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SECRETARY OF STATE, DURING THE WORKSHOP ON LATIN
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I have gratefully accepted the invitation to participate in this workshop and to make some brief comments on its subject, bearing in mind our practical experience in Puerto Rico in the field of educational and technical exchanges with Latin America. We are, as you probably know, a busy meeting place for people from the whole Hemisphere. It is our daily business to exchange views and opinions on many aspects of Latin American life with the thousands of visitors who come to our Commonwealth as trainees and observers. Many of our professors, technicians, and government officials have been on missions to Latin America and they bring back fresh insights into the present state of inter-American relations.

We feel that educational exchanges with Latin America must be appraised against the background of the dramatic social and democratic revolution now taking place in the Latin American half of the Hemisphere. A powerful and turbulent democratic wave is rolling up from the south which has struck the dictatorships with devastating force. The younger generations, even the high school students, have been in the forefront. They have provided new cadres and a fresh vigour to the anti-dictatorial movements of a generation

ago. While in most places the experienced democratic leaders have taken over, these younger groups will play an increasing role in coming years. Some of their ideas are nebulous and they may sound at times immature and extremely nationalistic, but we should not fail to gauge the strength and intensity of their purpose, nor their high and passionate devotion to a new way of democratic life, to good and honest government and to an emerging sense of unity with other liberal groups across national boundaries.

These seem to be their broad objectives, but the new groups are not doctrinaire. They have not completely defined their position on many ~~other~~ issues and this is an advantage and a promise if proper encouragement and desinterested advice are available. The new Latin America that is emerging has a powerful democratic élan, but not a well-rounded democratic program.

Let us point out another fact. There is a deep ambivalence vis-a-vis the United States. In spite of harsh criticism, many Latin Americans from the educated classes admire certain U.S. cultural achievements, particularly in the novel and the dramatic arts. There is obvious respect for U.S. industrial might, but not much love for U.S. leaders and U.S. institutions. Politically, the inner strength of U.S. democracy is little understood. The Latin Americans somehow feel that the U.S. has no "message" of effective use to them in rebuilding a democratic pattern.

In talking to many Latin Americans in the 20 - 40 age group, I have also been repeatedly struck by the fact that there is no immediate reaction of animosity towards this country.

But, on the other hand, there is a feeling of remoteness, of the existence of two separate psychological worlds that cannot meet. Techniques may migrate and be adapted; but heart to heart understanding is considered an almost impossible feat. For years, many Latin Americans have felt that the U.S. was, if not blind, at least indifferent to Latin American democratic yearnings. This is, indeed, an explosive psychological issue, now that the democratic whirlwind is in full force. It is a most formidable barrier to real understanding.

We must bear in mind another fact. We are in for a big and tense debate in this Hemisphere on the true nature of inter-American relationships. While the dictators were in power, the press was muzzled. Any debate was highly artificial. Only those issues were argued which the dictator allowed to be debatable. But now, the press has gained its freedom from Argentina to Cuba and a searching analysis has begun. This is a battle of facts and ideas and it cannot be avoided. We who favor an effective, vigorous solidarity in the Americas, must brace ourselves for a period of critical questioning, covering every phase from politics to education, from cultural mores to economic development and the value of U.S. techniques.

Inter-American educational exchange therefore has to seek out, as soon as possible, the young, emerging leaders. This task cannot be left to slow bureaucratic selection. The search has to reach quickly into universities and preparatory schools, into labor groups, into the press, and, indeed, into political and intellectual circles for those new leaders who are beginning to influence public opinion and who are shaping the new politics, the new economics, the new education. These people must have increasing opportunities for travel. They should meet with young study groups in American universities, labor unions and cultural institutes. They should meet with U.S. leaders in government, in the Congress, in industry, in labor, with no holds barred. I remember when Senator Fulbright was in Puerto Rico last year, we held a forum with forty chosen trainees from as many lands. Basic issues were discussed, from the atom bomb to racial segregation in Arkansas, and the caste system in India. It was rough, but it was effective.

I feel we should begin planning a type of seminar, workshop or colloquium where U.S. and Latin American leaders of the younger generation would get together to explore the basic issues separating the two Americas. We are ready in Puerto Rico to cooperate in a pilot experiment along these lines. Out of this experience we may develop a comradeship in dissent, as well as a partnership in agreement.

These are times for tough intellectual give and take in the New World community. I have a strong feeling that the young Latin Americans will appreciate discovering some of the U.S. outstanding traits: its capacity for self-analysis and self-criticism, its unwillingness to accept as permanent controlling factors of American life McCarthyism or racial prejudices or government by vested interest or Pollyanna conformism. The Latin American has to discover the great intellectual resilience of U.S. culture, the forces that defy standardization and complacency.

On the other hand, the United States should begin to attune its ears to the democratic clamor in Latin America. It should not expect the upcoming generations to behave like British parliamentarians. It is a tough generation. They will not be easy to deal with. No profit-making philosophy will persuade them. No rosy propaganda will win them over. Only the conviction that freedom is something to be shared by all, that democracy is not a word but an active, living faith, that one must always look beyond a government to the people, will provide a true basis for heart to heart understanding. These are, in my opinion, some of the guiding lights for the immediate future of educational exchange in the Hemisphere.