

Twentieth Century Metternichs And the Fear of Revolution

Robert F. Smith

THE FEAR OF REVOLUTION is one of the primary elements in U. S. foreign policy and its literary by-products. On occasion such fear becomes rampant paranoia and more than 20,000 soldiers and marines are dispatched to "prevent" 77 (or was it 53, or 45, or 20?) "known Communists" (dead or alive) from making a revolution in the Dominican Republic. In the footsteps of Teddy Roosevelt, "We stand at Armageddon and we battle for the Lord." The literary reflection can be seen in books entitled, *The Twilight Struggle*, and *The Last, Best Hope*.¹

The volumes by Leonard Gross and William D. Rogers are quite similar in both interpretation and subject. They are of the "one minute to midnight" type of contemporary anxiety literature.

The Twilight Struggle is a superficial "history" of the Alliance for Progress which reads very much like a State Department position paper. This should not be surprising since Rogers served as Deputy U. S. Coordinator for the Alliance for Progress and Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Agency for International Development. Let it be said that he is an honest man. He would like to paint a glowing picture of *Alianza* sponsored reform and progress, but the facts keep getting in the way. Rogers presents these, but he engages in a mighty literary effort to find the "silver lining."

After five and a half years of the Alliance, Rogers can report:

Millions of lives had been touched by new schools, potable water systems and heavier taxes. But through Latin America, the daily lives of poverty of the great masses of people were not very much different in 1967 than they had been in 1961—and there were far more people. Output in Latin America had increased during the Alliance years. The rates of growth during the period, however, were slower than the growth rates in preceding periods. . . . Nonetheless, the stark fact was that the lives of most people had changed remarkably little during the Alliance period. (265-66)

Why then does he conclude on such an optimistic note? According to Rogers (266-67), ". . . the capacity of Latin America to cope with that crisis [access of the masses to improved standard of living] was probably strengthened by the results of the second Alliance meeting [April 1967],

1. William D. Rogers, *The Twilight Struggle: The Alliance for Progress and the Politics of Development in Latin America* (Random House: New York, 1967), 301 pp., \$6.95. Leonard Gross, *The Last, Best Hope: Eduardo Frei and Chilean Democracy* (Random House: New York, 1967), 240 pp., \$5.95.

for all its businesslike tone." As he indicates, this was paradoxical since, "In tone and substance, the final plan of action was markedly different than the earlier Charter [Punte del Este, 1961]." The second meeting emphasized, "economic integration and international trade," rather than "political development, national integration, or basic structural and social change." Agrarian reform and education were downgraded.

Rogers believes (or would like to believe) that this new emphasis offers the best hope for Latin American development, and one of the central themes of his book is this shift from the reformist idealism of 1961 to the "businesslike" approach of 1967. Here, the volume has some usefulness in documenting the conservative progression of the Alliance which this reviewer analyzed in the Winter 1965 issue of *New Politics*.² If one extrapolates the concrete examples cited by Rogers from the "position paper" rhetoric, the role of the United States Government in promoting this trend clearly emerges.

Rogers notes that after 1962, AID instituted a "new development lending course: large loans tied not to individual projects but to comprehensive national development programs." These loans were based upon two elements; "a demonstrated balance of payments need to *increase the nation's ability to import U. S. goods and services* [*italics added*], and the adoption of public policies and programs which would insure against capital flight on the international account side or the misuse of domestic resources through inefficient budgeting, reduced local savings or inflation." (205) The latter standard included increased tax revenues, reduction of budget deficit, elimination of "distorting subsidies to public activities," and the adoption of "state incentives to private sector investment and growth." The author notes that policies designed to promote private enterprise can be more easily packaged into program loans than project loans. Thus, the weight of AID's new approach is on orthodox fiscal policies and the promotion of private enterprise.

Rogers admits that this approach has not been wholly successful, and that its significance for social reform, "is marginal at best." But, what about reform? Rogers says that change depends upon the commitment of Latin American leaders. Then, why subsidize those power groups which want very little structural change? Rogers would argue that the U. S. has no choice but to work with the groups that hold power. This argument would have some validity if the U. S. were willing to do precisely this. But, Cuba and the Dominican Republic clearly show that the U. S. Government not only will refuse economic support, but also will attack those groups which threaten to make major structural changes in

2. Now reprinted in, Marvin Gettleman & David Mermelstein (eds.), *The Great Society Reader: The Failure of American Liberalism* (Vintage Books: New York, 1967), pp. 372-381.

the socio-economic system. Rogers is not enthusiastic about the use of military force, but he does defend its use to prevent revolutions. Obviously we are dealing with more than a simple, disinterested support for development and change. Rogers, and the State Department, will accept only a certain kind of development policy and very limited amounts of basic structural reform. The rhetorical smoke screen of "democratic social revolution" obscures this fundamental issue.

GROSS HAS THE SAME PROBLEM in his study of Eduardo Frei, but it is less obtrusive because he is able to concentrate on a rather personable, idealistic political figure. This volume has more depth of analysis than the one by Rogers, and Gross does have considerable information about the historical roots of Chile's problems and the thought of Frei.

Still, Gross has to labor mightily to defend the thesis that Frei is successfully promoting a "revolution in liberty." The author's main argument here is that the Chilean President is transforming the attitudes of the elite. Several glowing personality sketches of such reformed members of the upper class, however, do not necessarily prove the point. Gross neglects the evidence that indicates a steady modification of the President's earlier reform pronouncements in the face of opposition from the elite. In addition, he does not mention the growing discord within the Christian Democratic Party which stems from this shift to the right.³ Perhaps these omissions are produced by the author's emphasis upon the theological roots of Chilean socio-economic problems (largely based upon the ideas of Father Roger E. Vekemans, S. J.). According to Gross, the Spanish Catholicism of the Chilean upper class has been the most important factor conditioning its lack of a sense of social obligation or a drive for material progress. At this point, the author divides the upper class into a minority group of landowners (the "oligarchy", or "old fashioned" elite), and a majority of moderates who would actually like to see reform and economic improvement. The latter group, however, must overcome the restrictive value-structure in order to work actively for such objectives. Once this upper class element has been converted—and the process is under way—then the major obstacle to a democratic social revolution will have been removed since these Chileans are opposed to the "landed elite."

Social value structure does play an important role in group ambitions and activities, but it is not the only factor. The Chilean upper class, and the society in general, is more complex than the picture presented by Gross. The political life emanating from this socio-economic system is also more than a division into far-Left, far-Right—the bad guys—, and broad middle. In a forthcoming work on Chilean politics, James Petras shows the submerged part of the socio-political iceberg

3. *The New York Times*, December 10, 1967, p. 26.

sighted by Gross.⁴ Petras demonstrates, for example, that the landowning group is not a separate, isolated entity, but is composed of the same families which are predominant in commerce and industry. Thus, the cobweb of concrete interests complicates the attempts at land reform.

Petras also shows that the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) cannot be explained simply as a band of humanitarian reformers. As he explains:

The old parties have seen their bases erode as increasing sectors of the populace began to search for satisfactions which previously were denied. . . . The inability of the traditional elites to meet the demands of significant rural and urban strata accounts for their plummeting popular support. The seemingly incongruous elements found in the PDC from the wealthy businessman to the poor peasant reflect the pragmatic decisions of the socio-economic elites and the populist appeals to the lower class.

Family and traditional attachments and links . . . make it very difficult for the PDC to radically change the existing social order. Its attempts to broaden the base which is participating in the policy focuses on raising the level of living of new sectors of the population without interfering with the basic interests of most of the older groups. (349-50)

Thus, the Frei wing of the PDC stresses orthodox economic development and private enterprise rather than reform *per se*. The theme is quite similar to that of North American liberalism. Economic growth will solve most problems, and in the long interim some reforms will be necessary to keep the masses loyal and orderly. The end product is the preservation of the system of private enterprise capitalism through the gradual absorption of the lower orders into the production-consumption mechanism. This process is called the "democratic social revolution" and under some circumstances the absorption may take place in varying degrees. But, will it work in less-than-affluent, underdeveloped countries where the bulk of property and wealth is relatively concentrated in the upper ten to twenty per cent of the population? Can such countries afford the process either economically or morally? After all, even in the rich United States the process of absorption is far from complete in spite of almost twenty-eight years of war-induced pump-priming and trickle-down.

COLD WAR LIBERALS SUCH AS ROGERS AND GROSS (and their counterparts in the State Department) may be good-hearted men who want to help the poverty-stricken masses of the world, but all insist that any such action take place within the economic order of private enterprise capitalism regardless of the length of time involved. They realize, however,

4. James Petras, *Politics and Social Forces in Chilean Development* (to be published by the University of California Press).

that some groups may grow impatient and take the revolutionary road, so they see an urgency to reform measures which will provide enough social mobility to preserve the economic order. Such men are not too happy with extreme right-wing governments since these will not provide the minimal reforms believed to be necessary for lower class acceptance of the prevailing economic order. But, such Cold War Liberals will accept right-wing governments if these are the only alternative to revolution and a basic change in the economic system. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., for example, agreed with President John F. Kennedy's view of the Dominican Republic after the assassination of Rafael Trujillo: "There are three possibilities in descending order of preference: a decent democratic regime, a continuation of the Trujillo regime or a Castro regime. We ought to aim at the first, but we really can't renounce the second until we are sure that we can avoid the third."⁵ Democracy and/or parliamentary government are obviously less important than preventing revolutions, and in this context some of the most corrupt and bloody regimes in the world can be included in the nomenclature of "the free world."

The United States, however, does not want to appear as simply the counterrevolutionary bulwark of the status quo, so the verbiage about "democratic social revolution" is utilized to obscure the real thrust of U. S. policy. The army openly admits this in its Officer Candidate School classes, but perhaps men such as Rogers and Gross really believe that the rhetoric has meaning.

Noam Chomsky has succinctly cut to the basic hypocrisy of this thesis. He writes:

It is easy for an American intellectual to deliver homilies on the virtues of freedom and liberty, but if he is really concerned about, say, Chinese totalitarianism or the burdens imposed on the Chinese peasantry in forced industrialization, then he should face a task that is infinitely more significant and challenging—the task of creating, in the United States, the intellectual and moral climate, as well as the social and economic conditions, that would permit this country to participate in modernization and development in a way commensurate with its material wealth and technical capacity. Massive capital gifts to Cuba and China might not succeed in alleviating the authoritarianism and terror that tend to accompany early stages of capital accumulation, but they are far more likely to have this effect than lectures on democratic values.⁶

Yet, Cold War Liberals assert that revolutions are too costly and that gradual change ("democratic social revolutions") is best. Two faulty as-

5. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1965), p. 769.

6. "The Responsibility of Intellectuals," in, Theodore Roszak (ed.), *The Dissenting Academy* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967), p. 279.

sumptions are involved at this point. One, is the belief that such change will take place to any *effective* degree (effective, that is, for those living in poverty). The other involves the cost. Barrington Moore, Jr., in his magisterial *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, writes:

The assumption that gradual and piecemeal reform has demonstrated its superiority over violent revolution as a way to advance human freedom is so pervasive that even to question such an assumption seems strange. . . . As I have reluctantly come to read this evidence [from the comparative history of modernization] the costs of moderation have been at least as atrocious as those of revolution, perhaps a great deal more.⁷

Of course, antirevolutionary publicists and officials have their own moral calculus concerning violence. The "reign of terror" of the French Revolution is often cited as an example of the evils caused by revolutions. Few, however, shed any tears or cite as a horrible example the fact that more people (approximately 20,000) were killed in a few days when the French Government crushed the Paris Commune in 1871, than were dispatched in an entire year of the "reign of terror."⁸ In a similar vein, one has only to recall the slightly concealed U. S. approval of the Indonesian bloodbath of 1965. And, who describes the casualties from malnutrition and disease in countries with an affluent upper class as crimes committed by a regime? Perhaps it is time for Cold War Liberals to give the lives of the poor more consideration than the property of the elite groups.

But, this would mean the acceptance of revolutions, since there is little evidence that the elites of Latin America (or elsewhere) are moving with any rapidity to improve the condition of the masses. Some may decide to make the sacrifices required for effective reform. In some countries, however, a basic change in the socio-economic system (revolution) is a prerequisite for any effective reform which will benefit people in this generation, and there is no such thing as a "democratic revolution." Elite groups do not give up their power and privileges without a struggle of some kind. The Civil War in the United States (which Moore entitles "The Last Capitalist Revolution") is a case in point.

If a person basically wants to preserve large chunks of the status quo (especially an economic system) and believes that this can be accomplished through the gradual absorption of the underprivileged into the prevailing economic order, he should frankly admit it—not orate about "democratic social revolution." Even the gradualist method is rarely democratic, however, in its operation. Who consulted the Eng-

7. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), p. 505.

8. Barbara Tuchman's review of Alister Horne, *The Fall of Paris: The Siege and the Commune, 1870-71* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), in, *The New York Times Book Review* (January 30, 1966), p. 24.

lish peasants or the sharecroppers of the southern United States when they were driven from the land by the men with economic and political power? To say that their children's children were eventually absorbed into the system does not make the process itself democratic.

GROSS, ROGERS, AND OFFICIALS OF THE U. S. government are opposed to revolution because they fear socialism or some form of economic order which replaces private enterprise capitalism. In this context, their sense of urgency, expressed as "Twilight Struggles" and "Last Best Hope", may be legitimate. Gross expresses the belief that, "If Frei cannot marshal the private sector, he will not only fail to achieve the society he projects, he will be forced to a type of socialism he neither advocates nor desires." Such a shift to socialism in Chile could come about through the election of Salvador Allende and the electoral victory of FRAP (the Socialist-Communist coalition). Why could not the United States accept such a development and maintain friendly relations? (This same question applies to the Cuban Revolution and the aborted Dominican Republic revolution.) This is the issue which lies at the heart of U. S. relations with all of the underdeveloped world, and the one which separates the Cold Warriors from those who are convinced that the United States *as a country* is not threatened by revolutionary nationalism.

Gross answers that, in the case of Chile, Allende would have expropriated U. S. mining interests, and the U. S. would have terminated all assistance to Chile (and friendship as well). The "domestic and international quarrels" produced by such actions would have pushed the Allende Government in "just one direction." (102) This obviously refers to Soviet assistance, and the implication involved is that at this point security interests are at stake. But, would this be because Allende threatened the U. S. or vice-versa?

Rogers is much more explicit (and militant) in defining how the U. S. is threatened by the "have-nots" of the underdeveloped world:

It is now clear enough that the international environment can become quite inclement for the rich, not merely in developed corners of the world but in the poor two-thirds as well. Where once the major challenges to U. S. national interest came from Europe, Russia and Japan, now the United States finds trouble in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The simple world system, in which a dozen or so "great powers" counted for everything, is past. In its place is a distinctly untidy, unstable agglomeration of haves and have-nots. A threat to the national interest is more likely to arise in Cuba or the Congo than in Berlin. Since 1953, the pattern of events has been one of conflict on the periphery, the underdeveloped world, rather than at the center. Violence or the threat of violence involves Vietnamese or Dominicans rather than Russians or Germans.

Winston Churchill told Stalin the same thing in 1943. This is modern imperialism clearly defended. The political leaders of the United States do not desire territory and do not want to rule other countries. They want to shape the development and the systems of the underdeveloped world to insure a capitalistic world order. Underdeveloped countries therefore must remain open to the economic and ideological penetration of the United States.

Given this world view, that U. S. prosperity (and security) depends upon the proper economic behavior of the underdeveloped nations, any group which seeks to alter basically a country's economic relationship with the United States becomes *ipso facto* a threat to the United States itself. Communism is beside the point. Revolutionary nationalism whatever the title is the "enemy." A 1964 CIA report (briefly declassified for some reporters) made this point explicitly. According to this report, both Communists and Castroists lacked the strength to gain power in any Latin American country. The real threat came from "leftist-nationalist groups who blame their own and their nation's troubles upon what they believe to be an alliance of foreign—especially U. S.—capitalists with local landowners, military leaders, and political adventurers."⁹

Edmond Taylor, the European correspondent for one of the leading Cold War liberal magazines (*The Reporter*) wrote that the confiscation of Western investments in Cuba and Indonesia created a "worldwide atmosphere of insecurity that might have a grave psychological impact on the capitalist system everywhere if allowed to go on indefinitely." Taylor then stated: "The contagion of such examples is particularly dangerous, and some at NATO argue that if President Johnson had not called a halt to the western retreat from Asia, the consequences might have been disastrous to western prosperity as well as in other ways."¹⁰ The oft-cited "domino theory" is relevant within this framework.

The strategic implications stemming from this world view raise serious problems for any hope of peace. If U. S. leaders believe that the socio-economic order of this country could not survive unless our kind of economic system is predominant throughout the world, and if the Westernized (U. S. oriented) leaders in various underdeveloped countries cannot command enough support to hold power, then we will be faced with a series of Vietnams and Dominican Republics. But, former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara told us that we could look forward to exactly that kind of future; a "thirty-year series of little wars."¹¹

Conceivably the United States could, with some sacrifices, accept

9. "Trends in the World Situation," 9 June, 1964.

10. April 8, 1965, p. 12. See also, J. Robert Moskin, "Our New Western Frontier," *Look* (May 30, 1967), pp. 36-46.

11. Dorian J. Fliegel, "Forgotten History of the Draft," *The Nation* (April 10, 1967), p. 456.

revolutionary nationalism in the underdeveloped world. The leaders of these movements do not want to be the puppets of any large power, and they do not pose a military threat to the United States. If they turn to the Soviet Union or China for aid and/or protection is it not because the United States has classified them as enemies? Should they submit to the views of the United States and commit political suicide? When military confrontations have occurred, they have been products of an *a priori* hostility to revolutionary nationalism which has presented revolutionary leaders with a choice between submission to the status quo or the negotiation of protective arrangements with other powers.

SECURITY IS LARGELY A STATE OF MIND, depending not only upon where, but also upon *how* the leaders of a nation define its frontiers. The economic policies of underdeveloped nations have become the frontiers of the world order which U. S. leaders have been developing since the late nineteenth century. In this context, Augusto Sandino, Venustiano Garranza, Jacobo Arbenz, Mohammed Mossadegh, Patrice Lumumba, Fidel Castro, and Salvador Allende all could be (and have been) defined as "threats to the United States." This imperial paranoia could produce disaster for the world, since such frontiers are beyond rational defense. To be sure, men such as Rogers and Gross hope that in the process of mond Robins' statement about Woodrow Wilson holds true for the poverty-stricken masses. All empires have had their benevolent elements—hershey bars in one hand, and napalm in the other. Still, Raymond Robins' statement about Woodrow Wilson holds true for the United States today: "He was willing to do anything for people except get off their backs and let them live their own lives. He would never let go until they forced him to and then it was too late."¹²

12. William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1962), p. 82.

ROBERT F. SMITH teaches at the University of Connecticut and has written widely on Latin American affairs.

Guerrilla Movements In Latin America—II

James Petras

THE FIRST PART OF THIS ARTICLE (Vol. VI, No. 1) was largely concerned with specific facts about the character and activities of guerrilla movements in a number of Latin American countries. In this concluding section our concerns are with the political circumstances generating guerrilla movements, the role of Communist parties in Latin America, the strength and weaknesses of guerrilla warfare and, finally with Regis Debray's controversial *Revolution In A Revolution?*

IN RESPONSE TO THE CUBAN REVOLUTION and the Latin American popular revolutionary movements, U.S. policymakers devised a dual strategy: an Alliance for Progress which was supposed to promote social reform, economic development and political democracy; and the building of Latin American military forces to insure the defeat of Castroism. Most of the Alliance funds were loans for refinancing previous loans and balancing the budget. Only a small percentage was ever applied to actual reform projects. More important, the funds were directed to a social structure whose dominant elites were not interested in agrarian reforms and economic development which would conflict with their own property holdings. The "aid" funds therefore, became social cement for bracing the old elites against the winds of change, rather than a stimulant for reform. Simultaneously, U.S. military aid to Latin America during the 1960's jumped 50 percent per year over that granted during the 1950's. In addition, the rationale for the build-up of the Latin American military was no longer the old bogey, a Russian invasion, but internal popular forces. In June 1963, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara pointed to this shift: "Until about 1960, military assistance programs for Latin America were oriented toward hemispheric defense. As it became clear that there was no significant threat of overt external aggression against Latin America, emphasis shifted to internal security . . ." Thus the rapid growth and expansion of counter-insurgency schools, U.S. military missions, and overall increased involvement by the U.S. in Latin American political life.

During the past year, serious insurgency and terrorist attacks have been successfully countered in several Latin American countries. In others, political threats have been contained. Venezuela has been able to improve substantially its control of guerrilla and terrorist elements during recent months. U.S. trained units of their armed forces and police have spearheaded a government campaign both in the cities and in the countryside. In Peru the government has already made good progress against guerrilla concentrations, and U.S. trained and supported Peruvian army and air force units have played prominent roles in this counter-guerrilla campaign. In Colombia, U.S. training, support and equipment, including several medium helicopters have materially aided the Colombian armed forces to establish government control in the rural insurgent areas.