the coup: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Low to moderate

#### **1.15. Argentina (1966)**

President Arturo Illia (1963-66) reversed oil contracts with the US, causing important friction.<sup>42</sup> However, cooperation was high in other areas, including military cooperation under a new “Military Assistance Program” which included the delivery of M-41 tanks and other technology. These transfers were later suspended due to the coup, which US officials did not anticipate. On the day of the coup, June 28, 1966, the US Department of State prohibited US officials from entering into conversations with the Argentine military until the issue of recognition was resolved, which took 18 days. The

US considered cutting military and economic aid to the new Argentine military government. However, Secretary of State Dean Rusk noticed that non-recognition was playing into the hands of the military by fostering nationalistic sentiments. After the new president, General Juan Carlos Onganía (1966-70), publicly pledged a return to electoral democracy on July 9, the US recognized the government on July 15. However, relations remained tense.<sup>43</sup>

US sympathized with the coup: No

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: Low

### **1.16. Panama (1968)**

The Panamanian coup of October 11, 1968, took place swiftly while the US Ambassador was out of his post, completely unaware of the military's move. Major Boris Martinez and Colonel Omar Torrijos led the coup, wary that the changes newly inaugurated President Arnulfo Arias (Oct 1 to 11, 1968) was promoting within the Armed Forces would affect them. Subsequently the US withdrew recognition for one month and granted Arias political asylum in the Canal Zone, which was seen at the time as a signal of support to Arias and opposition to the junta. Yet "US officials had no coherent position on the coup save for a preference for a government that would not threaten the canal."<sup>44</sup> Eventually the US recognized the junta and relations stayed stable yet cool under Torrijo's regime starting in 1969.

US sympathized with the coup: No

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

### **1.17. Peru (1968)**

According to David Scott Palmer, the main factors leading to the demise of constitutional rule in Peru and the bloodless coup of October 3, 1968, were the fact that Acción Popular – the president's party – was a second minority in Congress, excessive indebtedness, foreign exchange difficulties, a 40 per cent devaluation of the Peruvian currency in 1967, and corruption scandals.<sup>45</sup> This panoply of factors, which resembled that of contemporary presidential crises<sup>46</sup>, did not include US pressure as an essential component. On the contrary, a CIA memorandum suggests that the US was pleased with the democratic government of President Fernando Belaúnde (1963-68), which had reached a settlement with the US-owned International Petroleum Company (IPC). The military disliked and eventually overturned the IPC settlement, leading to tense bilateral relations in the years to follow.<sup>47</sup>

US sympathized with the coup: No

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

### **1.18. Ecuador (1970)**

With the victory in the 1968 elections, José María Velasco Ibarra assumed power for the fifth time. Leading a “nationalist revolutionary” movement, he was not seen positively by many US interests. His policies were contradictory, benefiting US oil companies but harming the tuna fishing industry. The US suspended military aid to his government in 1969.<sup>48</sup> Due to these many frictions it is implausible that the Washington would have encouraged or helped Ibarra when he declared himself dictator and refused to recognize parliamentary elections in 1970. The US did not react favorably to his *autogolpe*. Ibarra exploited these tensions to boost nationalistic support, seizing American fishing boats and launching a “tuna war” that represented “the nadir of US-Ecuadorian relations in the postwar period.”<sup>49</sup>

US sympathized with the coup: No

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

### **1.19. Honduras (1972)**

In a bloodless coup, the military ousted President Ramón Ernesto Cruz on December 4, 1972. Cruz faced heightened opposition from the left – labor unions, particularly – due to its recessive economic policies. Oswaldo López Arellano, the dictator whom the Kennedy administration fervently opposed after the 1963 coup, took power once more. However, this time López, following the example of Velasco Alvarado in Peru and Torrijos in Panama, promoted more progressive-nationalist policies, which provoked more opposition from Washington.<sup>50</sup>

US sympathized with the coup: No

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

### **1.20. Chile (1973)**

The involvement of the CIA in the 1973 coup against the government of Salvador Allende (1970-73) has been extensively documented. Early after the coup, historians already overwhelmingly agreed on US involvement. Some considered it decisive.<sup>51</sup> Others highlight the primordial importance of domestic dynamics<sup>52</sup>, yet proponents of this balanced view do not deny the fact that the CIA was directly involved in the coup. Authors generally agreed the pressure coming from the US was “enormous,” that Washington funded a relentless campaign against Allende in papers like *El Mercurio* using covert funds, that the CIA worked closely with the Chilean military and that it assisted pro-junta spokesmen who went abroad in search for support to the newly established regime.<sup>53</sup>

More recently declassified documents have provided even more evidence of extensive US involvement. The National Security Archive at George Washington University<sup>54</sup> provides a full list of available primary sources that can help reconstruct all these activities. This includes documentation about CIA’s Project FUBELT, evidence that President Richard Nixon as well as National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger

encouraged the coup, and the plans that the National Security Council developed to destabilize Chile economically and isolate Santiago diplomatically throughout the years 1970 to 1973.<sup>55</sup>

US sympathized: Yes  
US was actively involved: Yes  
US impact on outcome: High

### **1.21. Uruguay (1973)**

When the 1973 coup took place in Uruguay, the US was actively collaborating with the Uruguayan intelligence services, had developed tight interconnections with the security forces, supported counterinsurgency strategies, right-wing death squads, and the Uruguayan Condor unit.<sup>56</sup> There is evidence that the US military mission in Laguna del Sauce helped in the formation of death squads and that the CIA financed a propaganda campaign in a similar fashion to what had been done in Chile. It is not clear that the Bordaberry coup was promoted by the US. Active collaboration with the military “indirectly influenced” the coup<sup>57</sup>, yet there is no clear plan or sign of encouragement. However, since the activities of US agencies in Uruguay were themselves anti-democratic we code this coup as a US-supported one and one in which the US had effective agency.<sup>58</sup>

US sympathized: Yes  
US was actively involved: Yes  
US impact on outcome: Moderate

### **1.22. Argentina (1976)**

When the Argentine coup took place on March 24, 1976, the demise of the Nixon administration had led to a much less offensive foreign policy toward democracies in the region. The Argentine military did not have any direct assistance from the CIA or any other US agency in the planning the coup and let Isabel Perón’s government (1974-76) deteriorate naturally. At the moment of the coup the economic and social crisis was such that the Ford administration as well as the American press saw the coup as a necessary solution.<sup>59</sup> The US immediately recognized the military government and was pleased by Ministry of Economy Martínez de Hoz’s economic reform plan. Ford even suggested an increase in military aid. Yet the mood in the US Congress had changed and the Argentine junta faced an increasingly cool relation that became overtly hostile during the Carter administration (Russell, “Las relaciones Argentina-Estados Unidos,” 15; See also Grabendorff, “¿De país aislado a aliado preferido?”; Moyano, “Argentina’s Lost Patrol”).

US sympathized with the coup: Yes  
US was actively involved: No  
US impact on outcome: Low

### **1.23. Bolivia (1980)**

The US was actively supporting a process of democratization after the coup of November 1, 1979, by Col. Alberto Natusch Busch. Pressures coming from the US Embassy and the Department of State arguably played an important role in Natusch stepping down after two weeks and calling for elections. Therefore, when General García Meza plotted against the civilian process on July 17, 1980, the reaction of the US was stark. First, Washington refused to recognize the military government and suspended some \$127 million in assistance and aid. Then the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) began a series of investigations connecting the Meza regime with drug trafficking, which led the Bolivian government to declare specific DEA officers and Ambassador Marvin Weisman *persona non grata*. With the bilateral relations severed, the US opposed Meza further by pressuring the IMF, the World Bank, and other countries to isolate Bolivia and cutting all financial support.<sup>60</sup>

US sympathized with the coup: No

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

#### **1.24. Peru (1992)**

Elected in free and fair elections in 1990 in the context of a debilitating armed conflict against powerful terrorist challenges and of an economic meltdown, Fujimori led a coup against democracy on April 5, 1992, when he closed congress, suspended the 1978 constitution, and dismissed many members of the judiciary. This *autogolpe* led to the immediate response of Washington suspending all military aid to the country. The coup represented a major setback for Peru in the international scene, the US being actively against it.<sup>61</sup> “The US immediately suspended aid and pressured several aid organizations, including the IMF, to withhold over US\$2 billion in financial assistance.”<sup>62</sup> Much of the effort was channeled through the OAS. The US, together with all other democracies in the Americas, had signed the Santiago Declaration in 1991 (Resolution 1080), which empowered them to take action in the form of suspension from the regional organization and sanctions.

US sympathized with the coup: No

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

#### **1.25. Haiti (1999)**

The situation of the Haitian democracy deteriorated progressively after the suspension of parliamentary elections in 1997 and 1998 due to internal turmoil and pressure from the armed forces. In January 1999 President Rene Preval declared the terms of elected officials had expired and given the absence of any elections to determine the new officials, declared himself prime minister in a self-coup similar to Fujimori's. The Clinton administration sent consistent signals that Washington would be against a coup like this and that the resumption of elections and parliamentary activity was a priority. “From 1997 to 2000, under pressure from the Clinton administration, the World Bank International Development Association and the Inter-

American Development Bank suspended aid, because Haiti had no legitimate parliament to approve loans and grants.”<sup>63</sup> In the months following Preval’s declaration USAID also terminated programs. Critics assure the reaction of Washington could have been harsher but the US government never signaled it would support a dictatorship in any way.

US sympathized with the coup: No  
US was actively involved: No  
US impact on outcome: None

### **1.26. Honduras (2009)**

In 2009 democratically elected president of Honduras, Manuel Zelaya, sacked the head of the army for refusing to organize a nation-wide referendum. The referendum intended a constitutional reform that would grant Zelaya the possibility of re-election, a move that many in parliament, the majority of the Supreme Court, and the military, saw as unconstitutional. Foreseeing the possibility of this self-coup, a coalition of these actors illegally deposed Zelaya in June 28, 2009.<sup>64</sup>

All declassified documents – including cables from the US Embassy in Tegucigalpa that appeared on Wikileaks – suggest Washington was caught by surprise with the coup and played no role. Although there is no evidence to suggest that officials in the Obama administration were behind the coup, some have argued Secretary of State Hillary Clinton might have played a role in preventing Zelaya’s return to office by not suspending aid immediately, which might suggest that some actors in the Obama administrations sympathized with the new government. Overall, the evidence suggests that the U.S. attitude might have had a negative effect by omission and only post hoc.

US sympathized with the coup: Mixed  
US was actively involved: No  
US impact on outcome: Low

### **1.27. Venezuela (2009)**

The U.S. had tense relations with the government in Caracas since at least 2002, when President Hugo Chavez suffered a coup attempt for which he blamed the C.I.A. and the U.S. government. Concentration of power in the Venezuelan president and restriction of civil liberties increased in the years to follow reaching paroxysm in 2009, when a constitutional referendum determined the abolition of term limits. Minimal guarantees for the opposition were not met in this referendum. As in Honduras, the opposition to the referendum also alleged that it was unconstitutional. The U.S. could play no role in this breakdown. Chavez stringently anti-American and thus there was no motive. Besides, the US had no Embassy in the country – relations were severed in September 2008, and Washington had openly criticized the Venezuelan progressive slide into authoritarianism several times.

US sympathized with the coup: No  
US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

The following table summarizes our judgments about the US role in these 27 coups against democratic or semi-democratic governments from 1945 to 2010.

**Table 1. Summary of US role in 27 democratic breakdowns from 1945 to 2010**

Country	Year of coup	US sympathized?	US active involvement?	US impact on outcome?
Costa Rica	1948	Yes	No	Medium
Panama	1948	Yes	No	None
Peru	1948	Not clear	No	Low
Venezuela	1948	No	No	None
Colombia	1949	Yes	No	Low
Argentina	1951	No	No	None
Cuba	1952	Not clear	No	Low
Guatemala	1954	Yes	Yes	Decisive
Argentina	1962	Mixed	No	Low
Peru	1962	No	No	None
Ecuador	1963	Yes	No	Low
Honduras	1963	No	No	None
Bolivia	1964	Yes	No	Moderate
Brazil	1964	Yes	Yes	Low/Moderate
Argentina	1966	No	No	Low
Panama	1968	No	No	None
Peru	1968	No	No	None
Ecuador	1970	No	No	None
Honduras	1972	No	No	None
Chile	1973	Yes	Yes	Moderate/High
Uruguay	1973	Yes	Yes	Moderate
Argentina	1976	Yes	No	Low
Bolivia	1980	No	No	None
Peru	1992	No	No	None
Haiti	1999	No	No	None
Honduras	2009	Mixed	No	Low
Venezuela	2009	No	No	None

## 2. The US and democratic transitions (1945-2010)

To reconstruct cases of transition to competitive regimes from 1945 to 2010, we use several comparative assessments of the concrete role the US played during this period<sup>65</sup> as well as the case specific literature detailed below. After our review of this period, we concluded that the US was consistently in favor of democratic transitions when they happened. Sometimes this favorable sentiment played only a marginal role in the process; in others, the US played a decisive role. In general, during the period between 1945 and 1977, with the exception of the first Truman (1945-1949) and

Kennedy (1961-1963) administrations, Washington put less of an emphasis on democratization and thus its approval of the liberalizing process played a more secondary role.

Conversely, US support for transitions became key after 1977. This is in line with previous interpretations by other authors. In his assessment of the role of the US in the Latin American wave of democratization, Samuel Huntington concludes that it was *critical* in the Dominican Republic (1978), Ecuador (1979), El Salvador (1984), Guatemala (1986), Honduras (1982), Panamá (1990), Peru (1980) and Uruguay (1985) – eight cases –, and a *contributing factor* in Bolivia (1979, 1982) and Chile (1990).<sup>66</sup> Other authors argue the US played a *decisive* role also in Nicaragua (1984), Peru (1995), and Haiti (1995).<sup>67</sup> With the exception of the first two years of the Reagan administration and some intermittent backlashes during the 1980s, these pro-democratic policies were fairly consistent since the late 1970s until the present. Unlike the previous period, which was characterized by “hierarchical demonstration” but little agency on the ground in most cases, in this second era the agency of US officials and programs is clear.

The US not only applauded transitions in Latin America, it also worked actively for them to happen. This activism had two key components: democracy assistance and ambassadorial activism.

US democracy assistance programs started in the immediate post war adopting various forms. In the 1960s – particularly under the Kennedy Administration – the US Agency for International Development (USAID) engaged in more formal, though still limited, programs of political development assistance. These expanded greatly in the early 1980s and again in the 1990s. In 1990, Latin America represented 72 percent of the total budget for democracy assistance in the US Agency for International Development (USAID). By 1998, the region represented only 17 percent. This was not the result of a reduction in the budget for Latin America, but rather an expansion of democracy assistance programs world-wide. Finkel et al. “Effects of US Foreign Assistance” have shown that these programs generally enhance the level of democracy by small but statistically significant amounts. In 1984, the US government created the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), whose mission is to foster democracy around the world. NED is funded by congress, but an independent bipartisan board runs it. NED provides grants to groups in other countries that seek to promote democracy: civic organizations, human rights groups, etc. It supported the opposition to regimes as diverse as the Sandinistas in Nicaragua (1979-90) and Pinochet in Chile (1973-90). In some cases, NED provided funding for election monitoring and voter education.

Another way in which the US showed agency on the ground – and one that reaches back to 1945, when USAID and NED programs did not exist – was meeting with key agents and conveying a preference for democracy while threatening with cutting aid or financial assistance if certain democracy and human rights goals were not achieved. We consider public declarations of US ambassadors in favor of democratization as a critical element of agency – at the time considered in violation of these countries’ sovereignty. Another important indicator of US agency are official visits by high ranking US officers intended to convey the pro-democratic preferences of the US government or military. When these visits take place and actors such as the Vice President, Secretary of State, the First Lady, or the Commander of the US Southern

Command visit a particular leader or travel to a particular country to communicate Washington's pro-democratic preferences, we consider this agency on the ground.

### **2.1. Guatemala (1945)**

The US was wary of the Guatemalan dictator Jose Ubico Castañeda (1931-1944). Although he had collaborated with Washington during the war, he was highly corrupt – becoming the largest land owner in the country during his tenure – and allegedly sympathized with Nazi ideology. So, when the Guatemalan “revolution” took place, Washington did nothing to support him. “US Officials were beginning to see the dictator as an anachronism, they considered his handling of the crisis ineffectual, and they were confident that should Ubico be replaced, his successors would be friendly to Washington.”<sup>68</sup> As it did in a similar crisis in El Salvador during the same year, the reaction of the US Embassy was to ask the plotters to organize free and fair elections. Thus, Washington sympathized with and supported the transition.

According to one author “While the United States had not played an important role in the overthrow of the Ubico dictatorship the previous June, American officials had refused Ubico's last minute appeals for American support and similar appeals from his successor, General Ponce, when the later sought to perpetuate himself in power. They had allowed the Guatemalan revolutionaries to use the American embassy as a place for negotiating Ponce's surrender, in October 1944, and had welcomed the revolutionary government's commitment to preside over free elections, elections that Arévalo won handily.”<sup>69</sup> The Embassy's reports about the democratic government of Arévalo in 1945 and 1946 were relatively positive, but the situation deteriorated thereafter.<sup>70</sup>

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: Low

### **2.2. Panama (1945)**

Despite the fact that Washington officials knew the nationalists in the opposition would probably regain the central stage if the country transitioned to democracy, they nevertheless publicly supported the elections of June 15, 1945. As in the case of Guatemala, the process was primarily domestically driven. Yet it appears that US support for democracy was part of a larger set of liberal policies that included the inclusion of local labor in the Canal Zone and other liberalizing measures that at least accompanied the political overture.<sup>71</sup>

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: Low

### **2.3. Venezuela (1946)**

After the coup that brought Rómulo Betancourt, “Father of the Venezuelan Democracy” to power on October 19, 1945, US officials were generally in favor of the new junta in the understanding that it would allow for a rapid democratic transition. When those expectations were unmet, Washington started creating incentives for the government to move in that direction. In a meeting with Betancourt at the Miraflores Palace on April 30, 1946, Ambassador Frank P. Corrigan conveyed to the Venezuelan president that the main priorities he wanted to discuss were 1) the devotion of the Venezuelan government “toward the ideals of democracy and the preservation and development of democratic processes,” and 2) US material and strategic interests; in that order.<sup>72</sup> Then the US rewarded moves toward democratization – specially the October 27, 1946 elections – through a set of military and economic aid packages that were implicitly conditioned on this progress.

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Low

#### **2.4. Brazil (1946)**

Ambassador Adolf Augustus Berle Jr. arrived to Brazil in January 1945 imbued with a deep liberal agenda. According to one author his role was “helping to oust a pro-American dictator”<sup>73</sup> (Vargas) although he did so far more quietly than many of his contemporaries in this liberal wave. He wrote “Both our short and long-range interest, as well as our moral integrity, requires continuance of the classic policy of non-intervention, accompanied by encouragement of the steady development of democratic institutions.”<sup>74</sup> The Embassy voiced concerns regarding freedom of expression, and apprehension that Vargas would run in the elections or not surrender power. Berle communicated this personally to Vargas in a meeting that took place in the Guanabara Palace on September 28, 1945.

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: Low

#### **2.5. Argentina (1946)**

Argentina had declared war to the Axis powers on March 28, 1945, after remaining neutral during most of World War II. The authoritarian Argentine government was therefore seen as a sprout of fascism in the hemisphere that needed be eradicated. Washington sent an extremist liberal to lead the crusade. Shortly after arriving to Argentina in 1945 US Ambassador Spruille Braden declared: “We are carrying on a war in favor of democracy throughout the world, and when we say that we are fighting for democracy we mean just that. We propose to support democracy and we should like to see democratic governments in all parts of the world.”<sup>75</sup> As one Argentine historian put it, Braden became the “virtual leader of the opposition.”<sup>76</sup> Tragically for Braden, becoming actively involved in this fervent campaign against the dictatorship

backfired, fostered nationalism, and ended up being capitalized by one of the top military officers of the coup, Colonel Juan Domingo Perón, who was elected president.

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Low

## **2.6. Ecuador (1948)**

The US contributed to this transition by signaling strong democratic preferences. After the coup orchestrated against General José María Velasco Ibarra by his Minister of Defense, Colonel Carlos Macheno, most thought the US would welcome the new government, which promoted realignment with Washington. However, the US withheld recognition and even rejected an Ecuadoran delegation to the Rio Conference of 1947. The possibility of becoming a pariah in the hemisphere prompted Ecuadoran elites to depose Macheno. Carlos Julio Arosemena was voted as interim president and elections were called for June 1948. Shortly thereafter the US announced that it would resume normal diplomatic relations with Quito, and Ecuador was reincorporated in the hemispheric negotiations.<sup>77</sup>

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: High

## **2.7. Costa Rica (1949)**

As we saw in our review of the Costa Rican civil war and coup of 1948 (above), the role of the US was mostly that of preserving peace and bringing the local elites to an agreement. Weighting US influence in these processes is difficult – particularly because many actions seem to have favored the faction of José Figueres *vis-à-vis* Rafael Calderón, but the overall balance is that the US did not support the coup and did work to restore democracy. A historian evaluating precisely this concludes “There is no indication that Ambassador Davis ever hoped to have the Calderonistas lose or ever wanted the Costa Rican Communist Party to be defeated by force of arms. On the contrary, he appears to have consistently hoped and worked for a compromise settlement that would preserve constitutional government and avoid further bloodshed.”<sup>78</sup> In the end the junta led by Figueres would resign, restoring democratic rule in 1949.

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: Low

## **2.8. Panama (1956)**

The US maintained cordial relations with the government of José Antonio Remón, especially after the signature of the 1955 Eisenhower-Remón treaty on the

administration of the Canal Zone. Thus, the US saw the assassination of Remón and the rise of nationalism in 1956 – at least in part due to the nationalization of the Suez Canal – with considerable apprehension. Any sort of intervention in the domestic process would have been damaging for US interests, yet it appears that the election of Ernesto de la Guardia in 1956 was more attractive to Washington than the authoritarian rule of Ricardo Arias, “a sharp critic of US canal policy.”<sup>79</sup>

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

## **2.9. Bolivia (1956)**

Vice-President Hernán Siles Zuazo met personally with the Ambassador of the US, Gerald A. Drew, seeking the support of Washington for his candidacy to the June 17, 1956, general elections. The support to the electoral process and Siles’ candidacy – he would be later elected president by a large margin – is very clear in a January 27, 1956 cable sent by Ambassador Drew right after the meeting. In it he says: “The Vice President could not have been more emphatic and convincing in his repeated affirmations of friendship for the United States and his intention to continue the policy of the present Administration of close economic and political collaboration with the United States.” And concludes: “Mr. Powell and I believe that the Vice President is a man imbued with genuinely friendly sentiments toward the United States and with honest intentions to carry on the work of his prospective predecessor. We are confident that if he does take office, we will have in Hernan Siles Zuazo a well-meaning, genuine friend who will look to us for moral and material aid and who will seek and be guided by any reasonable recommendations we may have to make in such fields as foreign investments, technical assistance, etc., wherein we have a legitimate concern.”<sup>80</sup> Thus, the US accompanied these domestic developments with enthusiasm.

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

## **2.10. Peru (1956)**

Most accounts agree that US support for the Odría dictatorship was unwavering during the Eisenhower years. Yet, frictions began to surface in 1955. Odría was too invested in the dispute with Ecuador and when Washington refused to sell him planes, he bought them from the UK, which the US saw as problematic. The US officials had little problems in courting Prado – in a similar way as they were doing with Siles in Bolivia – a conservative who won the elections continued with the policy of alignment. Democracy, thus, was not a key issue in the bilateral relations but Washington supported the transition.<sup>81</sup>

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

## 2.11. Honduras (1957)

For Honduras to transition to democracy in the 1950s it was necessary that the armed forces be strengthened and institutionalized beyond partisan militias. A coup by the armed forces on October 21, 1956, against dictator Julio Lozano Díaz led to the 1957 constitution and first democratic elections. The US played a major role in the formation of the modern Honduran armed forces<sup>82</sup> and sympathized with the transition at the moment when it took place. Although the Eisenhower Administration was still hesitant to make a strong public statement recommending representative government – which would only be done by August 1958 – the liberal candidate and then constitutional president of Honduras, Ramón Villeda Morales, “smelled the shifting winds earlier.”<sup>83</sup>

In fact, Villeda counted on a mild US support that increased in time as he showed a capacity to maintain governability particularly against threats coming from labor and the extreme left. Ambassador Adolf A. Berle, who was involved in this decision, recalls: “when Ramón Villeda Morales came in we thought him a good, honest, well intentioned man, but questioned whether he was strong enough to swing it. Well, he was.”<sup>84</sup> Berle then acted as an advisor to the Kennedy Administration when Villeda came up frequently as an example used by liberals on the success of democracy promotion. However, while the US sympathized with the transition in 1957, it was also very wary.

US sympathized with the transition: Yes  
US was actively involved: No  
US impact on outcome: None

## 2.12. Argentina (1958)

US support for elections in Argentina was strongly signaled several times in 1957. Alberto Gainza Paz, editor of *La Prensa* – an Argentine newspaper famously closed down during the Perón administration – saw President Eisenhower in a meeting in Washington on April 10, 1957. Gainza Paz represented Argentine President Pedro Eugenio Aramburu in that meeting and described the efforts of the Junta as an attempt to restore the conditions for democratization after the disturbing effects of Peron’s “dictatorship.” Eisenhower made it clear that the US strongly favored prompt democratization: “The President thanked Dr. Gainza Paz for his detailed exposition of the problems facing Argentina today and assured him that the United States was tremendously interested in the effort of the Argentine people under President Aramburu to restore an orderly, democratic, constitutional form of government.”<sup>85</sup> President Eisenhower mentioned US cherished beliefs in “democracy and freedom” to Argentine dictator Pedro Eugenio Aramburu in a letter on the occasion of Argentina’s Aviation Week on November 6, 1957.

These and other communication were subtle.<sup>86</sup> As US democratic promotion policies toward all of Latin America began to change, these statements and demonstrations of support become more important. Perhaps the most important sign of

support was Vice President Richard Nixon's presence – although late, due to a traffic jam – at Arturo Frondizi's inauguration.<sup>87</sup>

In the years to follow, aid to Argentina increased considerably and Eisenhower personally congratulated Aramburu in a state visit to Buenos Aires during 1960 for “respecting constitutional processes.”<sup>88</sup> Yet the role of the US in the 1958 juncture was clearly secondary.

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

### **2.13. Colombia (1958)**

In line with the change stated above, the Eisenhower administration showed increasing opposition to certain authoritarian practices enacted by the Colombian dictator Gustavo Rojas Pinilla. As early as 1955 “Eisenhower authorized the State Department to inform General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla privately that public opinion in the United States would be aroused if the dictator persisted in suppressing the Colombian newspaper *El Tiempo*.”<sup>89</sup> Later, similar complaints were made due to the prosecution of Protestant missionaries. Notably, in January 29, 1956, the US Ambassador to Colombia, Phillip Bonsal, attended a bullfight with the prominent Liberal leader, Alberto Lleras Camargo, which was read as support for an overture and provoked a drastic reaction by the dictator ending in an episode of repression known as the Bullfight Massacre.<sup>90</sup>

Yet, Washington still believed that the suspension of certain right and guarantees was understandable given the context of civil war,<sup>91</sup> and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles recalled Ambassador Bonsal. Due to Colombian support during the Korean War and the perception of an armed communist threat, the US supported Rojas Pinilla's regime almost unwaveringly through military aid. His fall at the hands of the military Junta that oversaw the transition was a product of a pact between traditional elites to oust him and had nothing to do with Washington.

Although it played no important role in the fall of Rojas Pinilla, as the new Junta took over and liberalization started, the US overtly supported the process. Eisenhower expressed his support to the democratic transition in a letter to President Elect Alberto Lleras Camargo, dated May 12, 1958. In that letter he said “The recent expression of popular will in Colombia is gratifying to the world as indicative of the return of Colombia to constitutional processes of government, and your election as President of Colombia is heartening to all of us who cherish democratic political institutions.”<sup>92</sup> Notably, Vice-President Richard Nixon visited Bogotá during his Latin American tour and personally conveyed the support of the administration for the restoration of democracy, which was strongly signaled by the fact that he personally met the President-Elect. In November 1958 “the Eisenhower Administration also arranged for Lleras Camargo to address a joint session of Congress, visit Camp David, and be honored with a parade in New York City” which took place in April 1960.<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, during 1958 “The US personnel in Colombia uncovered a cabal of Rojas supporters planning to overthrow the coalition government. In December the US

Ambassador [John Moors Cabot] delivered the complete portfolio of US intelligence to the Colombian president, detailed information Lleras used to foil the coup.”<sup>94</sup>

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: Low

#### **2.14. Venezuela (1959)**

Dictator Marcos Pérez Jiménez was overthrown by a coup on January 23, 1958, after five years of rule in which US support for Pérez Jiménez was clear. Pérez Jiménez, who severed relations with the USSR as one of his first measures, was awarded the Legion of Merit in 1954. US Ambassador Fletcher Warren voiced his support for the regime in many occasions and until the very end of it. In a letter written by Warren on January 10, 1958 – then published by the newspaper *Tribuna Popular* – he commends Pérez Jiménez for putting down a coup attempt and asks to meet with the dictator to discuss its causes.<sup>95</sup>

On May 13, 1958, Vice President Richard Nixon was attacked by an angry mob in Caracas, ostensibly due to the fact that Washington decided to give asylum to the ousted dictator and his chief of police. Rómulo Betancourt, an opposition leader and main candidate by the party *Acción Democrática* who had also received asylum in the US, met with Nixon on the occasion. The US Vice-President expressed Washington’s concern with communism and support for the constitutional process. Yet, his near-death experience and diplomatic embarrassment provoked a more radical awakening. The episodes in Caracas, as well as attacks against Nixon in Lima and demonstrations in other capitals, ushered the change in Washington’s Latin American policy toward more clearly supporting democracy and development through more generous aid packages.

Developments in the following months suggest this change was well under way at the moment the Venezuelan junta organized elections and transferred power to civilian authorities. In August 1958 while welcoming the Venezuelan Ambassador to the US, Eisenhower said: “authoritarianism and autocracy of whatever form are incompatible with the ideals of our great leaders of the past.”<sup>96</sup> This is often considered the first time the Administration sent a clear signal of support for democratizers in the region, and is a clear sign of support for the Venezuelan transition in particular.

In December 1958 Rómulo Betancourt was elected President. He took office in February 1959, one month after the fall of Fulgencio Batista in Cuba. In the following months Betancourt pursued a diplomatic crusade in the OAS to promote what would be known as the “Betancourt Doctrine,” which suggested that Western Hemisphere states only recognize governments born of free elections and respectful of human rights. This pressure did not sway the Eisenhower policy of supporting specific authoritarian regimes with military aid but it did lead to important debates in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

With time, Betancourt’s reformism and an assassination attempt by Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo against him during 1960 would strengthen the liberal position in this debate, which was championed more earnestly by the Kennedy Administration.

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: Low

### **2.15. Argentina (1963)**

The US was hesitant to recognize the administration of José María Guido, the Senator who became Argentina's President after the deposition of Arturo Frondizi by a coup in March 1962. Soon after the coup, the new administration dispatched a secret mission that tried to convince the Kennedy Administration that recognizing Guido – a civilian under tutelage of the armed forces but a civilian at least – would be the lesser evil<sup>97</sup> and that this government would be a short interregnum before constitutional government was reinstated. Secretary of State Dean Rusk was hesitant to accept these arguments and considered that giving a green light to the Argentine military could have consequences in other countries where democratic governments were struggling as well. Assistant Secretary of State Arthur Schlesinger seconded this view. Yet the opinion of the Ambassador to Argentina, Robert McClintock, prevailed. McClintock considered that given the Argentine Supreme Court declared the outcome of the crisis to be constitutional, the best way to proceed for the US would be to recognize Guido and press for a rapid restoration of democracy. The US finally recognized the government on April 18, 1962, and Kennedy himself tried to calm some democratic allies like Venezuelan President, Rómulo Betancourt, who were championing a much harsher reaction in the OAS.

US support was clearly contingent on the advancement of the liberalization process. During the year and a half in office, much of Guido's diplomacy consisted in convincing the US that the process of restoring full democracy was under way. In August 3, 1962, when Washington faced a similar situation in Peru, the Argentine Minister of Foreign Affairs send a note to Secretary of State Rusk explaining that certain *de facto* governments could be seen as constitutional if they were limited by constitutional mandate and called for free and fair elections in a reasonable time, as the Argentine was doing.<sup>98</sup> It is hard to imagine that the Argentine military would have taken all these precautions and hastened the return to constitutional rule as they did had it not been for the policies of the Kennedy Administration.

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Medium

### **2.16. Peru (1963)**

Washington expressed an even stronger opposition to the 1962 coup in Peru.<sup>99</sup> “The reaction of the US government to the military takeover was immediate. On the day of the *golpe* Washington broke diplomatic relations and denounced the overthrow as a setback to the Alliance for Progress. On the following day, the Department of State suspended all but humanitarian aid to Peru.”<sup>100</sup> “In 1962, following the military coup in July of that year, the Kennedy administration showed its dismay by making no

development-loan commitment for the 1963 fiscal year and by deobligating \$5.8 million in existing loan authorizations.”<sup>101</sup> Although the American business community sympathized with the coup, Washington pushed fervently for democratization and supported the subsequent elections.

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Medium

### **2.17. Ecuador (1968)**

Otto Arosemena, cousin of Carlos Julio Arosemena – the President overthrown by a Junta in 1963 – was elected by a constitutional assembly in 1966 to oversee the transition to democracy. The government of Otto Arosemena in Ecuador had come to be at loggerheads with Lyndon Johnson after the Conference of Presidents of the Americas that took place in Punta del Este in April 1967, where the US President mocked his stubbornness by calling him a “cowboy” and said he would give him a Texan hat. Arosemena expelled the US Ambassador and the US suspended aid after this incident.<sup>102</sup> However, seeing that confrontation with Washington played into the hands of the military, Arosemena backed down and in March 1968 reshuffled his cabinet, dropping Foreign Minister Julio Prado – deemed responsible of the Punta del Este strategy – and appointing former Ambassador to the US, Gustavo Larrea, as a conciliatory gesture. The US quickly resumed aid and appointed a new ambassador.<sup>103</sup> In the following months Washington remained supportive of the process of democratization but did little to actually influence the outcome. Elections took place on June 2, and the transfer of power to democratically elected President José María Velasco Ibarra happened in August.

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

### **2.18. Honduras (1971)**

The Lyndon Johnson administration initially opposed the coup that put General Oswaldo López Arellano (1963-71) in power and withheld recognition until guarantees of a return to constitutional order were offered. These demands, however, were somehow abandoned when in 1965 Arellano himself was elected into office for a five-year term through a process that lacked essential guarantees for the opposition.<sup>104</sup> In the years to follow, Arellano oversaw an increase in the amount of US capital and fervently opposed communism, which gained him Washington’s favor in return.

Arellano considerably changed some key policies in the late 1960s, leading to increasing tensions with the US. Most notably, he pursued confrontational relations with El Salvador in 1969 – during the so-called “Soccer War” – and allied with peasant groups, labor unions, and even an incipient industrial sector that initially opposed him to the detriment of US capital.<sup>105</sup> In particular the increasing nationalism in the armed forces and the continuing tensions with El Salvador seem to have led the Nixon

Administration to prefer a transition as a way to ease these tensions and open the game for sectors of the Honduran elite closer to Washington.<sup>106</sup>

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

## **2.19. Argentina (1973)**

Although the US was largely agnostic about its regime preferences at that point in the Nixon Administration (this transition coincides with CIA support for the Chilean coup of Pinochet), evidence suggests that Washington earnestly preferred democratization in the Argentine case, if anything, for strategic reasons. The main concern at the time was that the proliferation of the guerrilla movements would endanger US citizens and officials in the country – which were often targeted and threatened by the insurgents. The military dictatorship that started in 1966 had proven largely unable to control the situation – if not responsible for fueling it. In a trip to Washington that included a conversation with National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger in September 1971, Bruno Quijano (who later became Ministry of Justice of Argentina) explained in detail how an ordered transition led by General Alejandro Agustín Lanusse would be the best solution for the current economic and social turmoil.<sup>107</sup> These plans of the Argentine government to restore democracy were implicitly understood as condition for furthering American financial assistance. The two met personally again on February 7, 1972, and in that occasion Quijano started the meeting by thanking Kissinger for the support already given and reiterating his government's "will to continue with the process of democratic institutionalization he had explained in September."<sup>108</sup> Kissinger later set a number of meetings between the Argentine Minister and private bankers.

Closer to the elections held on March 11, 1973, officials of both the CIA and the Department of State continued to report on the Argentine situation directly to Kissinger. Some of these reports show concern with the possibility that the outcome would favor Héctor Cámpora – who they call "[General Juan Domingo] Perón's puppet," but yet seem largely supportive of the elections and a policy of no intervention.<sup>109</sup> After Cámpora won the elections, the conclusion of the American diplomats remained that: "In the long term, a return to an elected government with all political groups freely participating should lead to political stability, more consistent economic and social policies, and the achievement of a more significant role in hemispheric affairs."<sup>110</sup>

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: No

US impact on outcome: None

## **2.20. Dominican Republic (1978)**

Huntington aptly referred to the transition to democracy in the Dominican Republic as as "the transition from without,"<sup>111</sup> and scholars agree it would not have occurred without US support.<sup>112</sup> Before the Dominican elections of May 16, 1978, the

US replaced ambassador Robert Hurwitch, seen as a pro-Balaguer figure, with the pro-democratic Robert Yost and sent foreign election observers via the OAS. On election night, when the results began to favor the opposition leader, Antonio Guzman, the military stopped the vote count. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance reacted almost immediately, sending harsh diplomatic protests to President Joaquín Balaguer. On May 19, Carter publicly called on Balaguer to “permit a free election or lose aid”.<sup>113</sup> The head of the US Southern Command in Panama, General Dennis P McAuliffe, personally called General Juan Rene Beauchamp, the head of the Dominican army, to let him know that the US military would oppose any coup effort. The US measures were “crucial in dismantling the coup in the making.”<sup>114</sup>

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: High

## **2.21. Bolivia (1979)**

Since the struggle for democracy started in Bolivia in 1977, the US embassy encouraged a very fragmented democratic opposition to present a common front (Whitehead “Bolivia’s Failed Democratization of 1977-1980,” 24) which among other activities, most notably the cut of military aid, had at least a moderate impact in leading to democratic elections. Elections were called for July 1, 1979, and observers from the OAS were admitted into the country. The divisions among the democratic forces led to a situation in which no candidate won more than 50 per cent of the vote. According to the Constitution, Congress had to adjudicate between the three major candidates, yet none of them achieved the required majority in Congress either. To overcome this deadlock, the President of the Senate was selected, but lacked legitimacy, leading to a coup in November 1, 1979, by Col. Alberto Natusch Busch.

Natusch’s government lasted only 16 days but provides a nice example of US pro-democratic intervention. A memorandum dated November 6, 1979, illustrates the kind of activities that the embassy undertook. It is signed by the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Ambassador Viron P. Vaky, and reads: “... I would like to suggest three possible initiatives we might take in support of our strategy to persuade Col. Natusch [the acting dictator] to withdraw and to return power to civilians and to Congress: 1) Ambassador Boeker might make a brief visit to the Congressional caucus. Word would quickly spread throughout La Paz that we had symbolically recognized the Congress as the legitimate source of power, while we refuse to take any acts appearing to grant recognition to the Natusch government. 2) General McCauliffe (sic) [Commander in Chief of the Southern Command] could phone Natusch or one of his close advisers, to urge him to seek a compromise solution and restore the constitutional process. As you know, McCauliffe played a key role in consolidating the electoral process in the Dominican Republic. 3) We could reinforce the impact of our cut-off of security assistance by urging Bolivia’s other suppliers to likewise, and to so inform the Bolivian military. Argentina and perhaps Brazil might not comply, but the European suppliers might be willing to suspend shipments for a short period (...) While we cannot determine events in Bolivia, the actions recommended above might help at the margins to get the outcome we seek.”<sup>115</sup>

Although the measures had the expected impact – Natusch stepped down after two weeks – the situation remained fragile. New elections and a renewed policy deadlock led to the coup of General García Meza on July 17, 1980. Now the reaction of the US was stark, not recognizing the government and severing relations with Bolivia.

US sympathized: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Moderate

## 2.22. Ecuador (1979)

In Ecuador the US played a critical role in bringing about a transition to democracy in the late 1970s. Pressure from Washington was deemed high even several years before the transition. When the coup that led to the demise of the dictator Guillermo Rodríguez Lara took place in January 1976, the Ecuadoran military burst into the US Embassy thinking that US agents were behind the coup. During both the Rodríguez Lara government and that of the junta that followed, US support for the military in key agendas, ranging from arms transfers and fishing rights, to territorial claims against Peru and maritime claims, was always implicitly conditioned on progress toward democratization. Some high level officials and important figures conveyed this to the junta, most notably Rosalynn Carter, the First Lady of the US. In her 1978 visit she “used every opportunity to reinforce the democratization process promised by the military governments” (Pastor “Exiting the Whirlpool,” 45). Also, the Commander of the Canal Zone visited the country and met with the junta to discourage any intervention.

The US Ambassador (ret.) Edwin Corr, second in charge at the Quito Embassy, recalls two episodes that illustrate the influence Washington exerted to favor pro-democratic actors. The first concerns a coup attempt by General Guillermo Durán, representative of the Army in the Junta. In this case, Corr flew to the coast to warn Admiral Alfredo Poveda, the representative of the Navy in the Junta and the most pro-democratic figure among the three, about Durán’s intentions, in a move that might have prevented that coup. The second episode concerns the role the US played in discouraging the candidacy of Assad Bucaram – a leftist leader deemed unacceptable by the junta. Acting as effective mediators between the democratic and authoritarian soft-liners, US diplomats approached Bucaram and talked him out of running for office to prevent a military reaction and facilitate the transition.

Handelman and Sanders arrive to similar conclusions about the 1979 transition, “Military intervention did not take place for a variety of reasons. ... The United States Embassy had strongly pressured the Ecuadorian armed forces to continue the return to civil rule. Further indication of the Carter administration’s strong commitment with *retorno* came in the form of a visit to Ecuador by the commander of the Canal Zone’s Southern Military Command. The visiting general conveyed to the Ecuadorian junta the United States’ firm support for the electoral process” (Handelman and Sanders “Military Government and the Movement Toward Democracy in South America,” 46)

US sympathized: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes  
US impact on outcome: High

### 2.23. Peru (1980)

The First Lady also visited Peru for the inauguration of President Fernando Belaúnde Terry on July 28, 1980. A few months before, a secret cable detailed the many ways in which the US Embassy was engaging the military to secure their support for the transition, which is deemed a “principal objective” of the US (US Department of State “Security Assistance Reporting Requirement for Peru”). One of these ways was through the use of military aid as a bargaining chip with the military. Unlike in Ecuador, the Peruvian military had secured USSR military aid in the early 1970s, which resulted in diminished leverage for Washington. In 1975, when General Juan Velasco Alvarado was replaced by General Francisco Morales Bermúdez in the midst of economic crisis, the US started to have greater economic leverage to push firmly for political liberalization. As in the Ecuadoran case, the US used diplomatic support in key issues as a bargaining chip to get liberalizations. These included key issues at the top of the Peruvian military agenda, such as the Law of the Sea, the Antarctic Treaty, and other issues affecting their historical rivalry with Chile and Ecuador.

In an interview with the authors, Harry Shlaudeman, the US Ambassador to Peru from June 1977 to October 1980, opined that: “US support in the IMF and with the World and Inter-American banks was critical in getting the military government through its terrible financial difficulties. That support was implicitly conditioned on progress toward democratization. During my farewell call on General Morales Bermudez, he made a point of expressing eternal gratitude for President Carter's support (...) Perhaps our main contribution was in insisting on APRA's full participation and on its democratic credentials. I think we did have a role in overcoming the long history of Aprista-military conflict which otherwise could have scuttled the process.”<sup>116</sup>

After Belaúnde took office, the role of the US continued to be key. Ambassador Edwin Corr says “in Peru I regarded the prevention of a coup against Belaúnde as my main job.”<sup>117</sup> US intelligence was key in informing Belaúnde of plans the military had for conducting air raids into Ecuadoran territory during the Falso Paquisha conflict of 1981, without civilian authorization. Also the US helped maintain the course of the Peruvian transitions rewarding the military with new military sales programs.

Corr, who succeeded Shlaudeman as Ambassador to Peru, says prevention of a coup against President Fernando Belaúnde (1980-85) was a top US objective. He confidentially informed President Belaúnde about Peruvian military officers’ grumblings, signs of coup plotting, and secret Peruvian military movements on the borders with Ecuador and Chile, the intelligence and the signals of strong US support helped the civilian coalition to keep the military ashore.<sup>118</sup>

US sympathized: Yes  
US was actively involved: Yes  
US impact on outcome: High/Moderate

## 2.24. Bolivia (1982)

The impact of US policies in this case is clear. When the military launched the fourth coup in three years intervening the elections of June 29, 1980, the Carter administration recalled its ambassador and established five conditions for a normalization of relations. Among them was “improved human rights [and] a reestablishment of democratic rule.”<sup>119</sup> After dictator Luis García Meza was deposed in November 1981 that Ambassador Edwin Corr, who had overseen the Peruvian transition and was then in charge of designing the Bolivian policies from Washington, started to “work behind the scenes to facilitate the transition.”<sup>120</sup> Support for Bolivia’s transition, which eventually took place in October 1982, could seem puzzling because it happened during the early Reagan administration, when the US seemed to have abandoned these objectives. However, García Meza’s links to neo-fascism and drug trafficking fostered a more active opposition on the part of Washington. As Lawrence Whitehead puts it: “... the regime was viewed as so unsavory that its strident anti-communism elicited no response, even from the Reagan administration...”<sup>121</sup> Right-wing military and secret services agents, among them former Nazi agent Klaus Barbie, continued to oppose democratic process and some of these individuals attacked the US ambassador’s residence. This attack strengthened US commitment to democratization, human rights, and bringing these individuals to justice.

For the new military dictator after the ouster of García Meza, Celso Torrelio, it was clear that the US would sever diplomatic relations once more if Siles Zuazo, the winner of the 1980 elections, were not allowed to take office. So “with Corr playing an important role, the military agreed to hand over the government to the winner of the 1980 elections.”<sup>122</sup> It is difficult to imagine that Meza would have stepped down as rapidly as he did if the US had not severed diplomatic relations with the country. Cutting diplomatic ties not only implied the complete suspension of military aid – which damaged his support within the military – but also made Bolivia a political pariah. The anti-American character of military hardliners turned the US into an even a more relevant political actor in this particular case.

US sympathized: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: High

## 2.25. Honduras (1982)

The Honduran transition to civilian rule with the inauguration of Roberto Suazo Cordoba in January 1982 was helped to a considerable extent by the work undertaken by Ambassador Jack Binns, whose memoirs constitute the best account of the process leading to constitutional democracy. Of all the activities of the embassy, he recalls, “The central point would be our support for the Honduras transition process.”<sup>123</sup> This included actively engaging political leaders and providing technical assistance for different organizations, from the organization of campaigns to vote counting. More importantly, he worked as other peers throughout the continent, dissuading the military from aborting the liberalization process by threatening cuts in aid. Although Ambassador Binns recalls the activities of the Embassy as clearly pro-democratic, he

also laments the activities of other agencies like the CIA were heading in a different course.

The main factor undermining the process was the change that started under the Reagan administration starting in January 1981.<sup>124</sup> This allowed for important contradictions between the CIA and hard-liners in Washington, on the one hand, and the Department of State and US Embassy activities on the other. Nevertheless, Binns, who was appointed by Carter and was a promoter of democracy, and the moderates in the Reagan administration were more influential at the time of the November 1981 elections that ended with the victory of Suazo Córdova and his inauguration a few months after. It was only after the Honduran transition that the US increased military aid fourfold – from \$8.9 million to \$31.2 million, rewarding the military for its assistance in the Central American crisis – training and harboring the contras, for example – and also for not blocking democratic elections.<sup>125</sup> So in the end the Reagan diplomacy ended up supporting democracy by strengthening the position of a moderate like Suazo Córdova, who was seen as the lesser evil.<sup>126</sup> When in 1985 the elected president threatened to extend his stay in office “The US Embassy, which was widely recognized as a major source of power in the country, worked with the Honduran military to block Suazo Córdova’s schemes and assure the elections were on schedule.”<sup>127</sup>

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Moderate/High

## **2.26. Argentina (1983)**

After the Malvinas/Falklands War in 1982, the US became an overt if gentle pro-democratic player in Argentina. The embassy organized a dinner to honor the candidates for the 1983 presidential elections and repeatedly voiced its support for the process. Then, Reagan backed president elect Alfonsín, promising he would lift the US arms embargo if the Argentine armed forces let Alfonsín take office. The day before his inauguration, Alfonsín publicly raised his glass to offer a toast in name of Jimmy Carter and his pro-human rights policies, provoking the rage of the officials of the Reagan administration but also showing the importance the Argentine leader attributed to the US in the process.<sup>128</sup> A year later, Reagan invited Alfonsín to Washington to show his support.<sup>129</sup>

US sympathized: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Low

## **2.27. Nicaragua (1984)**

The US role in Nicaragua during the 1980s is extremely complicated. Some authors categorize this case along with the Grenada 1983 and Panama 1989 interventions as a case of “democratization by force.”<sup>130</sup> Yet it is fatuous to attribute a consistently pro-democratic sentiment to Washington’s activities throughout the period.

Both soft-liners and hard-liners in Washington agreed that the Managua government was not democratic. While liberals supported moderation and elections as the way out of the crisis, hawks were willing to use other, non-democratic means to combat the Nicaraguan “communists.” As long as the US was supporting the contras, we do not consider the US policy as pro-democratic in *intentions*. Yet after interviews with Ambassador Thomas Pickering (Ambassador to El Salvador from September 1983 to June 1985) and Ambassador Harry Shlaudeman (US Special Negotiator for Nicaragua in 1984), as well as our review of many sources, we conclude that the temporary suspension of congressional funding and policies enacted during the months that preceded the November 1984 elections, particularly by the Department of State, had democratizing *consequences*.

In particular, there is substantial evidence that US pressures on Nicaragua encouraged the Sandinistas’ decision to have reasonably free and fair elections in 1984. Even hard-liners in Washington interpreted support for the contras as a way, not to topple the FSLN but to press the government to run elections that could tip the balance toward moderate leaders such as Alfonso Robelo and Violeta Chamorro.<sup>131</sup> These elections were open enough that Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán (2013) coded Nicaragua as semi-democratic from 1984 on. Also V-Dem codes a significant increase in levels of electoral democracy in 1984.<sup>132</sup> It is quite plausible that without US pressure, the 1984 Nicaraguan elections would have been less fair and free. For this reason, even though the US continued to support authoritarian extremists, there is reason to believe that US pressure was an important factor in triggering the elections that led to a transition from the authoritarian period of 1979-84 (there were no elections during this period) to the semi-democratic later Sandinista years.

An important change in Washington vis-à-vis the situation in Nicaragua took place after the invasion of Grenada in October 1983 and the CIA mining of Nicaraguan harbors in early 1984. The latter event led to an important backlash in Congress. In May both Houses passed resolutions condemning the mining, and congress approved the complete ban for funding contra activities in Nicaragua on October 10, 1984. Already in May CIA agents had met with contra leader Edgar Chamorro to assure him that despite that the congressional resolution, “the United States would find a way to continue its support.”<sup>133</sup> Yet general elections were to be held in Nicaragua on November 4, 1984, right when CIA activities were effectively suspended and the only limited finding that the contras had received for months was only for their “safe and expeditious withdrawal.”<sup>134</sup> Moderates in Washington had taken control and policy towards Nicaragua was shifting some from concentrating on militarily defeating revolutionary forces in Central America to supporting the electoral process. Secretary of State Schultz met personally with Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega before the elections and Harry Shlaudeman met several times with Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Victor Tinoco. In these negotiations, the US pursued four objectives 1) that the Sandinistas stop supporting the FMLN in El Salvador, 2) a reduction in the size of Nicaragua’s armed forces, and 3) the cutting of ties with the Soviet bloc, and 4) free elections.

Two events subsequently again changed the course of US policies. First, the victory of Daniel Ortega with more than 60 per cent of the votes in the 1984 election. Second, the victory of Reagan in the US elections only two days later. Reagan called the Nicaraguan elections “a Soviet-style sham” and hard-liners retook control of foreign policy toward Nicaragua.

US sympathized with the transition: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: High

## **2.28. El Salvador (1984)**

Reagan's administration initially sought to militarily defeat the Salvadoran revolutionary guerrillas by bolstering the Salvadoran armed forces, including sectors that formed death squads and generated a blood bath in the early years of the civil war, 1980-83. Throughout the remainder of the civil war, 1983-92, the US sometimes (but mostly inadvertently) supported the extreme right wing. Many scholars and activists have criticized the US for not having paid more attention to the massive human rights abuses committed by the Salvadoran military and death squads.

Yet whether we date the Salvadoran transition to 1984, when José Napoleón Duarte was elected president, or 1994, when the civil war had ended and the first elections when the left could run had taken place, the US played a major role in democratization. This is not because the US consistently pursued a pro-democracy policy. But the US role was decisive in several ways. In response to congressional criticism of US policy, the Reagan administration pressured the Salvadoran government to sponsor elections beginning in 1982. The first time USAID provided ample technical assistance for an election was in 1982 in El Salvador. And even if Reagan approved a fivefold increase of military aid to the country in February 1984, the House Western Hemisphere Subcommittee concurrently approved new certification requirements so the Salvadoran military would know that this aid was conditional on moderation and advancement of democracy.<sup>135</sup>

Part of the extreme right wing in El Salvador complained bitterly about the US insistence on elections. Another part of the extreme right wing realized that in response to US pressure, it needed to organize a political party and compete in the elections. Roberto D'Aubuisson, who had helped organize death squads, became the primary force behind creating ARENA, the conservative political party that competed in the 1982 constituent assembly and the 1984 presidential election, and then won the 1989 presidential election. Because of US pressure, elections became one of the two important currencies during the civil war (the other was military power).

From 1983 on, the Reagan administration insisted that the Salvadoran government and military attempt to curb and disband the death squads. It also insisted that the Salvadoran government and military get rid of some military officials who were most notorious for massive human rights violations.<sup>136</sup> This pressure, too, helped eventually pave the way toward making negotiations possible starting in 1989. Much of the Salvadoran right would have preferred an even more extensive blood bath. The Reagan administration knew by the time of the March 1984 elections that a victory of the extreme (though moderating some) right represented by D'Aubuisson would jeopardize the objective of defeating the FMLN. Support for the Christian Democratic candidate, José Napoleón Duarte was uniform throughout US agencies from a hawkish CIA to a more dovish State Department. A State Department official is quoted saying: "Everyone in the [US] Embassy knew that if Duarte didn't win that was the end of

Reagan's policy in El Salvador."<sup>137</sup> Our interview with Ambassador Pickering confirms this view. In charge of the US Embassy at the time, Pickering considered that Washington's technical support – conducting polls, for example – was key in fostering Duarte's campaign in the countryside and coordination with trade unions. In December 1983 Vice-President George HW Bush had a meeting with fifteen colonels in San Salvador in which he asked for the democratization process to go forward and the complete deactivation of the death squads. He even handed a list of human right violators that Washington wanted to see removed. Pickering evaluated the visit as a "turning point" that sent a "clear message" about the change in Washington's stance *vis-à-vis* democracy in Central America.<sup>138</sup>

Absent US pressure, the less extremist and violent forces including the democratic center probably would not have been able to hold the more extremist and violent forces in check, and a transition probably would not have occurred. "Absent U.S. pressures and influences, the war would have gone in a different direction, with even greater power exercised by the far right, which wanted to intensify the war effort."<sup>139</sup>

Mainwaring and Pérez Liñan provide an extensive review of secondary sources supporting their conclusion: "It is unlikely that, absent U.S. support, El Salvador would have had a semi-democracy by 1984."<sup>140</sup> Most sources agree on five points: the US (i) pressured the Salvadoran government to hold elections starting in 1982; (ii) pushed for far-reaching agrarian reform, (iii) pushed for the enhancement of the human right situation, (iv) provided resources and legitimacy to centrist actors, and (v) provided massive military aid with two goals: securing that the military would win the war – thus preventing the rise of a leftist FMLN authoritarianism – and putting Washington in a position of greater influence *vis-à-vis* the armed forces, which could then be used to favor officials that favored a transition.<sup>141</sup>

The elections of 1984 were not free or fair, but they were highly competitive between the right wing and the centrist Christian Democrats, and the vote count is presumed to have been fair. The transition probably would not have occurred when it did without US pressure to hold meaningful elections. Given the power of the dominant sectors and the military, their willingness to resort to brutal repression to protect their interests, their anti-democratic past, and the huge stakes in a battle against a powerful and violent Marxist insurgency, it is unlikely that El Salvador would have experienced a transition from authoritarian rule at that time.

The process unleashed with the elections in 1982, 1984, and 1989 eventually paved the way to peace negotiations that ended in 1992 and to the integration of the former revolutionaries in the electoral process in 1994. Until well into the 1990s, the US continued to be highly influential in El Salvador's process of democratization.

US sympathized: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: High

## 2.29. Brazil (1985)

The Brazilian *abertura* started in 1974. The US maintained a cordial relation with the military throughout the process, leading many analysts to conclude that the role of Washington in the transition was very limited.<sup>142</sup> As in the cases of Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay, it is in fact difficult to attribute much impact on outcome to the US. The embassy repeatedly conveyed its support for the liberalization plans of the military and “applauded” every move toward democratization.<sup>143</sup> Other agencies like USAID and the National Endowment for Democracy effectively provided institutional assistance, but all this was marginal and largely depended on the good will of the politicians in charge and domestic process. This leads us to conclude that the US was favorable and actively involved in the transition, yet its marginal impact must have been low.

US sympathized: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Low

### 2.30. Uruguay (1985)

During the Carter administration, the US pressed the Uruguayan military to liberalize and even facilitated dialogue with civilians in a July 4<sup>th</sup> 1980 dinner at the embassy, leading to two years of civil-military negotiations.<sup>144</sup> During the Reagan years, these pressures waned considerably yet the US continued to be “a stone in the shoe” for the military until 1985.<sup>145</sup> The US publicly criticized human right violations, accompanied the process of liberalization, showed support for the elections, and backed Julio Maria Sanguinetti (1985-1990) after he was elected. The elections were conducted with some judicial assistance and electoral assistance projects from USAID, and the National Endowment for Democracy carried out a variety of projects related to party building, legislative training, and constitutional reform. The programs were “not great” and “represented little more than symbolic support for democracy.”<sup>146</sup> Although they cannot be attributed a great causal effect, they constitute clear evidence of US activism on the ground. A CIA report of February 1985 suggests that the US be much more discreet in its support for the process if it was not to be seen as interfering in Uruguayan domestic affairs, which could have spoiled the process.<sup>147</sup> Sanguinetti was invited to Washington after the elections – just like Alfonsín (Argentina) and Sarney (Brazil) – and Reagan publicly commended the process, expressing his full support. In March 1985, Secretary of State George Schultz travelled to Uruguay to express US support during Sanguinetti’s inauguration.

Another CIA report dated November 1985 shows that the US Embassy in Montevideo remained close to Sanguinetti and informed him on the activities of the Uruguayan left and segments of the military that were wary the new president would opt for human rights trials as the Argentine government had done. The report shows a clear disposition to support the civilian government and prevent any military coup. The importance attributed to Washington in the process was perceived to be high by the officials who wrote this report. They conclude that if a coup was to take place in Uruguay and the US failed to prevent it or condemn it, the event could have affected the whole Southern Cone. They say, for example “Neighboring armed forces – especially in Argentina – will closely watch US and other creditor nation’s attitudes towards the Uruguayan military regime.”<sup>148</sup>

US sympathized: Yes  
US was actively involved: Yes  
US impact on outcome: Low/Moderate

### **2.31. Guatemala (1986)**

As in many previous instances, the US used military sales and economic and military aid as bargaining chips in exchange for evidence that Guatemala was moving toward democracy. During the Carter years, Congress had imposed an embargo conditioned on improvement in the human rights situation, a policy that remained untouched during the early Reagan years despite the backlash in other parts of Central America. Key in the process was Rep. Michael Barnes, Democrat from Maryland and chairman of the House Foreign Affairs sub-committee on Latin America. On January 7, 1983, he approved the lifting of the embargo facilitating the sale of \$6.3 million worth military equipment conditional on democratic progress. Barnes said at that time: “My staff and I spend a lot of time talking to Guatemalans who seek a humane, democratic government for their country, and I take their views very seriously (...) I have found that they are not as concerned about this sale itself as they are about the possibility that it will open the floodgates that lead to more military aid.”<sup>149</sup> He made it clear that the US would continue to condition aid to democratic progress.

A new Guatemalan Constitution was approved on May 31, 1985, and elections took place in November, leading to the election of the Christian Democrat Vinicio Cerezo, who was inaugurated on January 14, 1986. The US did not resume economic and military aid until after the elections had taken place. The US Congress then fulfilled its implicit promise to the Guatemalan military and started to release aid, always dealing directly with Cerezo.<sup>150</sup> Vice-President George HW Bush was present during Cerezo’s inauguration ceremony, showing American support for the transition personally, just as he had done in other Central American instances. In his period as President Elect, Cerezo visited Washington and met with members of Congress, several Executive officials mostly from the State Department as well as financial institutions and the press, and all showed support for his government. He visited Washington again one year later in May 1987 for a similarly “warm” and “supportive” reception.<sup>151</sup>

US sympathized: Yes  
US was actively involved: Yes  
US impact on outcome: Moderate

### **2.32. Mexico (1988)**

In Mexico, US involvement was “conspicuous by its absence until 1988, but things changed that year: “US pressures to force the Mexican authoritarian regime to open to party competition came from various sources – the mass media, academics, the US Congress, and federal government officials...”<sup>152</sup> As in the cases of Brazil and Argentina, the US was very cautious not to be seen as intruding in the domestic affairs of these countries. In the words of Ambassador Corr “democratization was our first and

foremost objective in Mexico as well but there we had to be extremely cautious given the history of our bilateral relations.”<sup>153</sup>

US sympathized: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Low

### **2.33. Paraguay (1989)**

Ambassador Clyde Taylor was sent to Paraguay in 1985. He started to meet frequently with leaders of the opposition to Stroessner dictatorship. He made public, sometimes reckless, claims in favor of a political change.<sup>154</sup> The US ambassador was often insulted and threatened, even harassed by the police. On one opportunity the police broke up one event he was leading, causing general panic. Unlike Pinochet in Chile, Stroessner had no allies in Washington to turn to. The National Endowment for Democracy, publicly supported by the US Embassy, financed radio stations and several pro-democratic NGOs. Also some economic pressure – conditioning aid and loans on democratic progress – was applied.<sup>155</sup> Finally, Stroessner was overthrown in a military coup in 1989. Domestic events explain the timing of his demise. Despite Ambassador Taylor’s activism, the impact on outcome of US policy should be considered minimal given the very low economic and political leverage the regional hegemon had vis-à-vis the regime.

US sympathized: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Low

### **2.34. Chile (1990)**

Although the US generally supported Pinochet during the first Reagan administration, Pinochet lost favor in early 1985 after he imposed a state of siege.<sup>156</sup> Harry Barnes was sent as new Ambassador to Chile in November 1985 with the explicit goal of “pressuring Pinochet to adhere to the formal transition process.”<sup>157</sup> The US started to vote against Chile in the UN Human Rights Commission, developed contact with the business sector and the military, and acted consistently to support the moderate opposition to Pinochet.

The US became explicitly involved since the October 1988 plebiscite to decide whether Pinochet should continue in power until 1997 or not. On December 17, 1987, the Reagan administration asked for fair competition during the campaign and Congress released 1 million dollars through the National Endowment for Democracy directed to support the campaign for democracy. USAID then granted 1.285 million dollar grant to an electoral assistance organization.<sup>158</sup> The Reagan administration stepped in on behalf of democracy by developing a policy of pressure to ensure that the Chilean 1988 plebiscite would be fair. Besides stepping up diplomatic pressures, Washington also funded several civic groups to monitor the process. International monitors helped ensure a fair plebiscite in 1988, leading to Pinochet’s defeat and to free and fair elections in 1989 that restored democracy in March 1990.<sup>159</sup> Absent US pressure for a fair vote,

there is a reasonable chance that the Chilean dictatorship would have created an even more unfair playing field or that it would have not respected the results of the 1988 plebiscite and the 1989 elections.

US sympathized: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Moderate

### **2.35. Panama (1990)**

The US invasion of Panama in 1989 overthrew a dictator and began a process of installing democracy. Panamanian dictator Manuel Antonio Noriega fell out of favor with the US in the late 1980s because of his drug trafficking activities. In 1988, the US indicted Noriega for these activities, and it began plotting to force him out of power,

In May 1989, Noriega committed bald-faced electoral fraud so that his acolyte, Carlos Duque, could gain the presidency. In August 1989, Noriega dissolved the Assembly, reinstating his dictatorship. On December 20, 1989 the US invaded Panama, ousted the government, and installed Guillermo Endara, the winner of the May 1989 presidential election, as president. With the holding of presidential and legislative elections in 1994, Panama progressed to a democracy. Without the US military invasion, the Noriega dictatorship would have remained in power.<sup>160</sup>

US sympathized: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Decisive

### **2.36. Haiti (1995)**

The left-of-center Catholic priest, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, won in a landslide and took office as Haiti's first democratically elected president in February 1991. In September of that year, a military coup toppled Aristide. The OAS and the US condemned the coup and the military dictatorship that followed. Although these pressures had little initial impact, concern in Washington had grown by 1993 due to tens of thousands of refugees coming ashore. Action by the US government led to UN sanctions in June and the Governors Island Accord of July, in which the military accede to leave power in a three-month period.<sup>161</sup> The military held on to power despite international pressure and the US Armed Forces finally had to intervene under UN Security Council Resolution 940.

Operation Uphold Sovereignty was launched in September 1994. The mission included a diplomatic component led by Ex-President Carter, which symbolized the pro-Human Rights and pro-Democratic inspirations of the intervention. After three years of conflict and US policy vacillation, in October 1994 by threatening an invasion the US and OAS finally managed to force out the dictator who led the 1991 coup. The UN, US, and OAS restored Aristide to power. Things fell apart again in Haiti after Aristide, but this fact should not obscure the successful effort of the OAS and US to force a dictator to back down and to restore a freely and fairly elected president to power. This US/OAS intervention was ultimately successful in restoring a

democratically elected president to power even though Haiti's semi-democratic regime soon fell apart.<sup>162</sup>

President Clinton visited the country in 1995 as a UN mission was deployed to secure the electoral process went smoothly. The US also mobilized allies in the OAS, whose members had approved the Santiago Declaration one year before. The regional organization also played a prominent role in pressuring for democratization in this case.<sup>163</sup>

US sympathized: Yes

US was actively involved: Yes

US impact on outcome: Decisive

### 2.36. Peru (1995)

Fujimori led a coup against democracy on April 5, 1992, when he closed congress, suspended the 1978 constitution, and dismissed many members of the judiciary. This *autogolpe* led to the immediate response of Washington suspending all military aid to the country. The coup represented a major setback for Peru in the international scene, the US being actively against it.<sup>164</sup> "The US immediately suspended aid and pressured several aid organizations, including the IMF, to withhold over US\$2 billion in financial assistance."<sup>165</sup> Much of the effort was channeled through the OAS. The US, together with all other democracies in the Americas, had signed the Santiago Declaration in 1991 (Resolution 1080), which empowered them to take action in the form of suspension from the regional organization and sanctions.

Under pressure from the US and the OAS, including a possibility of sanctions, Fujimori addressed the organization at an emergency meeting in May 1992, called for the purpose of discussing the April 1992 Peruvian coup. At this meeting, Fujimori agreed to convene elections in short order (November 1992) for a constitutional assembly. He also reversed his plan to hold a plebiscite intended to legitimize his palace coup. It is implausible that Fujimori would have taken these steps without US and (less significantly) OAS pressure, which was therefore decisive in reversing the democratic breakdown in a short time.

Because of US and OAS pressure, Fujimori agreed to hold elections including for the presidency and national congress in 1995. The 1995 elections were not fully free and fair, but they were competitive enough that Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán (2013) view Peru as semi-democratic from 1995 on. Freedom House's combined score improved from 9 to 7 because of the elections. Scholars of democratization such as Jon Pevehouse, who have studied the case in detail, see international pressure as the main driver of its rapid return to semi-democracy in 1995.

The constitutional congress also led to the creation of what became one of the most powerful voices of criticism of the Fujimori administration. In her detailed treatment of the creation of the ombudsman, Balmaceda argues that OAS pressure on Fujimori was decisive.<sup>166</sup> These democratizing steps did not prevent a subsequent deepening of authoritarian tendencies in Fujimori's regime after his reelection in 1995. From this perspective, the US/OAS intervention had modest short-term effects on the

political regime. However, by placing restraints on the authoritarian proclivities of the Fujimori government, the US and OAS helped create the dynamic that ultimately led to his downfall in 2000. The US/ OAS intervention reversed an outright democratic breakdown and led to the restoration of a competitive political regime, with reasonably free and fair elections in 1995, and with some surprisingly vociferous mechanisms of criticisms from within the state—above all, the ombudsman.

US sympathized: Yes  
 US was actively involved: Yes  
 US impact on outcome: High

### 2.37. Haiti 2006

After the collapse of the Haitian democracy in 1999 a failed transitional attempt took place under Jean-Bertrand Aristide (2001-04) who was unable to restore the rule of law and was finally deposed by a coup led by paramilitaries in 2004. In response to the worsening of the Haitian situation the UN Security Council deployed the MINUSTAH, a peacekeeping mission that considered the restitution of democratic rule as a central feature of its mandate. A transition government formed in Haiti and its President, Gerard Latortue, visited the US in 2005, where he was constantly reminded – especially by members of Congress – of the imperious necessity to restore democracy. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visited Port-au-Prince subsequently and conveyed the same priority. In the meantime, the US had restored financial assistance and aid suspended back in 1999, conditional to this progress. Although the US was far from the only actor pushing Haitian elites in this direction, its influence on the outcome was undoubtedly important.<sup>167</sup>

US sympathized: Yes  
 US was actively involved: Yes  
 US impact on outcome: High

**Table 2. Summary of US role in 37 democratic transitions from 1945 to 2010**

Country	Year of transition	US sympathized?	US active involvement?	US impact on outcome?
Guatemala	1945	Yes	No	Low
Panama	1945	Yes	No	Low
Venezuela	1946	Yes	Yes	Low
Brazil	1946	Yes	No	Low
Argentina	1946	Yes	Yes	Low
Ecuador	1948	Yes	Yes	High
Costa Rica	1949	Yes	No	Low
Panama	1956	Yes	No	None
Bolivia	1956	Yes	No	None
Peru	1956	Yes	No	None
Honduras	1957	Yes	No	None
Argentina	1958	Yes	No	None
Colombia	1958	Yes	No	Low
Venezuela	1959	Yes	No	Low

Argentina	1963	Yes	Yes	Moderate
Peru	1963	Yes	Yes	Moderate
Ecuador	1968	Yes	No	None
Honduras	1971	Yes	No	None
Argentina	1973	Yes	No	Low
Dominican Rep	1978	Yes	Yes	Decisive
Bolivia	1979	Yes	Yes	Moderate
Ecuador	1979	Yes	Yes	High
Peru	1980	Yes	Yes	High/Moderate
Bolivia	1982	Yes	Yes	High
Honduras	1982	Yes	Yes	High
Argentina	1983	Yes	Yes	Low
Nicaragua	1984	Yes	Yes	High
El Salvador	1984	Yes	Yes	Decisive
Brazil	1985	Yes	Yes	Low
Uruguay	1985	Yes	Yes	Low/Moderate
Guatemala	1986	Yes	Yes	Moderate
Mexico	1988	Yes	Yes	Low
Paraguay	1989	Yes	Yes	Low
Chile	1990	Yes	Yes	Moderate
Panama	1990	Yes	Yes	Decisive
Haiti	1995	Yes	Yes	Decisive
Peru	1995	Yes	Yes	High/decisive

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<sup>1</sup> Key in this respect were Kryzanek, “US-Latin American Relations”; Lowenthal, “Exporting Democracy”; Smith, “Talons of the Eagle”; Atkins, “Latin America and the Caribbean in the International System”; Pastor, “Exiting the Whirlpool”; Schoultz, “Beneath the United States.” Other comparative analyses also compare breakdowns, and some other compare transitions to competitive regimes.

<sup>2</sup> We use the coding provided by Thyne “Supporter of Stability or Agent of Agitation” and Mainwaring and Perez-Liñan “Democracies and Dictatorships” which are based on public declarations to infer the stance of US officials vis-à-vis democracy in specific countries and years as a way to cross-verify our interpretations.

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- <sup>3</sup> Blasier “The Hovering Giant: U.S. Responses to Revolutionary Change in Latin America”; Wood “The Dismantling of the Good Neighbor Policy”; Cottam “Images and Intervention: US Policies in Latin America”; Payne, “Uncivil Movements”; Pakenham *Liberal America and the Third World*; Schoultz *Beneath the United States*, Schwartzberg, *Democracy and US Policy in Latin America*.
- <sup>4</sup> See Robinson “Promoting Polyarchy.”
- <sup>5</sup> A detailed account of the events of the Costa Rican revolution of 1948 is provided by Bell “Crisis in Costa Rica: The 1948 Revolution.”
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, 70.
- <sup>7</sup> Longley “Peaceful Costa Rica, The First Battleground,” 149-160.
- <sup>8</sup> “Crisis in Costa Rica,” 150.
- <sup>9</sup> See also Lehoucq, “Class Conflict, Political Crisis.”
- <sup>10</sup> Conniff “Panama and the United States,” 105-109.
- <sup>11</sup> Hedrick and Hedrick “Historical Dictionary of Panama,” 105, 167.
- <sup>12</sup> McClintock and Vallas “The United States and Peru,” 10.
- <sup>13</sup> Clayton “Peru and the United States,” 175. See also Carey “Perú and the United States 1900-1962.”
- <sup>14</sup> Ewell “Venezuela and the United States,” 152.
- <sup>15</sup> Romero and Kelly “United States and Venezuela,” 17.
- <sup>16</sup> “Democracy and US Policy in Latin America.” See also Levine “Conflict and Political Change in Venezuela.”
- <sup>17</sup> Coleman “Colombia and the United States,” 56.
- <sup>18</sup> “Colombia and the United States,” 63-65.
- <sup>19</sup> Randall, “Colombia and the United States,” 207-208.
- <sup>20</sup> Norden and Russell “The United States and Argentina,” 20.
- <sup>21</sup> Rappoport and Spiguel “Relaciones Tumultuosas.” We thank Benjamín García Holgado for noticing the inopportune visit of the Ambassador.
- <sup>22</sup> Morales Domínguez and Prevost “United States-Cuban Relations” 32-34.
- <sup>23</sup> Morley, “Imperial State and Revolution” 48, 398.
- <sup>24</sup> Handy, “A Gift,” 136-147; Schlesinger and Kinzer “Bitter Fruit,” 65-225.
- <sup>25</sup> Streeter, “Managing the Counterrevolution” 13-23.
- <sup>26</sup> See also Immerman, “CIA in Guatemala”; Cullather “Secret History.”
- <sup>27</sup> Schlesinger and Kinzer “Bitter Fruit,” 203.
- <sup>28</sup> Rabe, “The Most Dangerous Area,” 62.
- <sup>29</sup> New York Times 6/16/1964 “Frondizi Accuses US ‘strategists.’”
- <sup>30</sup> See Potash, “The Army and Politics in Argentina,” 1-15.
- <sup>31</sup> Payne “The Peruvian Coup D’Etat of 1962,”
- <sup>32</sup> St John, “The Foreign Policy of Peru,” 194.
- <sup>33</sup> Sharp, “US Foreign Policy and Peru,” 172.
- <sup>34</sup> Needler, “Anatomy of a Coup D’Etat,” 2.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, 26.
- <sup>36</sup> Bowman, “Militarization, Democracy, and Development,” 174.
- <sup>37</sup> Selser, “La CIA en Bolivia”; Calderon, “The Bolivian Coup of 1964”; Whitehead “The United States and Bolivia”; Malloy and Gamarra “Revolution and Reaction.”
- <sup>38</sup> Lehman, “Bolivia and the United States,” 144.
- <sup>39</sup> Parker, “Brazil and the Quiet Intervention.”
- <sup>40</sup> Spektor, “The United States and the 1964 Military Coup,” 1.
- <sup>41</sup> US Department of State “Telegram from the Ambassador to Brazil.” See also Black, “United States Penetration of Brazil.”

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- <sup>42</sup> Norden and Russell “The United States and Argentina,” 22.
- <sup>43</sup> Escude and Cisneros, “Historia General de las Relaciones Exteriores de la República Argentina,” Vol. 14, 295.
- <sup>44</sup> Conniff, “Panama and the United States,” 126.
- <sup>45</sup> Palmer “Peru, the Authoritarian Tradition,” 98-99.
- <sup>46</sup> Pérez-Liñán “Presidential Impeachment.”
- <sup>47</sup> CIA “The Peruvian Coup: Reasons and Prospects.”
- <sup>48</sup> Pineo, “Ecuador and the United States,” 177-185; Smith, “American Tuna,” 127.
- <sup>49</sup> Leonard et al “Encyclopedia of US-Latin American relations,” 936.
- <sup>50</sup> Euraque, “Reinterpreting the Banana Republic,” 155.
- <sup>51</sup> Fagen, “The United States and Chile”; See also Jensen “The Garotte.”
- <sup>52</sup> Orrego Vicuña “Chile: The Balanced View.”
- <sup>53</sup> Valenzuela, “The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Chile,” 48, 127, 133.
- <sup>54</sup> See NSA-GWU below in “primary sources.”
- <sup>55</sup> A recent account of the facts (incorporating all this material) can be found in McElveen and Siekmeyer “Foreign Relations of the United States.”
- <sup>56</sup> Leighton and Lopez “40 Years are Nothing,” xv.
- <sup>57</sup> Kaufman, “Uruguay in Transition,” 11.
- <sup>58</sup> See also Gillespie “The Breakdown of Democracy in Uruguay.”
- <sup>59</sup> Escude and Cisneros, “Historia General de las Relaciones Exteriores,” Vol. 14, 378.
- <sup>60</sup> Malloy and Gamarra, “Revolution and Reaction,” 148; MacDonald, “Mountain High,” 49; Menzel, “Fire in the Andes,” 5.
- <sup>61</sup> Kenney “Fujimori’s Coup”; Palmer, “Fujipopulism and Peru’s Progress.”
- <sup>62</sup> Palmer 1996: 223; Pevehouse “Democracy from Above,” 133.
- <sup>63</sup> Buss and Gardner, “Haiti in the Balance,” 76.
- <sup>64</sup> The Economist 7/25/2009 “Why and how to reinstate Zelaya.”
- <sup>65</sup> Middlebrook and Rico, “The United States and Latin America in the 1980s”; Carothers, “In the Name of Democracy”; Robinson, “Promoting Capitalist Polyarchy”; Legler, Lean, and Boniface, “Promoting Democracy in the Americas.”
- <sup>66</sup> Huntington, “The Third Wave,” 98.
- <sup>67</sup> See Mainwaring and Perez-Liñán “Democracies and Dictatorships,” 229; Lowenthal “The United States and Latin American Democracy.”
- <sup>68</sup> “Shattered Hope,” 25.
- <sup>69</sup> Schwaartzberg, “Democracy and US Policy,” 48.
- <sup>70</sup> “Shattered Hope,” 102.
- <sup>71</sup> Conniff, “Panama since 1903,” 657-659.
- <sup>72</sup> Schwaartzberg, “Democracy and US Policy,” 151.
- <sup>73</sup> Schwaartzberg, “Democracy and US Policy,” 30.
- <sup>74</sup> Note in Berle’s diary, apud Schwaartzberg, “Democracy and US Policy,” 31.
- <sup>75</sup> Quoted in Schwaartzberg, “Democracy and US Policy,” 49.
- <sup>76</sup> Luna, “El 45,” 101.
- <sup>77</sup> Schwaartzberg, “Democracy and US Policy,” 170-172.
- <sup>78</sup> Schwaartzberg, “Democracy and US Policy,” 184.
- <sup>79</sup> Conniff “Panama and the United States,” 110.
- <sup>80</sup> US Department of State “Despatch from the Ambassador in Bolivia”
- <sup>81</sup> US Department of State “Telegram from the Ambassador in Peru.”
- <sup>82</sup> Sundloff Schulz, “The United States, Honduras,” 30.
- <sup>83</sup> Euraque, “Reinterpreting the Banana republic,” 108.
- <sup>84</sup> Ibidem.

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- <sup>85</sup> US Department of State “Memorandum of a Conversation.”
- <sup>86</sup> The American Presidency Project “Letter Greeting President Aramburu”
- <sup>87</sup> Newton, “Eisenhower: The White House Years,” 268.
- <sup>88</sup> Rabe, “Eisenhower and Latin America” 62.
- <sup>89</sup> *Ibidem*, 84.
- <sup>90</sup> Drexler, “Colombia and the United States,” 80; Ruiz, “The Colombian,” 105.
- <sup>91</sup> This opinion appears in the memoirs of US diplomat Vernon L. Fluharty. See Saenz Rovner “Colombia Años 50,” 183.
- <sup>92</sup> The American Presidency Project “Exchange of Letters”
- <sup>93</sup> Ruiz, “The Colombian,” 107.
- <sup>94</sup> Coleman, “Colombia and the United States,” 183.
- <sup>95</sup> Jackson, “Romulo Betancourt,” 359.
- <sup>96</sup> Bulreigh, “Small Wars,” 415.
- <sup>97</sup> Sheinin, “Argentina and the United States,” 138.
- <sup>98</sup> Escude and Cisneros “Historia General,” 314.
- <sup>99</sup> Payne “The Peruvian Coup D’Etat of 1962,”
- <sup>100</sup> St John, “The Foreign Policy of Peru,” 194.
- <sup>101</sup> Sharp, “US Foreign Policy and Peru,” 172.
- <sup>102</sup> US Department of State “Action Memorandum.”
- <sup>103</sup> US Department of State “Information Memorandum.”
- <sup>104</sup> CIA “Honduras.”
- <sup>105</sup> Reichman, “The Broken Village,” 87.
- <sup>106</sup> US Department of State “Memorandum from the Executive Secretary.”
- <sup>107</sup> Potash, “The Army and Politics,” 395.
- <sup>108</sup> Yofre, “Volver a Matar,” 42.
- <sup>109</sup> US Department of State “Memorandum from the Deputy Director.”
- <sup>110</sup> US Department of State “2. Memorandum from the Executive Secretary.”
- <sup>111</sup> Huntington, “The Third Wave,” 97.
- <sup>112</sup> Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán, 229.
- <sup>113</sup> Pastor, “Exiting the Whirlpool,” 46.
- <sup>114</sup> Hartlyn “The Struggle for Democratic Politics in the Dominican Republic,” 125; see also Atkins “Latin America and the Caribbean in the International System.” The episode shows clearly the Dominican Republic is a country where the US has impressive linkages and leverage. See Levitsky and Way, “Competitive Authoritarianism,” 133. One author calls it an “informal empire.” Lake, “Hierarchy in International Relations.”
- <sup>115</sup> US Department of State “US policy in Bolivia.”
- <sup>116</sup> Interview with Ambassador (ret.) Harry Shlaudeman, December 11, 2015.
- <sup>117</sup> Interview with Ambassador (ret.) Edwin Corr, February 1, 2018.
- <sup>118</sup> Interview with Ambassador (ret.) Edwin Corr, January 24, 2018.
- <sup>119</sup> Carothers “In the Name of Democracy,” 127.
- <sup>120</sup> Carothers “In the Name of Democracy,” 128. Whitehead, “Bolivia since 1930,” 575.
- <sup>121</sup> Whitehead (1991: 575)
- <sup>122</sup> Gamarra “The United States and Bolivia,” 187.
- <sup>123</sup> Binns, “The United States in Honduras 1980-1981,” 53.
- <sup>124</sup> Ronald Reagan and his UN representative Jeane Kirkpatrick had adopted a tough stance against Carter, accusing him of applying different standards to dictators in Latin America and allied authoritarian regimes in other latitudes. However, once in office the Republicans did soften some measures against authoritarian regimes in the region. The Reagan Administration’s stance towards democracy was more discrete, but not radically

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inconsistent with Carter's. For certain authors discretion was the main difference: "The new approach was that progress on human rights could be better achieved by firmly stating our opposition to such behavior in diplomatic exchanges rather than making our views known in the press or international forums. Furthermore, Reagan thought to avoid what he felt was an uneven application of the Carter human rights policy in which only certain countries were singled out for public rebuke." Kryzanek, "US-Latin American Relations," 170.

<sup>125</sup> See Carothers "In the Name of Democracy," 51.

<sup>126</sup> As Abraham Lowenthal recalls: "At various times and places the Reagan administration was promoting: 'democracy by centrist transition' through the emergence of elected civilian governments in El Salvador, *Honduras* and Guatemala; 'democracy by force' in Nicaragua and Grenada; 'democracy by applause' through limited diplomatic support to the many transitions from authoritarian rule in South America; and 'democracy by pressure' to induce the remaining right-wing dictators in Chile, Paraguay, Panama and Haiti to cede power through elections." Lowenthal "The United States and Latin American Democracy," 391-392.

<sup>127</sup> Carothers "In the Name of Democracy," 52.

<sup>128</sup> Interview with Ambassador (ret.) Edwin Corr, February 1, 2018.

<sup>129</sup> Russell, "Las relaciones Argentina-Estados Unidos," 43-44; Escude and Cisneros, "Historia General de las Relaciones Exteriores de la República Argentina."

<sup>130</sup> Carothers, "In the Name of Democracy" 77-110.

<sup>131</sup> Hager and Snyder "The United States and Nicaragua," 33.

<sup>132</sup> Coppedge et al "V-Dem Dataset"

<sup>133</sup> Arnson "Crossroads," 173.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibidem*, 176.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibidem*, 153.

<sup>136</sup> In 1983 Washington's strategy in Central America switched from supporting the "contras" and the Salvadoran army including its most extremist elements to more consistently backing democratic actors. Facing constant democratic opposition, Reagan declared in April before Congress that democratization was his "first and foremost" goal in Central America. Subsequently, the works of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America (the Kissinger Commission) helped strengthen the moderates' position.

<sup>137</sup> Quoted in Arnson, "Crossroads," 158.

<sup>138</sup> See also Zamora, "La izquierda partidaria salvadoreña."

<sup>139</sup> Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán, 197.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibidem*, 186.

<sup>141</sup> Arnson, "El Salvador"; Bonner, "Weakness and Deceit", Bosch, "The Salvadoran Officer Corp" 69-72, Browning, "Agrarian Reform in El Salvador", Deere, "A Comparative Analysis", Karl "Imposing Consent?", LeoGrande "Our Own Backyard," McClintock "The American Connection", Sikkink "Mixed Signals," 170-173; Stanley "The Protection Racket State", 232-253; Williams and Walter "Military and Demilitarization in El Salvador," 115.

<sup>142</sup> Hurrell, "The International Dimensions of Democratization in Latin America."

<sup>143</sup> Carothers, "In the Name of Democracy," 133.

<sup>144</sup> Gillespie "Negotiating Democracy," 120.

<sup>145</sup> Caetano and Rilla "Breve Historia de la Dictadura: 1973-1985," 65.

<sup>146</sup> Carothers, "In the name of democracy," 135.

<sup>147</sup> CIA "Supporting the Transition and Human Rights."

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- <sup>148</sup> CIA “Uruguay: Challenges to Democracy.”
- <sup>149</sup> New York Times, 1/8/1983 “US lifts embargo on military sales to Guatemalans.”
- <sup>150</sup> Taylor, “Return of Guatemala’s Refugees,” 211.
- <sup>151</sup> Fauriol and Loser “Guatemala’s Political Puzzle,” 88.
- <sup>152</sup> Meyer, “Mexico: The Exception and the Rule,” 218, 227.
- <sup>153</sup> Author interview with Ambassador Corr, January 26, 2018.
- <sup>154</sup> Carothers, “In the Name of Democracy,” 164.
- <sup>155</sup> Lowenthal, “Exporting Democracy,” 392.
- <sup>156</sup> Some say the change in US foreign policy took place before, in 1983, given the success of the Argentine transition Chile appeared for liberals in the Department of State to be the odd man out. See Morley and McGuillon, “Reagan and Pinochet,” 68-69.
- <sup>157</sup> Carothers, “In the Name of Democracy” 154.
- <sup>158</sup> Ibidem, 158.
- <sup>159</sup> Ibidem, 109-110.
- <sup>160</sup> Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*: 293-300.
- <sup>161</sup> Palmer “US Relations with Latin America,” 24.
- <sup>162</sup> Acevedo and Grossman 1996: 142-145.
- <sup>163</sup> Pevehouse “Democracy from Above,” 133.
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- <sup>166</sup> Balmaceda “The Human Rights Ombudsman in the Central Andes.”
- <sup>167</sup> Buss, “Haiti in the Balance,” 79-90; Hallward, “Damming the Flood,” 300-305.