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The Alliance for Progress during the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations: Laudable idea, poorly implemented?

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On March 13, 1961, John F. Kennedy gathered a number of Latin American diplomats in the East Room of the White House. The President delivered a speech steeped in rhetoric and eloquence that outlined a new expansive effort to help those "once dormant peoples [who] are struggling upward toward the sun, toward a better life." The Alliance for Progress, he asserted, was to be "a vast cooperative effort, unparalleled in magnitude and nobility of purpose, to satisfy the basic needs of the American people for homes, work and land, health and schools."[1] JFK's proposal was warmly welcomed within Latin America. The aid effort had its origins in the Eisenhower administration with the creation of the Inter-American Development Bank and the "$500 million fund pledged by the Act of Bogota, to be used not as an instrument of the Cold War, but as a first step in the sound development of the Americas."[2] However, the scale, idealism and ambition of the Alliance came from the Kennedy administration. It was a response to the encroachment of the Cold War into the Western Hemisphere, exemplified by Castro's Cuba.[3] The administration, adhering to Cold War principles, such as the "domino theory," aimed to prevent other Latin American nations turning to communism by offering the Alliance for Progress as a superior alternative to Marxist doctrine and economics. On August 17, 1961, the objectives of the Alliance were detailed in the Charter of Punta del Este. The aims were as sweeping as they were admirable, the participants resolving to tackle illiteracy, health issues, land reform, social reform and the inequitable distribution of wealth at the same time as improving Latin American economies and democracy.[4] Following President Kennedy's assassination, his successor, Lyndon Johnson, inherited the Alliance and four days later met with Latin American representatives to "reaffirm the pledge" Kennedy had made to their continent.[5]

As Rodrigo Botero asserted twenty-five years after its inception, the Alliance is actually split in to two parts, its concept and process. His succinct definition – "The concept refers to a hemispheric commitment to economic

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modernization and social justice within a democratic framework. The Process refers to the pragmatic and administrative procedures that were set in motion in order to carry out that commitment" – is an excellent starting place from which one can attempt to explain the Alliance.[6] Superficially, the concept of the Alliance can not fail to be seen as "laudable," but a deeper exploration, beneath the rhetoric, of its actual aims and methods reveals at the very least that our definition of "laudable" requires qualification. An assessment of the "process" of the Alliance shows it to be "poorly implemented," but more than this, that it was from the start destined to experience immense difficulties for numerous reasons. Paramount is the central role Kennedy played in inadvertently undermining its implementation and the refutation of the suggestion that it died with the President; rather that there was a greater degree of continuity during the Johnson administration than is sometimes recognised. I will first consider the current literature and address a few of the issues raised. This essay shall then look at the Kennedy and Johnson administrations side by side on a number of different concepts that illustrate the levels of continuity and areas of contrast. First, I shall discuss whether the Alliance was laudable as a concept and investigate the motivating factors behind its inception. This shall include exploring the influence of modernization theorists as well as United States traditions of hegemony in its hemisphere. Furthermore, I shall address the economic and cultural factors that played important roles in forming both administrations' views and policies southward. The prevailing Cold War security issues shall be considered so that I can investigate the significance of the growing reliance on military regimes and counter-insurgency in official thinking regarding Latin America.

Secondly, this essay shall evaluate how well implemented the Alliance for Progress was on two levels; the practical level of bureaucratic and financial efficacy, and whether or not its ideals were implemented. On the practical level I will show that numerous bureaucratic and personnel issues made effective implementation of the Alliance an extremely difficult process, which was further highlighted by its hugely impressive and unrealistic aims. On the abstract, principle level, there is the ideological question that was central to the Alliance's chance of success, which was acknowledged by both administrations but never ably resolved. This leads into the question of whether Johnson's policies can be seen as a significant departure from Kennedy's. By looking at both Presidents' records regarding military regimes and their attitudes regarding intervention it is revealed that they followed a remarkably similar path. Finally, I shall make a few notes about President Kennedy's use of rhetoric compared with Johnson. Whilst famous for his eloquent turn of phrase throughout his term, JFK inadvertently hindered the effective implementation of the Alliance for Progress. Ultimately, I will demonstrate that the similarities between the two Presidents are many and the

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differences fewer than sometimes supposed; the ideals of the Alliance were laudable but poorly realised due to inherent cultural factors and security concerns within both administrations; and the practical implementation of Alliance funds and aims was greatly undermined by prevailing bureaucratic, personnel, economic, domestic and national security factors as well as the founders' sheer scale of ambition.

It is worth starting with a brief account of some of the prevailing schools of thought regarding the Alliance for Progress. Robert Dallek states that the Alliance "fell victim to international conditions and traditional U.S. paternalism toward the southern republics."[7] Moreover, it "had become an imperfect cover for traditional actions serving perceived U.S. national security."[8] Both assertions are accurate but need clarification. Internal as well as international conditions contributed to the Alliance's failure and poor implementation. That it "had become" a façade for traditional U.S. security concerns presupposes that this was not its original intention. This is not to say, however, that the Alliance had no altruistic elements, for example its emphasis on progress, education and reform. Dallek is right to note that the Alliance under Kennedy, initially or gradually, revolved chiefly around security, much as it did under Johnson. As Peter Smith suggests, "it was the perceived exigency of global issues, rather than a concern with Latin America, that gave shape to U.S. policy."[9] H. W. Brands highlights the significance of Cuba in American thinking. Recollecting the damage the "loss" of China did to President Truman, Johnson was motivated by "the fear of political fallout from another successful communist revolution" like in Castro's Cuba.[10] Thus we see a convergence of domestic and international, political, economic and security considerations with pragmatism and idealism. Stephen Rabe highlights the pervasive belief in a communistic monolith, emanating somehow from the USSR and China, in making counter-insurgency programmes central to the U.S. policy toward Latin America. He contends that both Kennedy and Johnson "ultimately discounted nuanced analyses of insurrection in Latin America and trusted in their fears."[11] The significance of this point lies both in the fact that Kennedy supported the counter-insurgency policy and in the continuity between the two presidents. The incongruity of Kennedy's idealistic rhetoric and his resolute pragmatism inadvertently served to undermine the Alliance from the very beginning. The rhetoric was so lofty it was unattainable, which led to disillusion within the administration and opposition within Congress. Moreover, President Johnson's continuity of Kennedy's less admirable policies were seen as a change in direction because the new president abandoned the accompanying rhetoric that had sustained the delusion of the Alliance as a solely altruistic aid effort.

The first issue of whether the Alliance for Progress was laudable is not the same as whether it was altruistic. It was not. Few would suggest it was altruistic,

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despite the rhetoric, and the question of the very existence of true altruism is best left to evolutionary biologists and philosophers. A discussion of means and ends is more suitable to historical debate. By Immanuel Kant's maxim one should treat others not as means to an end, but as the end itself. Without wishing to argue about the merits, or lack thereof, of Kantian ethics, this is still a useful entering point about the relative laudability of the Alliance for Progress. Unfortunately, for defenders of the Alliance, even a cursory look at its record regarding democracies and military regimes suggests that its professed objectives were not the ends in themselves, rather one of the means. However, before looking at the actual aims and the ends of the United States and the Alliance, it is worth noting that it did expand the idea of development into American foreign policy.[12] That there were other more ulterior motives is not in doubt, but the problem of underdeveloped countries and efforts to help them did become part of U.S. foreign policy thinking. When compared with previous neglect towards Latin America and concurrent military aid this aspect of the Alliance for Progress is certainly laudable. The issue is that it was frequently a cover for other methods and objectives that combined to subordinate the more admirable qualities.

Modernization theory was central to the vision that the Kennedy administration had for Latin America.[13] Michael Latham suggests that "the ideology of modernization shaped and legitimated" the Alliance, combining development with containment.[14] It provided a social science framework for tackling the issues at stake in Latin America, such as land reform, inequality and education. Its use suited the administration because of the explicit belief that democracies would align themselves with the United States and that modernization would be the method to produce them.[15] The most prominent figure in this movement was Walt Rostow, whose theories about modernization and economic "take-off" were adopted by the administration.[16] Rostow remained an influential figure in the Johnson administration, becoming Special Assistant to the President in 1966. He continued throughout the 1960s to support US efforts to help "boost agriculture and improve education, [so that] the region during the 1970's could attain a level of 'take-off' for self-sustained growth which would promote social and political stability and dependence on US public financing."[17] The Marshall Plan for Europe was a forerunner of the Alliance, but analogies between the two are tenuous at best.[18] More than this, modernization theory "projected an identity for the United States as an advanced nation that assisted societies striving to follow a trail blazed by its own experience."[19] It is this appeal to American exceptionalism that becomes central to any discussion of the Alliance as a "laudable idea." At the very least, it conflicts with that other American ideal of self-determination. Furthermore, it helps to account, in part, for the opinions of some Americans who blamed the shortcomings of the Alliance on Latin American culture.[20] The intention of the modernization

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theorists was generally laudable, but, as Latham notes, "might there not be 'something distasteful to the Latin Americans' about U.S. claims of having produced social justice in the hemisphere."[21] However, the validity of modernization theory is less important than the fact that it was accepted by both Kennedy and Johnson as plausible and applicable to Latin America. More significant is the degree to which modernization combined with older notions of American superiority to lend a rather "distasteful" aspect to the Alliance.

In addition to the new ideas of modernization, the Monroe Doctrine had been the guiding principle for U.S. policy toward Latin America since 1823, stating that extracontinental powers were to have no influence in the Western Hemisphere. Traditionally, it was the European powers that the U.S. wanted to prevent colonising Latin America, but now it was the Soviet Union. Moreover, the United States reserved the right to intervene in the "turbulent internal affairs" of the Caribbean and Central America "and acquired the habit of defining good government unilaterally" in Latin America.[22] This attitude toward Latin America generally constituted two elements – the economic realm and the cultural.

The first element, economic interest, was not causative regarding the Alliance. Security concerns, Cold War paradigms and proximate revolutions were more significant causes. However, there was a "need to protect the United States' economic stake in Latin America." That is not to suggest, as Albert Michaels does, that "the Alliance was an attempt to defend an economic stake whose survival was vital to the United States' abilities to face a critical situation." [23] It does highlight the traditional values within the Alliance for Progress that existed during both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.[24] A common defence of Kennedy is that his years in office saw a decline in private U.S. investment in Latin America. This is true but misses the point somewhat. Firstly, the decline was in part due to the presence of Castro's Cuba, which helped cause a decrease in new private U.S. investment from $540 million in 1959 to only $90 million in 1961.[25] This perceived threat itself declined over the years thus allowing for an increasing U.S. business interest in Latin America under Johnson. Secondly, this decline was actually a concern to the Kennedy administration, which envisaged private investment as an essential component of the Alliance. Whilst the influence of the private sector was perhaps smaller under Kennedy than Johnson, administration officials, such as Rostow, argued for an investigation of how "leadership in private enterprise can make a contribution to the structural problems of Latin American countries."[26]

It has also been argued that private business was an influential factor in U.S. policy. For example, Christopher Mitchell suggests that Teodoro Moscoso, Coordinator of the Alliance, "perhaps to increase his standing with the U.S. business

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community," froze U.S. economic assistance to Peru because of a dispute with the American oil corporation, International Petroleum Company.[27] This concern continued into the next administration as Johnson and Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Thomas Mann were determined to protect U.S. investments, particularly in Venezuela, Peru and Brazil.[28] In Chile, the Christian Democrats received the Johnson administration's support in part because of their reforms and in part because "[Chilean President] Frei has a lot of leverage… because of the US copper industry" and its tie to his country.[29] In fact, the Johnson administration had close ties with private business interests whose aims would often coincide, for example in support for Frei and opposition to his left-wing opponent Allende in Chile.[30] President Johnson frequently consulted with important business figures, such as David Rockefeller.[31] In both administrations there was even a certain amount of traditional reticence regarding Europe's involvement in Latin America.[32] The economic realm of the Alliance for Progress is instructive in revealing motives of an ulterior nature, as well as highlighting the continuity between the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

The second, cultural element of traditional American interest in their neighbours to the south helps to explain U.S. attitudes in foreign policy and towards Latin America in particular. The Alliance for Progress was an expression of the long-held vision of the United States as a city on a hill.[33] This aspect of the American psyche certainly had good qualities, "a generous, advanced nation promoting a better life for less fortunate peoples around the globe and greater scientific understanding."[34] Such a belief, however, has a tendency to cause a certain myopia regarding the limits of U.S. power and its ability to change the world.[35] At the same time, during the Cold War "appeals based upon the morality of an American world-transforming mission became rationalizations for policies which often derived from realpolitik considerations."[36] This led to the curious situation where both administrations were greatly influenced by their own belief in America's mission at the same time as manipulating this belief to gain public support for the Alliance. The more recent theories of modernization, and the concurrent appreciation of American society, also contributed to the intellectual acceptance of the United States role as a missionary nation. Michael Latham raises an interesting point, that few U.S. officials ever actually questioned the basic assumption that their country could change the world.[37] Whether this is an admirable quality is debatable, but it illustrates the restrictive framework within which U.S. officials ensconced themselves by combining American exceptionalism with modernization theory. As a motivating factor it can be seen as either relatively harmless or bordering on cultural imperialism, but it had darker undertones. This was most prevalent in the widespread belief that it was in fact Latin American culture that was holding back development, if only they could adopt the superior North American customs.[38]

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Moreover, this leads us to the significance of education, which was central to the Alliance.[39] However, the other side of the education coin is often propaganda, and U.S. policy in Latin America was no exception. The Task Force on Latin America, headed by Adolf Berle, recommended to Kennedy an "enlargement of the education-information-propaganda effort."[40] The belief that American education regarding political and economic matters was right and good may have sustained U.S. officials, but the communists probably felt the same about their own education. Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union have turned "propaganda" into a dirty word, usually only applied to one's opponent's education efforts. However, the delineation between Soviet and communist propaganda and American education is especially fine. Education is undoubtedly a laudable project when it is balanced and propagated for its intrinsic value, but when it slides towards propaganda it becomes less so. It merely underlines the cultural imperialism of U.S. policy in Latin America and its struggle to compete with the communists.

Beyond its economic and cultural interests, the United States main concerns during the Cold War revolved around containment of communism and, for Latin America, stability. Both Kennedy and Johnson adhered to the strategy of containment and its derivatives such as the domino theory. They were both, in this respect, products of their political environment. The revolution in Cuba brought these two concerns sharply into focus.[41] The Alliance for Progress was part of a concerted effort to ostracise Castro.[42] In spite of Kennedy's rhetoric about the Alliance's other aims, the security of the United States was paramount.[43] Kennedy's attitude is famously elucidated in his assessment of the Dominican Republic: the United States had three choices, "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."[44] This quotation concisely sums up Kennedy's view of foreign policy. The Trujillo regime was a harsh dictatorship, which Kennedy was apparently willing to work with if it helped prevent the spread of Castroism. Both JFK and LBJ were determined to prevent "another Cuba."[45] As Peter Smith asserts, "the overriding consideration in Washington's outlook was the strengthening of its position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union."[46] "Broadly-based political stability" was certainly a central goal of the United States in the Alliance for Progress, but all else being equal, stability would be chosen over broadly-based politics.[47] This was coupled with a quixotic belief in the potential of Latin American militaries to preserve stability and help the development process without embroiling themselves within the actual politics of their countries.[48] Johnson held similar concerns and during a crisis period of instability he asserted that "we would not have another Cuba in this hemisphere."[49] Following the finding of a Cuban arms cache in Venezuela, the Johnson

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administration went as far as trying to get an Organization of American States resolution to approve U.S. military intervention against Cuba if it was found to be using subversive aggression against its neighbours.[50] This adherence to the containment strategy once more highlights the realpolitik of both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations that was often obfuscated by rhetoric and appeals to American exceptionalism. This aim, of containing communism, led to the use of methods that were not only morally dubious but also actively contradicted other Alliance aims.

Foremost amongst these methods are the United States-operated counter-insurgency training schools, designed to give Latin American militaries the skills required to maintain internal security, combat guerrillas and an appreciation of the military's role in society. In theory this would help preserve stability at the same time as guarding against military involvement in politics. However, the United States also perceived the military as a useful tool, even if its incursions into politics were essentially at odds with the Alliance. Under both Kennedy and Johnson "the Alliance was hampered by its own inconsistencies – inconsistencies which led to or did nothing to deter 16 military coups in eight years."[51] Both the President Kennedy and his brother, Robert, were in favour of using counter-insurgency to achieve their aims.[52] Kennedy was no doubt influenced by the support from social scientists, such as Lucian Pye, Samuel Huntington and Walt Rostow, for the use of the military as part of the process of modernization.[53] This led to "a powerful lobby within the U.S. government against making the defense of democracy or radical reforms the top priority of U.S. foreign policy."[54] Giving the militaries more training and better equipment, whilst encouraging their role in maintaining internal security, almost inevitably led to "a more powerful voice for the military in the political future of the region."[55] During the Kennedy years military aid to Latin America increased from an average of $65.58 million per year, between 1953 and 1961, to $172.3 million per year in the first three years following Kennedy's inauguration.[56] In Argentina and Peru, Kennedy acquiesced in the military's overthrow of the respective governments. Regarding the latter, it was hoped that the initial suspension of diplomatic relations would "demonstrate to the hemisphere our firm support of [the] democratic, constitutional process and to provide a deterrent to potential military coups."[57] Unfortunately this measure proved to have limited impact upon the Peruvian junta and "after a month of huffing and puffing" Kennedy resumed diplomatic negotiations.[58] During the Kennedy administration, seven military coups took place, each of which ultimately received U.S. support.[59]

That is not to say that Kennedy could necessarily have prevented the military coups but his ready acquiescence, mirrored later by Johnson, revealed a degree of vacuity in U.S. rhetoric. Indeed, Johnson's record regarding military

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coups continued Kennedy's precedents. Less than a month after a military coup in Bolivia, Johnson recognised the new government led by General Barrientos.[60] Similar examples can be found with the coup in Peru on October 3, 1968, which was recognised only three weeks later, and the military junta in Panama that was recognised on November 11, 1968, exactly a month after it took over the country.[61] Under Johnson, Lincoln Gordon, a Kennedy appointee, agreed with the view that the Brazilian military was "a potentially politically strong restraining force against… undemocratic excesses."[62] The Department of State opposed any policy that "might tend to alienate the military forces on whom the Alliance for Progress must depend to maintain stability in the area."[63] Accounts of successful counter-insurgency programs and incidents were reported by Walt Rostow to Johnson with "satisfaction."[64] Rostow continued throughout the Johnson administration to advocate further use of militaries in as "a force for progress" over whom the United States had some had "some leverage through equipment modernization."[65] Some officials, such as Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and Adolf Berle, opposed the use of counter-insurgency programmes and support for military regimes and recognised the inherent contradictions such policies revealed.[66] That such contradictions were recognised within the Kennedy administration further highlights the President's role in the active hypocrisy regarding Alliance aims and means, his desire for stability by any means and the fact that Johnson did not invent the friendly U.S. policy toward military regimes, nor did he depart from his predecessor.

So we have seen that the Alliance for Progress was laudable to a degree, whilst its ideals were often left behind in the light of more pressing pragmatic security issues. Now we can explore the extent to which the Alliance itself was poorly implemented by assessing its effectiveness in moving towards and achieving its goals. This was in itself sometimes hindered by the focus on fundamental Cold War security concerns. For instance, the implacable anti-communism and frequent aversion of the United States to left-wing governments was not always compatible with reform. Within U.S. policy there was "confusion between the short-term goal of anticommunism and the long-term elimination of conditions assumed to invite communist subversion."[67] Land reform frequently came into conflict with the desire for increased production, and was frequently subordinated to it.[68] It was felt that commercial agriculture would contribute to economic growth whereas land redistribution would have the opposite effect and might even fuel communist gains in rural communities.[69] Further contradictions were revealed by Latin American countries' desire for funding and the United States' emphasis that "ultimate responsibility lies within the developing nation itself."[70] Reforms were discordant with economic growth and equally could not protect U.S. investments.[71] Even so, government officials advised distributing the wealth so as to achieve economic growth.[72] The contradictions between economic growth and social and land reform

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were constant obstacles to a concerted and effective implementation of the Alliance's goals.

Additionally, the Alliance suffered from personnel problems. These were considered remediable by the Kennedy administration and prevented a full reassessment of the Alliance for Progress's objectives and ability to achieve them.[73] Schlesinger raised the issue of opposition from within the State Department to the basic goals of the Alliance, whose "attitudes [are] entrenched, their minds are set, and they regard new approaches and ideas with automatic scepticism. They are predominantly out of sympathy with the *Alianza*."[74] Richard Goodwin made a similar complaint, unfavourably comparing the men available to the Alliance with those that worked on the Marshall Plan.[75] Just under two years later he repeated the complaint, with perhaps even more bitterness, that "the Alianza has the same trouble as the Washington Nats – they don't have the ballplayers."[76] That is not to suggest the Alliance had no good men, which Goodwin too refuted. Rather, it simply exposes the obvious fact that it is extremely difficult to satisfactorily implement any organisation if the personnel doing so are not suitable, not least one as huge as the Alliance, which also had obstacles within the bureaucratic machinery to contend with.[77] "Internecine conflicts" between the Agency for International Development, the Export-Import Bank, the Food for Peace Programme and the Peace Corps greatly impeded the Alliance for Progress.[78]

Such issues, however, were not unique to either the Alliance or the Kennedy/Johnson administrations. Indeed, both Presidents sought to resolve the slow bureaucratic nature of efficaciously implementing the Alliance. Kennedy, after five months of searching, appointed Robert Woodward as Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, an ostensibly significant position. However, with the numerous other high-ranking officials involved in the Alliance, "in the maze of the New Frontier, the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs can get lost – and never be missed."[79] Two years later, the President created the position of Under Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, who would be responsible "for the Alliance for Progress as well as for the Bureau of Inter-American affairs….In addition, he would have general concern with all government activities relating to Latin America."[80] President Johnson attempted to centralise decisions through Thomas Mann in order to speed things up.[81] Mann was later given the position of Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs. Complaints about the speed of the distribution of Alliance loans persisted into the Johnson administration.[82] Despite these inherent difficulties the Alliance managed to give more than it intended.[83] However, this merely highlights the scale of failure and the unattainable nature of the Alliance's aims. In September 1963, Teodoro Moscoso noted that due to Congressional budget cuts "the U.S. Government investment in all of Latin America

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next year will amount to little more than what Russia is pumping into Communist Cuba alone."[84] Moreover, Levinson and De Onis illustrate that in real terms the amount of aid was much lower, "on a *net* disbursement basis (gross disbursement less repayments and interest)" Latin America only received $4.8 billion from the United States. This reiterates that the aid provided was not sufficient to achieve the aims of the Alliance.[85]

Another factor that contributed to the poor implementation of the Alliance for Progress was the ideological gap which was exacerbated by the traditional image of U.S. policy in Latin America.[86] There was no psychological pull that enabled the Alliance to generate widespread support amongst Latin Americans, particularly when contrasted with the ideological appeal of communism. However, the Alliance for Progress also failed to link itself with "the single most powerful, psychological force…. in Latin America": nationalism.[87] Even so, an appealing ideology would not necessarily have gained the essential support from the upper and middle classes that the Alliance required. The middle class, democratic left was perceived to be one of the vehicles by which progress could be made.[88] Yet there were early "danger signals" that the progress would not be smooth.[89] There was a pervasive complaint that the Alliance was actually strengthening the oligarchies power, not redistributing it.[90] The upper classes were adamantly opposed to reform, especially land reform, which they realised would weaken their hold over society.[91] The U.S. government recognised early on that it had little influence over these oligarchies.[92] Thus land reform, the most celebrated initial objective, was quickly dropped so as not to disrupt the status quo.[93] The Christian Democrats in Chile were ideal for U.S. purposes, because of their middle class reformism.[94] However, they were unable to retain support precisely because of their association with the U.S. towards whom there was still "plenty of latent hostility."[95] Ultimately the United States was unable to neither garner adequate support from the middle classes nor bend the upper classes to their will. Both sectors were trepidatious about what they could lose through progress, rather than what they, and their fellow countrymen, might gain.

The question still remains whether the ideals of the Alliance for Progress were poorly implemented not only by Johnson and Mann, but also by Kennedy. The irrefutable fact is that JFK tolerated military regimes, much as Johnson did. LBJ and Mann continued the counter-insurgency programmes that Kennedy initiated.[96] Even so, the so-called Mann Doctrine, which stated that the U.S. would not intervene in the case of military coups, implicitly giving official support for them, at the very least "raised questions."[97] It was certainly at odds with the Alliance ethos that was formed at Punta del Este. However, a full year before Kennedy's death, Schlesinger was warning of the dangers of the "apparent recrystalization of elements of the Eisenhower policy within the framework of the Alliance for Progress."[98] In fact, the

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Mann Doctrine was preceded by the Martin Doctrine.[99] Even Schlesinger in his renunciation of the Martin Doctrine for detecting "so many notable virtues in military rule," serves to illustrate the Kennedy administration's position that "everyone in Latin America accepts the necessity of dealing with military regimes for tactical purposes."[100] The "fundamental faith in our democratic purpose" that Schlesinger calls for when dealing with military regimes, was rarely held with conviction throughout the years of the Alliance for Progress.[101] This is further highlighted in a Department of State assessment of the Alliance, which stated that it "has enlisted the support and the open commitment of responsible Latin American governments."[102] Apparently military regimes were considered alongside more democratic governments as being "responsible." Defenders of Kennedy, and critics of Johnson, would cite the U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic as proof of Johnson's departure from Kennedy. Yet even this is a fallacious defence. Kennedy had stated that the U.S. would act unilaterally to prevent another Cuba and even went so far as to ask his Secretary of Defence, Robert McNamara, "how many troops could we get into the Dominican Republic in a 12-24-36-48 hour period? How many into Honduras? How many into Venezuela?"[103] The intervention adhered to the fear of another Cuba that Kennedy and Johnson both subscribed to. That is not to say that JFK would necessarily have done the same as Johnson regarding the Dominican Republic, but intervention could be seen as the logical extension of Kennedy's policies, albeit without his rosy hue of rhetoric.

This leads us to the central role that President Kennedy's rhetoric played from the very beginning of the Alliance in undermining its effective implementation. Like the Truman Doctrine, a good deal of rhetoric, combined with fear of communism, was required to sell the Alliance for Progress to Latin America and the United States Congress. Considering the immense task at hand of developing an entire continent, such high aims were unachievable. Johnson agreed with the Ambassador of Chile that the Alliance was "started off on a very high pitch."[104] In many ways JFK's rhetoric limited his foreign policy options.[105] Less than two weeks after the Charter of Punta del Este promised emergency aid to those countries requesting it, suggestions were being made within the administration "that it was very unlikely such aid could be provided for out of development lending; that the uncommitted portion of our development grant fund was earmarked mostly for Africa; and that, consequently, the emergency aid for Latin America would have to come from the contingency fund which was already very seriously depleted." Secretary of State Dean Rusk concurred in this judgement. Moreover, it was considered important to advise "our Latin American missions not to encourage requests for emergency aid and, on the contrary, to discourage it."[106] Equally, security concerns took precedence over following through on rhetoric. The inability

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to achieve the considerable aims rapidly, which was at odds with the concept of American exceptionalism, led to increased opposition within Congress.[107]

In August 1963 the House of Representatives voted to cut Kennedy's foreign aid request by $1.4 billion and set further restrictions on the distribution of Alliance funds.[108] This pessimistic view of the Alliance's record was widespread. Indeed, on the very day of JFK's assassination *Time* reported that "Latin America as a whole is standing still. Its average per capita economic product increased only 1% in 1961, scarcely at all last year. Holding down the average are two giants – Argentina and Brazil. Yet of the total $2.5 billion in Alliance aid so far committed, Brazil and Argentina got nearly a third – $841.8 million between them."[109] President Johnson was also hit by Congressional reticence regarding foreign aid. "Mischievous" amendments to AID bills restricted Johnson's ability to grant aid and loans to military governments, which as we have seen were abundant and often friendly to the U.S.[110] In 1967 Congress continued to "distribute the misery" by cutting the administration's request for $3.3 billion by $800 million, meaning Johnson would not be able to provide the extra $100 million for Latin America he had promised at Punta del Este.[111] As Robert and Bobbie Smetherman assert, "high visibility assistance provides an easy target for rationalization and the possibility of rankling disillusion."[112]

Thus we have seen that the Alliance was a laudable idea, given a qualified definition. It was handicapped by the Cold War paradigms in which it was formed. Its objectives were superficially praiseworthy, but invariably were simply the cover for more ulterior motives aimed at benefiting the United States position regarding the Soviet Union. Its ideals were frequently contradicted by its less than savoury methods of counter-insurgency and support for military regimes and were consequently poorly implemented. The actual pragmatic administration of the Alliance also suffered from a considerable litany of difficulties in bureaucratic structure and personnel issues. It also failed to gain widespread support from the middle class sector of Latin American society it expected to be its mainstay. It was opposed at virtually every turn by Latin American elites who feared losing their power, which contributed to the U.S. being more lenient about certain aspects of reform, particularly land, so as to retain the support of these oligarchs. Moreover, this poor showing, both as an idea and in implementation, was underscored by a belief prevalent in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations in American exceptionalism. Furthermore, there was a strong continuity between the two presidents in aims and means if not in rhetoric. If anything, it was Kennedy's rhetoric that not only helped to undermine the Alliance for Progress's effective implementation but also produced a rhetorical gap with President Johnson. This gave rise to the erroneous conviction that Johnson departed significantly from the

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precedents set by Kennedy, when in fact neither president effectively implemented the Alliance's ideals, or was able to achieve its vast social and economic aims, or even represent it as a truly laudable idea.

Endnotes

[1] "Address at a White House Reception for Members of Congress and for the Diplomatic Corps of the Latin American Republics, March 13, 1961," in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, John F. Kennedy: Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President, January 20 to December 31, 1961* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1962), 172.

[2] "Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 30, 1961." Ibid., 25.

[3] Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle: Dynamics of U.S.-Latin American Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 150.

[4] "The Charter of Punta del Este, Establishing an Alliance for Progress within the Framework of Operation Pan America; August 17, 1961," accessed on May 6, 2009 at *http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/intam16.asp.*

[5] "Remarks on the Alliance for Progress to Representatives of the Countries of Latin America, November 26, 1963," in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Lyndon B. Johnson: Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President, Book 1 – November 22, 1963 to June 30, 1964* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1965), 7.

[6] Rodrigo Botero, "The Alliance for Progress: Reflections for Our Time," in *The Alliance for Progress: A Retrospective,* ed L. Ronald Scheman (New York: Praeger, 1988), 159.

[7] Robert Dallek, *John F. Kennedy: An Unfinished Life, 1917-1963* (London: Penguin, 2004), 709.

[8] Ibid., 522.

[9] Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 163.

[10] H. W. Brands, *The Wages of Globalism: Lyndon Johnson and the Limits of American Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 31.

[11] Stephen G. Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World: John F. Kennedy Confronts Communist Revolution in Latin America* (London: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 127, 139.

[12] Federico G. Gil, "The Kennedy-Johnson Years," in *United States Policy in Latin America: A Quarter Century of Crisis and Challenge, 1961-1968*, ed. John D. Martz (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 9.

[13] "Letter to President Frondizi of Argentina Concerning the Alliance for Progress, April 27, 1961," in *Public Papers: John F. Kennedy, 1961*, 323.

[14] Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (London: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 72.

[15] Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 145.

[16] John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 208.

[17] "Memorandum from the President's Special Assistant (Rostow) to President Johnson, February 10, 1967," *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XXXI: South and Central America; Mexico*, ed. David C. Geyer, David H. Herschler & Edward C. Keefer (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 2004), 111.

[18] "Message to the Inter-American Economic and Social Conference at Punta del Este, Uruguay, August 5, 1961," in *Public Papers: John F. Kennedy, 1961*, 549.

[19] Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 91.

[20] Ibid., 94.

[21] Ibid., 107. Latham is quoting the economist Albert O. Hirschman.

[22] Jerome Levinson & Juan De Onis, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way: A Critical Report on the Alliance for Progress* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1970), 31.

[23] Albert L. Michaels, "The Alliance for Progress and Chile's 'Revolution in Liberty,' 1964-1970," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 18.1 (1976), 75.

[24] Levinson & De Onis, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 181.

[25] "Alianza Si', Progreso No, March 16, 1962." *Time Magazine*, accessed on 6 May 2009 at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,940654,00.html

[26] "Interdepartmental Committee of Under Secretaries on Foreign Economic Policy, March 20, 1963," *FRUS XII, 1961-1963*, 141.

[27] Christopher Mitchell, "Dominance and Fragmentation in U.S. Latin American Policy," in *Latin America and the United States: The Changing Political Realities*, ed. Julio Cotler & Richard R. Fagen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 189.

[28] "Telephone Conversation between President Johnson and the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann), June 11, 1964," *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XXXI: South and Central America; Mexico*, ed. David C. Geyer, David H. Herschler & Edward C. Keefer (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 2004), 49.

[29] "Memorandum of Telephone Conversation between President Johnson and the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Mann), November 13, 1965," *FRUS XXXI, 1964-1968*, 623.

[30] "Memorandum for the Record, May 12, 1964." Ibid., 574-5.

[31] "Telephone Conversation between President Johnson and the Representative to the Council of the Organization of American States (Linowitz), April 4, 1967." Ibid.,, 121.

[32] "Airgram from the Department of State to all Posts in the American Republics, November 10, 1962," *FRUS XII, 1961-1963*, 114. The Latin Americans were complaining about the "European Economic Community's restrictions on meat." "The U.S. abstained on the meat" resolution; "Memorandum from the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Johnson, October 19, 1965," *FRUS XXXI, 1964-1968*, 295. Bundy is concerned with the possibility of the sale of French aircraft to the Argentine Air Force and the influence this would give to the French.

[33] Anna Kasten Nelson, "President Kennedy's National Security Policy: A Reconsideration," *Reviews in American History* 19.1 (1991), 7.

[34] Dallek, *John F. Kennedy*, 709.

[35] Tony Smith, "The Alliance for Progress: The 1960s," *Exporting Democracy: The United States and Latin America, Themes and Issues*, ed. Abraham F. Lowenthal (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 86.

[36] Robert H. Johnson, *Improbable Dangers: U.S. Conceptions of Threat in the Cold War and After* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994), 34.

[37] Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 96-101.

[38] Teodoro Moscoso, "The Will to Economic Development," *The Alliance for Progress: A Retrospective*, ed L. Ronald Scheman (New York: Praeger, 1988), 82, 237; Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 94.

[39] "United States Policy toward Latin America, July 3, 1961," *FRUS XII, 1961-1963*, 36.

[40] "Letter from the Chairman of the Task Force on Latin America (Berle) to President Kennedy, July 7, 1961." Ibid., 38.

[41] Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 147.

[42] "Policy on Castro, December 8, 1961." *Time Magazine*, accessed on 6 May 2009 at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,895769,00.html

[43] Harold Molineu, *U.S. Policy toward Latin America: From Regionalism to Globalism* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 29.

[44] Kennedy reported by Arthur Schlesinger and quoted in Stephen E. Ambrose & Douglas G. Brinkley, *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy Since 1938* (London: Penguin, 1997), 206. The memorandum of the meeting reports that "The President said that we wanted a Democratic regime in the Dominican Republic; failing that we would prefer a friendly dictatorship, and the last thing we wanted was a Castro type regime"; "Memorandum from the President's Special Assistant (Goodwin) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), June 8 1961," *FRUS XII, 1961-1963*, 644.

[45] Joseph S. Tulchin, "The Promise of Progress: U.S. Relations with Latin American During the Administration of Lyndon B. Johnson," in *Lyndon Johnson Confronts the World: American Foreign Policy, 1963-1968*, ed. Warren I. Cohen & Nancy Bernkopf Tucker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 236.

[46] Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 162.

[47] "Research Memorandum Prepared in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, January 17, 1962," *FRUS XII, 1961-1963*, 79.

[48] "Research Memorandum from the Director of the bureau of Intelligence and Research (Hughes) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Woodward), January 19, 1962." Ibid., 88.

[49] "Telephone Conversation between President Johnson and Senator Richard Russell, March 9, 1964," *FRUS XXXI, 1964-1968*, 842.

[50] "Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann) to Secretary of State Rusk, March 2, 1964." Ibid., 23.

[51] Michaels, "The Alliance for Progress and Chile's 'Revolution in Liberty,'" 76.

[52] Dallek, *John F. Kennedy*, 437.

[53] Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 128.

[54] Tulchin, "The Promise of Progress," 217.

[55] Molineu, *U.S. Policy toward Latin America*, 133.

[56] Ibid., 29.

[57] "Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Martin) to Acting Secretary of State Ball, October 3, 1962," *FRUS XII, 1961-1963*, 877.

[58] "Giving In, August 24, 1962," *Time Magazine*, accessed on 11 May 2009 at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,896519,00.html

[59] "Angry Talk and Negative Action, October 11, 1963," *Time Magazine*, accessed on 11 May 2009 at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,873086,00.html

[60] "Memorandum from Acting Secretary of State Harriman to President Johnson, December 3, 1964," *FRUS XXXI, 1964-1968*, 343.

[61] "Action Memorandum from the President's Special Assistant (Rostow) to President Johnson, November 9, 1968." Ibid., 960-61; "Information Memorandum from the President's Special Assistant (Rostow) to President Johnson, October 25, 1968." Ibid., 1078.

[62] "Memorandum from the Director of the Office of Brazilian Affairs (Burton) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann), January 8, 1964." Ibid., 399.

[63] "Memorandum from Secretary of Defense McNamara to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), June 11, 1965." Ibid., 78.

[64] "Telegram from the President's Special Assistant (Rostow) to President Johnson in Texas, September 7, 1967." Ibid., 152.

[65] "Record of Discussion and Decisions of 22nd Meeting of the Senior Interdepartmental Group, September 28, 1967." Ibid., 156.

[66] "Letter from the Chairman of the Task Force on Latin America (Berle) to President Kennedy, July 7, 1961," *FRUS XII, 1961-1963*, 43. Berle warns against the "opportunist support of transitory power-holders or forces whose objectives are basically hostile to the peoples they dominate."

[67] Tulchin, "The Promise of Progress," 242.

[68] Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 154.

[69] Smith, "The Alliance for Progress: The 1960s," 80-1.

[70] "Address on the First Anniversary of the Alliance for Progress, March 13, 1962," *Public Papers: John F. Kennedy, 1962*, 222.

[71] Michaels, "The Alliance for Progress and Chile's 'Revolution in Liberty,'" 96.

[72] "Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State (Bowles) to Secretary of State Rusk, July 25, 1961," *FRUS XII, 1961-1963*, 44.

[73] Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 102.

[74] "Memorandum from the President's Special Assistant (Schlesinger) to President Kennedy, June 27, 1961," *FRUS XII, 1961-1963*, 29.

[75] "Memorandum from the President's Assistant Special Counsel (Goodwin) to President Kennedy, September 28, 1961." Ibid., 64.

[76] "Memorandum from the Secretary General of the International Peace Corps Secretariat (Goodwin) to President Kennedy, September 10, 1963." Ibid., 147.

[77] "Memorandum of Conversation, March 9, 1962," *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963, Volume IX: Foreign Economic Policy*, ed. Evans Gerakas *et al*. (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1995), 294.

[78] Gil, "The Kennedy-Johnson Years," 14.

[79] "No. 22, June 23, 1961," *Time Magazine*, accessed on 12 May 2009 at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,894482,00.html

[80] "Memorandum from President Kennedy to Secretary of State Rusk, October 29, 1963," *FRUS XII, 1961-1963*, 158-8. As the footnote that accompanies the memorandum states, "this recommendation dates to the Report from the Task Force on Immediate Latin American Problems to the President-elect of January 4, 1961."

[81] "Mann for the Job, December 27, 1963," *Time Magazine*, accessed on 6 May 2009 at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,870581-1,00.html

[82] "Telephone Conversation between President Johnson and the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann), May 26, 1964," *FRUS XXXI, 1964-1968*, 40.

[83] Smith, "The Alliance for Progress: The 1960s," 72. "Kennedy called for committing $20 billion over a ten-year period; in fact $22.3 billion was disbursed to Latin America under the program."

[84] "Cut When It Hurts, September 20, 1963," *Time Magazine*, accessed on 12 May 2009 at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,870535,00.html

[85] Levinson & De Onis, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 138-40.

[86] Gil, "The Kennedy-Johnson Years," 16.

[87] "Memorandum by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Morales-Carrion), April 9, 1962," *FRUS XII, 1961-1963*, 101.

[88] "The Democratic Left, May 11, 1962," *Time Magazine*, accessed on 6 May 2009 at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,939385,00.html

[89] Gil, "The Kennedy-Johnson Years," 13.

[90] Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 104.

[91] Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 154.

[92] "Highlights of the First Meeting of the Working Group on Problems of the Alliance for Progress, January 16, 1962." *FRUS XII, 1961-1963*, 76.

[93] Smith, "The Alliance for Progress: The 1960s," 79.

[94] "Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann) to Secretary of State Rusk, May 1, 1964," *FRUS XXXI, 1964-1968*, 565.

[95] "Memorandum from Gordon Chase of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), March 19, 1964." Ibid., 553.

[96] Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 140.

[97] "The LBJ Brand, March 27, 1964." *Time Magazine*, accessed on 6 May 2009 at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,938533,00.html

[98] "Memorandum from the President's Special Assistant (Schlesinger) to the President's Special Assistant (Dungan), October 15, 1962," *FRUS XII, 1961-1963*, 110.

[99] Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 179.

[100] "Memorandum from the President's Special Assistant (Schlesinger) to President Kennedy, October 8, 1963," *FRUS XII, 1961-1963*, 151.

[101] Ibid., 151.

[102] "Airgram from the Department of State to All Posts in the American Republics, December 10, 1963." Ibid., 168.

[103] "Memorandum from President Kennedy to Secretary of Defense McNamara, October 4, 1963." Ibid., 739.

[104] "Memorandum of Conversation in the Cabinet Room, May 11, 1964," *FRUS XXXI, 1964-1968*, 36.

[105] Burton I. Kaufman, "John F. Kennedy as World Leader: A Perspective on the Literature," *America in the World: The Historiography of American Foreign Relations since 1941*, ed. Michael J. Hogan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 332.

[106] "Memorandum for the Files, August 26, 1961," *FRUS IX, 1961-1963*, 257.

[107] William O. Walker III, "The Struggle for the Americas: The Johnson Administration and Cuba," *The Foreign Policies of Lyndon Johnson: Beyond Vietnam*, ed. H. W. Brands (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1999), 81.

[108] "The Stunning Setback, August 30, 1963," *Time Magazine*, accessed on 6 May 2009 at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,940698,00.html

[109] "Going the Wrong Way, November 22, 1963," *Time Magazine*, accessed on 6 May 2009 at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,898020,00.html?iid=digg_share

[110] "Action Memorandum from the President's Special Assistant (Rostow) to President Johnson, July 19, 1966," *FRUS IX, 1964-1968*, 143.

[111] "Memorandum from the President's Special Asssistant (Rostow) to President Johnson, July 31, 1967." Ibid., 190.

[112] Robert M. Smetherman & Bobbie B. Smetherman. "High Visibility Foreign Aid: The Alliance for Progress," *The Western Political Quarterly* 24.1 (1971), 52.

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