protect Americans living in the Dominican Republic. His major reason, however, was that he was afraid Bosch might let the Communists take over. The marines, with the help of an additional 20,000 soldiers, remained in the Dominican Republic until August 1965. The American forces helped the military rulers remain in power.

Bosch said that “this was a democratic revolution smashed by the leading democracy in the world.” To Latin American leaders in other countries it led to a belief that, if the United States did not like their policies or politics, it would support revolutions to overthrow them.

Most of the suspected “Communists” turned out to be anti-American, Dominican nationalists with no known Communist connections. Johnson made an error in reasoning that had been made before him and would, at times, be made after him: that anyone who is anti-United States must be a Communist. The American intervention in the Dominican Republic increased distrust of the United States and increased anti-American feeling.

In the United States opinion is divided. Many think that the United States should not help dictators and military rulers gain power. Others believe that revolutions in Latin America are often supported by anti-American Communists or by Communist-backed groups. Therefore, the United States should support certain governments even if they are ruled by the army or dictators to preserve order.

Unsettled 1970s and 1980s

In the 1970s, under President Richard Nixon, the United States decided to drop the social and economic aims of the Alliance for Progress. Instead, Nixon called for a partnership between the United States and Latin America. Nixon also made it “perfectly clear” that the United States would not accept the seizure of property belonging to American businesses in Latin America.

During the Nixon years the Central Intelligence Agency was very active in Latin America. Its activities included supplying money and training groups in Chile who wished to overthrow the government of President Salvador Allende.

In the administration of President Jimmy Carter, the United States tried to reassure Latin Americans that our policy was to work for reform and progress. The centerpiece of the Carter policy was his program on human rights and a concern for individual civil and political freedom in the hemisphere. This new policy was aimed at governments in Latin America that had taken repressive measures against people who disagreed with government actions. In particular, Carter threatened to cut off aid to Argentina and Chile unless the governments of those two countries protected the rights of their people.

Grenada

In October 1983, U.S. military forces landed on the island of Grenada in the Caribbean Sea. Grenada had been ruled by a government friendly to Cuba since 1979. In early 1983, Cuba began assisting in the construction of a large and modern airport in Grenada by workers heavily armed with modern weapons. President Ronald Reagan feared that the airport would be used by the Cubans and the Russians as a military base. He was also concerned about the safety of Americans, such as medical students, on the island if there should be trouble.

More than 6,000 U.S. troops were sent to Grenada. U.S. citizens were evacuated (taken away to safety). Several hundred armed Cubans on the island were captured and ordered to leave. U.S. troops remained on the island until a democratically elected government was set up a few months later.
Governments in Latin America

The United States is a republic, and so are the nations of Latin America. This means that each of the 22 independent nations of Latin America has its own written constitution. Each of these constitutions describes the way the government is supposed to work.

In a republic the people are supposed to elect their president and other government officials. Republics also have branches (arms) of the government that make the laws.

Most nations of Latin America have been free for more than 160 years. Some of the nations have a tradition (history) of honest and fair election of their leaders. Venezuela, Uruguay, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Chile (until 1974) offer good examples of peaceful and constitutional change of leaders. However, many Latin American nations have not been able to set up good, strong governments to serve the people. In these countries the governments change often. Bolivia has had more than 60 revolutions since 1820. Ecuador has had 11 different constitutions. Colombia has had 27 civil wars. These are only a few examples of unstable governments in Latin America.

You might think that, because the United States is also a republic, its politics and government are very similar to those of Latin American nations. There are, however, important differences.

In the United States we, the citizens, play an important role in governing ourselves. By voting, we elect the president (our executive branch) and the members of Congress (our law-making, or legislative, branch). For this reason we feel that the United States is a government "of the people and by the people." The leaders of our government are changed by peaceful election.

In Latin American countries only certain people may vote. Many people do not have the right to vote and do not take part in the government. Leaders in Latin America are often changed by military takeovers.

Many Dictatorships

During most of their history, many Latin American nations have been ruled by dictators. In a dictatorship, one person (the dictator) or a small group of persons rule the country. They make the laws and do whatever they want, without regard to the wishes of the people.

In Latin America, a dictator is called a caudillo. Many caudillos have been generals or powerful military leaders. Latin Americans like their leaders to be bold, brave, and powerful and to be macho (very masculine). The people have confidence in this type of man. They believe he will serve them better than other types of leaders.

The caudillos force their way into power with the help of a small group of supporters. They hold power because they control the army and navy. This type of government is not stable because the leaders remain in power only until the next revolution.

Political Parties

Political parties are important if governments of the people are to work. Latin American parties can be divided into three groups: Conservative, Liberal, and Workers. During most of the history of Latin America the Conservatives and Liberals fought over the power of the church and control of power in the government.
The workers and the poorest people had no party to speak for them. Therefore, the government paid little attention to labor reforms and the improvement of social conditions.

Workers’ parties came into existence in the 20th century. Members were usually Socialists or Communists. The Socialist Worker parties and Communist Worker parties have not been able to cooperate (except in Chile in 1938 and again in 1970). As a result, few reforms for the people have been put into action.

The Future and Possible Change

One event has greatly influenced the situation in Latin America. That event is the Cuban Revolution. As you have already read, Fidel Castro led a people’s revolution in Cuba. Because this was a revolution in which most of the people took part, many changes have occurred in Cuba.

What lessons were learned by other Latin American countries? They saw poor people who were no longer satisfied with their living conditions. They learned that when such conditions are not improved there can be revolution.

Many governments are now showing interest in the welfare of the people. Education laws are being more strictly enforced. Colombia has set up a system of radio schools to reach the poor mountain and country people. Chile uses television for group teaching. The governments now realize that, in order to bring about improvements in people’s lives, the people must be educated. If more people learn to read and write, more people will be able to understand how their governments work. By using their votes more wisely, they will elect leaders who will bring about reform.

Latin American leaders have made it possible for more people to vote. Only with time, education, and the widening right to vote will Latin American countries encourage the setting up of governments “of the people, by the people, and for the people.”

Chile: The Failure of a Peaceful Revolution

Chile was one of the few countries of Latin America to have a stable government and economy in the 19th and early 20th century. However, problems did exist. The majority of the Chilean people were farmers. Few of them owned the land on which they worked in poverty. Most of the land and wealth was held by a few hundred families. There was, however, a small but growing middle class living in the cities of Chile.

The unequal distribution of wealth and power led to protest from the middle class and peasants (poor farmers). Also, economic problems began to arise. Chile’s economic well-being was based on the sale of nitrates and copper. When sales of these two resources began to fall, great unemployment resulted.

In 1970, Dr. Salvador Allende won a narrow victory in a democratically held election. Allende was the head of a coalition of Communists and Socialists. He gained the support of the defeated party by promising to follow democratic and constitutional procedures while in office.

Allende wished to help the poor. His program called for equal distribution of income and land. He began a process of nationalizing Chile’s natural resources (copper, nitrates, and iron ore). Allende scolded the owners of the copper and nitrate mines for not using the profits from the mines to help the Chilean people. He hinted that the owners, many of whom were from the United States, would not be paid for their property because of the
excessive (very large) profits they had taken out of the country in the past. Actually, much of the property that was nationalized was paid for. However, the owners felt they had not received the true value.

Allende then ordered a 35 percent wage increase for the miners and at the same time set up a system of price controls. These price controls prevented the raising of prices on food and other products sold in Chile. In addition, 1,300 farms were taken away from their owners without payment. The government also took control of the banks.

Salvador Allende became President of Chile in 1970. His "peaceful revolution" and attempts to change the economic situation in Chile failed. In 1973 he was killed and a military junta took control of Chile.

The poor peasants, the miners, and the urban poor benefited from these changes. But the middle class in the cities and the urban (city) middle-class workers did not. They became very unhappy and dissatisfied with Allende and his government. Strikes took place in the cities, and members of groups opposed to Allende carried out a series of terrorist acts. To make matters worse, food shortages developed and the market for copper and nitrates shrank.

President Richard Nixon had made it part of his policy that the United States would not accept the seizure of property belonging to U.S. businesses in Latin America. Nixon considered Allende's nationalization of natural resources a direct threat to U.S. interests. To help bring down the Allende government, the United States and American banks and businesses withheld loans and further investments in Chile.
By late 1972, Chile's economy was in deep trouble. Strikes continued. Allende accused the United States of "strangling" Chile's economy and asked for assistance from the Soviet Union. Even with the aid of technicians and experts from the Soviet Union, Cuba, and other Communist nations the economy continued to worsen.

Strikes and street rioting in the cities increased. In September 1973, the army attacked the presidential palace, killing Allende. A military junta under the leadership of General Augusto Pinochet took control. Pinochet immediately suspended all civil liberties, disbanded all political parties, and prohibited strikes. Pinocchet ruled Chile as an absolute dictator until March 1990.

The failure of this "peaceful revolution" has been blamed on middle-class greed and upper-class terror. Additional blame is placed on the antidemocratic military and U.S. interference in the form of Central Intelligence Agency aid to the army and the opposition to Allende. Allende's opponents believe that the ideas and actions that he promoted would have destroyed Chilean democracy.

Argentina: From Democracy to Dictatorship to Democracy

Argentina in many ways was the most advantaged of the Latin American nations. The fertile soil and the wealth of natural resources made Argentina's future look bright. However, Argentina had to attract Europeans who knew how to raise the crops that European customers would buy. In addition, railways were needed to haul the new crops to the seaports of Argentina.

To achieve these ends Argentina encouraged European immigration and investment. By 1900, Argentina had more foreign-born people in its population than native-born. The English invested in and constructed the best rail system in Latin America for the Argentines.

The immigrants (mainly Italians and Germans) made a great industry of agriculture. In the early years of independence many farms had surrounded the towns and cities in order to feed the local population. After the Europeans came, thousands of acres were planted in wheat. Grain now went to the city people of Europe as well as to the people of Argentina.

On the pampas, the grazing of cattle was transformed into a stock-raising industry. Cattle was raised for export. The development of the meat-packing industry brought great profits. Along with grain exports, meat product exports brought great prosperity and wealth to Argentina.

After Argentina became independent, the country, as was the case in all of Latin America, went through a period of local wars, weak leaders, and unstable government. Then, from 1835 to 1852, Argentina was ruled by Juan Manuel de Rosas, a caudillo considered to be one of the most brutal ever to appear in Latin America. However, he did establish order, and he taught the Argentines the value of the civil liberties and freedom he had taken away from them. In 1852, Rosas was overthrown, and from then until 1930 Argentina had a constitution, regular elections, and movement toward more democratic government.

In 1930, however, Argentina fell victim to the worldwide depression. Exports of beef and wheat fell sharply, and unemployment grew. The government did little to improve the situation. At this point the military took control. One president, picked by the army or navy, followed another. None stayed in power long. Then, in 1943, Colonel Juan Perón took over and ruled through people he controlled. In 1946, he became president and ruled for 9 years.
Perón established order and reformed the economy. He began by encouraging outside investment in Argentine industry. He aided the growth of labor unions and used them as a base for increasing his power. Perón increased wages and benefits for the workers and their families. He nationalized the railroads and used government money for public works. Although he protected and widened workers' rights on the job, he outlawed freedom of speech and limited freedom of the press. He abolished the clause (part) of the constitution that would have prevented him from succeeding himself as president of Argentina.

Eva Perón, his wife, helped him to win the support of the people. She had the title "Minister of Health and Labor." Women's rights and welfare programs were her special interests. She helped women gain the right to vote and had hospitals and schools built. When she died in 1952, the Argentine workers wept for her.

Perón lost the support of the army when he threatened to arm the workers. He also lost the support of the Roman Catholic Church when he tried to weaken its power with the people.

In 1955, Perón was driven from power by a group of army officers. During the next 18 years the people of Argentina faced a worsening political and economic situation. When elections did take place, the army removed from office people whom it did not like. Civil liberties disappeared entirely, and the days of the brutal Rosas returned to Argentina.

By the 1970s, unemployment and inflation were high. In 1972, Perón was re-elected president, but he died in 1974 before he could do anything to improve the situation. The army continued to rule, and conditions kept getting worse.

In 1982, Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands, a British colony in the South Atlantic. Argentina had long claimed ownerships of the Falklands. The military government hoped to unite the country by this popular action and to draw the people's attention from the troubled economy and the loss of freedom. After a two month war, however, Argentina was defeated and the British regained control of the islands.

In 1983, in a democratic election, Raúl Alfonsín was elected president. He was faced with the worst inflation in Argentina's history. In addition, high employment and a huge foreign debt existed. Since Alfonsín took office, he has restored civil liberties, ended human rights violations, and attempted to solve Argentina's economic problems.

The recent past haunts the government of Raúl Alfonsín. During the "dirty war" against "Marxists" between 1976 and 1983, the army resorted to illegal methods. At least 9,000 Argentines were arrested, never charged, and disappeared without trace. Torture and murder were the usual methods used by many army officers to gain their objectives.

When Alfonsín became president, he promised to investigate and punish the officers involved. Five former military junta leaders and five other generals were sent to prison. Another 360 officers were to face trial on human rights violation.

In April 1987, however, an army mutiny broke out, led by a junior army officer, Lt. Col. Aldo Rico. Rico said he was not leading a mutiny against the government but protesting the continuing military trials. In May 1987, a law was proposed that would exonerate all lower-ranking officers of atrocities on the ground they were following orders.

The army felt that it fought a successful war against a Marxist attempt to overthrow the legitimate government between 1976 and 1983 and that it should be honored, not put on trial. The opposition is convinced that the army acted illegally and that thousands of innocent people were tortured and murdered, and that the "assassins" must be brought to justice.

In the middle, the majority of Argentines are uncertain. They are anxious for reconciliation and peace but are not sure how to achieve them. They are committed to democracy, but because of lack of experience are unsure of how to make it work successfully.
The army was not satisfied to allow a civilian government to put army officers on trial. As a result, army rebellions took place in April 1987, January 1988, and November 1988. The reason for the rebellions in each case was the same—a demand for amnesty for those officers accused of human rights violations during the 1976–1983 period of military rule. In each case, Alfonsín put down the rebellion and refused to give amnesty.

In May 1989, elections for the presidency were held. A rule in the constitution prevented President Alfonsín from seeking a second consecutive term of office.

In the election, the Peronista’s Partido Justicialista candidate Carlos Saúl Menem won with 47 percent of the vote and became president on July 8, 1989.

Inflation continued to be the major economic problem that faced Argentina. Rates of inflation reached a monthly figure of almost 200 percent in July 1989.

When Menem became president he put in motion an economic program which included: (1) devaluation of the Argentine currency; (2) new taxes; (3) reduction of tariffs to encourage exports and imports; (4) declaration of a state of emergency to allow for large public spending cuts and privatization of state-owned industries; (5) price controls on basic goods; and (6) an increase in utility rates by 200 to 900 percent.

This program seemed to be succeeding and the inflation rate fell. However, when price controls were lifted and raises were given to workers in December 1989, inflation again began to rise. Inflation continued to be a problem in 1991 and 1992 but has been more controlled than it was in the 1980s.

Early in December 1990, a new army rebellion broke out which was quickly put down. However, on December 30, 1990 President Menem pardoned many of the officers who had been involved in the human rights violations during the 1976–1983 period. After the pardons were granted, the army was satisfied and seemed to become a loyal supporter of the Menem presidency. Most Argentineans (70%), however, objected to the pardons.

The Road Ahead: A Swing to Democracy?

Between 1980 and 1990 military governments were forced to give up power in Latin American nations. The list of countries that moved toward civilian and democratic rule included Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay, Brazil, Peru, Panama, Paraguay, and Honduras. In Ecuador an elected civilian president replaced a military junta in 1979.

In March 1990, 71-year-old Patricio Aylwin Azocar took office as the democratically elected president of Chile, ending 17 years of harsh military rule. Aylwin was elected at the head of a 17-party coalition. General Pinochet, the last of the military dictators, was named commander of the army.

Democratic elections took place in Peru in 1985, when Alan García Perez was elected, and in 1990, when Alberto Fujimori, the son of Japanese immigrants, was elected president. The events that followed in Peru are described in the following section.

In Bolivia elections took place in 1985 and in 1989. The current president of Bolivia is Jaime Paz Zamora.

Guatemala held elections in November 1985 and in November 1990. In the most recent election neither of the two major candidates won a majority of the votes, and as a result a run-off election was held in 1991.

In Honduras, a presidential election took place in 1985 and again in 1989. In January 1990, Rafael Callejas took office. This event marked the first time since 1932 that a change to a president from the opposition party was achieved peacefully through a democratic election.
Recent Crises in Three Latin American Countries

Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso), led by Abimael Guzman, has carried on a 12-year campaign to destroy all of Peru’s “capitalist and imperialist” institutions through violence and to set up a peasant-worker state on the Maoist-Chinese model. The Shining Path movement is perhaps the most radical leftist rebellion still in operation in the world. It has waged a war of terror throughout Peru that has taken 25,000 lives and damaged 22 billion dollars worth of property.

To put down the rebellion, Alberto Fujimori has turned his presidency into a virtual dictatorship. In April 1992, he unilaterally dissolved Peru’s congress, shut down the courts, and suspended the constitution, largely on the grounds that these measures were necessary to destroy Shining Path. The United States and most European and Latin American countries disapproved, and the United States went so far as to suspend aid to Peru.

As the rebels were closing in on Lima, Fujimori set up a dictablana (soft dictatorship). He has suspended civil liberties, loosened controls on the police, and changed the judicial system so that convictions are easier to obtain.

Abimael Guzman, the leader of Shining Path, was born in Arequipa. As a university student he was influenced by Communist ideas. He was also influenced by Mao Zedong’s Cultural Revolution in China. In 1962, he became a teacher of philosophy at Huamanga University, where his students called him “Shampoo”; he could wash one’s brains, making everything crystal clear.

As he built a guerrilla organization, he ruthlessly stamped out opposing ideas and opinions. His followers were compelled to memorize his “Gonzalo Thoughts” (named after his alias) and to learn Maoist hymns in Chinese, syllable by syllable. In a way Guzman was trying to create a collective brain; the individual was to become an instrument for the greater good.

In September 1992 Guzman was captured by government forces. The capture of its leader was a blow to the bloodiest and most self-sufficient revolutionary movement in Latin America. Money to support Shining Path flowed, not from foreign sponsors, but from the Huallaga Valley in central Peru, a prime cocoa-producing area.

Even with the capture of Guzman, however, Shining Path will continue to exist and spread terror. The conditions that gave rise to the rebellion back in the late 1970s—poverty, injustice, and deep resentment over racial and class distinctions—still prevail. Until Fujimori finds a more stable, equitable, and democratic course, thousands of impoverished Peruvians will be willing to support an alternative vision, no matter how ruthless or violent.

To explain the appeal of Shining Path for many Peruvians, a review of the dichotomy (division into two parts) that exists in the country will be helpful.

In the Andes, near the town of Cuzco, sculptors are raising what will be the largest statue in Peru. It is a 114-foot-high bronze sculpture of Inca Pacha Kuteq, a 15th-century ruler of the Inca empire.

Far away, near the coast in the capital city, Lima, is a statue of the Spaniard Francisco Pizarro, conqueror of the Inca Empire.

The two statues symbolize the regional and racial divisions of modern Peru. It is impossible to understand the violence of the Shining Path rebel movement by looking only at poverty and political oppression. Racial and ethnic discrimination is also a very important factor.

Of Peru’s 22 million people, about 60 percent are mestizos, that is, people of mixed Spanish and Native American (Quechuan) heritage, 30 percent are Andean Native Americans, and 10 percent are whites. A Quechuan who moves into the city, cuts his braids, puts
on Western clothes, and learns to speak Spanish then considers himself a mestizo, or “cholo.” Most Shining Path supporters come from Peru’s Andean heartland—Cuzco, Ayacucho, Huancavelica, and Huancayo—all centers of Peru’s Quechuan population.

On the 500th anniversary of Columbus’ arrival in the Americas (1492), Peru’s Association of Economists delivered a bill for 647 billion dollars in colonial reparations to Spain’s ambassador to Peru. In addition the association requested an apology for the genocide (mass killing) perpetrated by the Spanish conqueros and colonists. The largest item on the bill was for a ransom of seven tons of gold and 13 tons of silver that a captive Inca, Atahualpa, paid Pizarro for his release. After the ransom was paid, Pizarro had Atahualpa killed.

After Pizarro founded Lima, the Spanish adopted racial controls to maintain their power. Indians were not permitted to own horses, to wear Spanish dress, to enter the churches of Lima, or to own or carry weapons.

Thousands of the Quechua people worked and died as slaves in Spanish mines. Also, when British companies hired contract laborers from India, China, and Polynesia to mine nitrates (guano), they allowed hundreds to be blinded by the ammonia fumes in the mines. In 1920s, uncounted workers died from an unregulated copper smelter run by an American company.

This history of mistreatment of course contributes to the extreme xenophobic (hatred of things foreign, or “white” in this case) ideas of Shining Path and to the feelings of the poor of Andean Peru. They see whites as foreigners, and they have strong feelings of vengeance. It is also interesting that Quechua and Aymara peoples feel like foreigners in their own country, since Peru is ruled by descendants of the Spanish conqueros or later immigrants who gained success in their new homeland.

In November 1992, the Peruvian people elected members of a new Congress to replace the one President Fujimori had dissolved earlier in the same year. The results were a vote of confidence for Fujimori, as the people chose members of his party to represent them.

Fernando Collor de Mello won the Brazilian presidency in 1989 by promising reforms that would help the desacoucado (shirtless ones), the Brazilian poor. By the summer of 1991, Brazilians by the thousand had put on shirts—black ones—to show their disgust with the Collor government.

In September 1992, a congressional commission concluded after a three month investigation that President Collor and members of his family had received 6.5 million dollars from his campaign fund raiser. The fund raiser extorted large sums from businessmen who hoped to get government contracts or favors. Also, an inflation rate of 20 percent a month and record unemployment helped to destroy support for the once-popular Collor.

In September 1992, the Brazilian Congress voted to accuse Collor formally. Officially Collor has been “suspended” from office for up to 180 days while the Brazilian Senate tries him on the charge of receiving bribes and kickbacks. They will hear the evidence and then vote on whether to remove him from office.

If Collor is removed, Vice President Itamar Franco would then be sworn in as president with the right to rule for up to six months. It would be his job to run the government and try to revive the very sick Brazilian economy.

However, Latin America’s largest nation has shown one very impressive sign of democracy. For the first time it has settled a government crisis by strict constitutional methods without military intervention.
Nevertheless, Brazil’s democracy is still weak. A long and painful impeachment process could do great harm. Many Brazilians are convinced that the best solution is for Collor to resign, but he has said several times that he never will.

In February 1991, a small group of soldiers led by an army colonel attempted unsuccessfully to overthrow the Venezuelan government. For 34 years, Venezuela has been a stable democracy, and the failed coup sent shock waves throughout Latin America. Like President Carlos Andres Perez of Venezuela, most Latin American leaders have begun painful free-market reforms and have asked their people to cooperate.

Perez’s own policies were a factor in the coup attempt. He has often been charged with tolerating corruption. Also, in a recent year Venezuela’s economy grew by 9 percent and earned 15 billion dollars from oil exports. Yet Perez kept social spending in check and allowed real wages of Venezuelan workers to drop. In addition, the army killed 300 people to put down food riots in 1989, yet the poor still resent cuts in food and gasoline subsidies.

As a result of the coup attempt, a new 4-billion-dollar economic-development program has been introduced in Venezuela.

However, in late November 1992, the second unsuccessful coup of the year was attempted by the same army group. In the coup attempt, 230 people died and rebel planes bombed the presidential palace.

In a December 1992 poll, just after the coup attempt, Perez has a disapproval rate of 92 percent. To underline this disapproval and unhappiness, Venezuelan voters in several sections of the country did not vote for candidates from Perez’s party in the elections held 10 days after the coup attempt. With this unrest, it is difficult to believe that there will not be other attempted coups in the near future.

Problems That Latin American Democracies Face

Although civilian rule is still weak in most countries in Latin America, the trend toward democratic elections and popular rule is clear.

The movement toward democracy is taking place at a time of many problems. The major factors that brought the military to power in the past were high inflation, local high unemployment and recession, and severe foreign debt problems.

The military was not able to solve these problems. In fact, the situation became worse. The new democratically elected governments now have to deal with high inflation, high unemployment, and a large foreign debt. The success of the democratic movement may depend on how quickly these problems can be solved.