

ent with the agreed plans of the Inter-American Defense Board and other bilateral or multilateral military agreements to which the United States is a party.”<sup>15</sup>

b. Noted the President's approval of NSC 144 as amended, and his statement that this approval did not constitute an endorsement of any specific program of military and economic assistance for Latin America, which will be subject to review in the light of (1) the priority of financing of present and proposed programs for Latin America in relation to programs for other foreign areas and to programs for domestic security, and (2) the overall objective of achieving a balanced Federal budget.

*Note:* NSC 144 as amended subsequently circulated as NSC 144/1.

[Here follows discussion relating to review of basic national security policies (item 10), which is printed with the documentation concerning the mutual security program in volume I, and NSC status of projects.]

<sup>15</sup> For documentation relating to U.S. policy regarding hemisphere defense, provision of armaments, and military assistance to other American republics, see pp. 116 ff.

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*Statement of Policy by the National Security Council*<sup>1</sup>

TOP SECRET  
NSC 144/1

WASHINGTON, March 18, 1953.

UNITED STATES OBJECTIVES AND COURSES OF ACTION WITH RESPECT  
TO LATIN AMERICA

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. There is a trend in Latin America toward nationalistic regimes maintained in large part by appeals to the masses of the population. Concurrently, there is an increasing popular demand for immediate improvement in the low living standards of the masses, with the result that most Latin American governments are under intense domestic political pressures to increase production and to diversify their economies.

2. A realistic and constructive approach to this need which recognizes the importance of bettering conditions for the general population, is essential to arrest the drift in the area toward radical and nationalistic regimes. The growth of nationalism is facilitated by historic anti-U.S. prejudices and exploited by Communists.

<sup>1</sup> The Executive Secretary of the NSC, James S. Lay, Jr., in a note to the NSC dated Mar. 18, 1953, not printed, referred to the Council's action on NSC 144 (NSC Action No. 746) and the President's approval that date of NSC 144 as amended, and transmitted the statement of policy as NSC 144/1 to all appropriate executive departments and agencies.

3. The limited purpose of this paper is to define our objectives and courses of action concerning this and other important problems common to the area; policies toward particular country situations, such as those in Argentina and Guatemala, are left for subsequent papers.

#### OBJECTIVES

4. The objectives of the United States with respect to Latin America area:

*a.* Hemisphere solidarity in support of our world policies, particularly in the UN and other international organizations.

*b.* An orderly political and economic development in Latin America so that the states in the area will be more effective members of the hemisphere system and increasingly important participants in the economic and political affairs of the free world.

*c.* The safeguarding of the hemisphere, including sea and air approaches, by individual and collective defense measures against external aggression through the development of indigenous military forces and local bases necessary for hemisphere defense.

*d.* The reduction and elimination of the menace of internal Communist or other anti-U.S. subversion.

*e.* Adequate production in Latin America of, and access by the United States to, raw materials essential to U.S. security.

*f.* Support by Latin America of collective action in defense of other areas of the free world.

*g.* The ultimate standardization of Latin American military organization, training, doctrine and equipment along U.S. lines.

#### COURSES OF ACTION

##### *Political*

5. The United States should achieve a greater degree of hemisphere solidarity by:

*a.* A greater utilization of the Organization of American States as a means of achieving our objectives, which will avoid the appearance of unilateral action and identify our interests with those of the other American states.

*b.* Consulting with the Latin American states, whenever possible, before taking actions which will affect them or for which we wish their support, explaining as fully as security permits the reasons for our decisions and actions.

*c.* Evidencing greater consideration of Latin American problems at the highest levels of government by according sympathetic attention to representatives of Latin America, by exercising care in public statements relating to the area, and through such methods as visits by high government officials and distinguished private citizens to Latin American states.

*d.* Refraining from overt unilateral intervention in the internal political affairs of the other American states, in accordance with existing treaty obligations. This does not preclude multilateral action through the inter-American system. . . .

e. In determining the extent of U.S. assistance and support to particular American states, taking into consideration their willingness and ability to cooperate with the United States in achieving common objectives.

f. Assisting through the Organization of American States, or by such other means as may be available, those American states which are resisting pressures from their neighbors, whenever such pressures are inimical to U.S. interests and the inter-American system.

g. Encouraging the incorporation of Canada into the Organization of American States.

6. The United States should also:

a. Encourage through consultation, assistance and other available means individual and collective action against internal subversive activities by communists and other anti-U.S. elements.

b. Encourage the development of the regional Inter-American Organization of Workers (ORIT) and the development of responsible, democratic labor leadership in Latin America capable of taking the initiative away from communists and other anti-U.S. inter-American labor movements.

c. Encourage Latin American governments to continue to prevent direct shipments of strategic materials to the Soviet bloc and to adopt an import certificate and delivery verification system to facilitate the prevention of indirect shipments.

#### *Economic*

7. The United States should seek to assist in the economic development of Latin America by:

a. Encouraging Latin American governments to recognize that the bulk of the capital required for their economic development can best be supplied by private enterprise and that their own self-interest requires the creation of a climate which will attract private investment.

b. Continuing the present level of International Bank loans and Export-Import Bank loans and, where appropriate, accelerating and increasing them, as a necessary supplement to foreign private investment.

c. Continuing a limited economic grant program in Latin America, including such projects as the Inter-American Highway and the Rama Road.

d. Making it easy for Latin American countries to sell their products to us, through simplification of customs procedures and reduction of trade barriers under the Reciprocal Trade Agreements program.

e. Continuing the program of technical assistance to the area, but designing individual projects within the capability of the particular country concerned.

f. Undertaking a thorough study of the means by which we can assist Latin American capital to play a more vigorous and responsible role in economic development of the area.

8. The United States should encourage the institution of necessary Latin American government fiscal, budgetary and other measures which are indispensable to economic progress in the area through utili-

zation of the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank, the Export-Import Bank, and other appropriate means.

*Information and Related Activities*

9. The U.S. Information and Cultural Programs for Latin American states should be specifically directed to the problems and psychology of specific states in the area, with the objective of alerting them to the dangers of Soviet imperialism and communist and other anti-U.S. subversion, and convincing them that their own self-interest requires an orientation of Latin American policies to our objectives.

10. . . .

*Military*

11. The United States should encourage acceptance of the concept that each of the Latin American states is responsible for maximizing its contribution to:

- a. The internal security of its own territory.
- b. The defense of its own territory, including land communication, coastal waters, ports and approaches thereto, bases located within its area of responsibility and air lanes of communication associated therewith.
- c. The allied defense effort, including participation in combined operations within the hemisphere and support of collective actions in other theaters by forces beyond the requirements of hemisphere security.

12. In support of the course of action in paragraph 11, the United States should provide military assistance to Latin America consistent with the agreed plans of the Inter-American Defense Board and other bilateral or multilateral military agreements to which the United States is a party. U.S. military assistance should be designed to reduce to a minimum the diversion of U.S. forces for the maintenance of hemisphere security; and in determining the type of military assistance to be provided each nation, consideration should be given to its role in hemisphere defense.

13. The United States should assume primary responsibility for military operations in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and the Caribbean Sea, including sea and air approaches to the Panama Canal, and at the appropriate time should seek from other American states acceptance of U.S. military control of the defense of these areas.

14. To the extent that military bases other than U.S. bases in Latin America are required to further joint defense efforts, the United States should technically guide and assist the Latin American countries in their development and maintenance and seek agreements providing for their reciprocal use, rights of air transit and technical stops, and availability for common defense purposes.

15. The United States should take political, economic or military action, as appropriate, to insure the continued availability of U.S. bases in Latin America.

16. Where necessary the United States should assist in the protection of sources and processing facilities of strategic materials and land transportation related thereto. However, each of the Latin American countries should organize its own civil defense.

17. In providing military aid and seeking military commitments the United States should not encourage Latin American nations to contribute to the military effort to an extent which would jeopardize their economic stability.

18. In addition, the United States should:

*a.* Continue the planning of the Inter-American Defense Board and the Military Commissions on which we are jointly members with Brazil and Mexico.

*b.* Continue and establish where appropriate, military training missions in Latin American nations.

*c.* Continue to provide training in the United States for selected Latin American military personnel.

*d.* Seek a wider participation by Latin America in the UN action in Korea where the type of participation will improve UN capabilities.\*

*e.* Seek the ultimate standardization along U.S. lines of the organization, training, doctrine and equipment of Latin American armed forces.

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\*The general problem of reimbursement for U.S. logistical support of Latin American forces participating in the war in Korea will be considered in the forthcoming report on U.S. policy relating to Korea. This problem is currently most acute in the case of Colombia. [Footnote in the source text.]

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*Memorandum by the Under Secretary of State (Smith) to the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Lay)*<sup>1</sup>

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] July 23, 1953.

Subject: First Progress Report on NSC 144/1, United States Objectives and Courses of Action with Respect to Latin America.

NSC 144/1 was approved as governmental policy on March 18, 1953. It is requested that this progress report as of July 15, 1953 be circulated to the members of the Council for their information.

1. *Political*

*Utilization of the Organization of American States (OAS):* Active participation in the normal activities of the OAS and its organs and agencies continued throughout the period. Steps were taken to insure that a

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<sup>1</sup>A title sheet and summary are not printed. Drafted by Robert M. Sayre, William G. Bowdler, and Jean H. Mulliken; cleared with the Offices of South American Affairs, Middle American Affairs, and Regional American Affairs, the Bureau of Economic Affairs, the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of State, and the Policy Planning Staff.