

Address in Miami Before the Inter-American Press Association.

November 18, 1963

President John F. Kennedy (Kennedy Doctrine/No More Cubas Speech)

Mr. O'Farrill, Governor Bryant, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

I am very proud to be here tonight. I am particularly interested in the fact that two of our distinguished guests this evening are former Prime Ministers of Peru and are now publishers of newspapers. It does suggest to those who hold office that when the time comes, as they say in the United States, "if you can't beat them, join them."

This association and its members carry a very large responsibility for the defense of freedom in the hemisphere. Through the press you create the vital public awareness of our responsibility and appreciation of our dangers. Your work to fulfill this responsibility and the courageous fight of your association for freedom of the press and the liberty of the citizens make me very proud to come to this meeting.

I want to commend the American publishers who are here for their interest in the Inter-American Association, and I want to express a very warm welcome to those of you who have come from our sister Republics to visit our country on this important occasion.

I think it is appropriate that this meeting should take place just as the annual review of the Alliance for Progress at Sao Paulo has ended. That congress and conference has reviewed our progress, examined our defects, on occasion applauded our achievement. It has been a forum for discussion and critical analysis, and if one fact emerges from that meeting, it is, despite differences on specific problems, there is a common dedication and a common belief in the fundamental principles of the charter of Punta del Este, in the soundness, the urgency, and, I believe, the inevitability of the Alianza para el Progreso. Indeed, it could not be otherwise, for those principles, the goals and the methods of the Alliance, represent the only hope whereby men of good will can obtain progress without despotism, social justice without social terror. And it is on the Alliance for Progress that we base our common hope for the future.

That hope is for a hemisphere where every man has enough to eat and a chance to work, where every child can learn, and every family can find decent shelter. It is for a hemisphere where every man, from the American Negro to the Indian of the altiplano, can be liberated from the bonds of social injustice, free to pursue his talents as far as they will take him. It is a hope for a hemisphere of nations, each confident in the strength of its own independence, devoted to the liberty of its citizens, and joined with all nations of the West in an association based on national strength and a common dedication to freedom. For we all share in this hemisphere a common heritage. And if the idea of Atlantic community is to have full meaning, it must include the nations of Latin America.

The fulfillment of these hopes is not an easy task. It is important that the people of the United States, on whom much responsibility rests, realize how enormous that task is. They can see its dimensions in the fact that Latin America is the fastest growing continent in the world. Its population has increased 10 percent in the past 10 years. Its almost 200 million people will be 400 million people by the 1980's. They can see its dimensions in the fact that tens of millions of their neighbors in the South exist in poverty, with annual incomes of less than \$100, that life expectancy in almost half of the countries in Latin America is less than 50 years, that half of the children have no schools to attend, that almost half the adults can neither read nor write, that tens of millions of city dwellers live in unbearable slums, that millions more live in rural areas and suffer from easily curable diseases, yet without hope of treatment, that in vast

areas men and women are crippled by hunger while we possess in the United States the scientific tools necessary to grow all the food we need.

These problems--the hard reality of life in much of Latin America--will not be solved simply by complaining about Castro, by blaming all problems on communism, or generals, or nationalism. The harsh facts of poverty and social injustice will not yield easily to promises or good will. The task we have set ourselves and the Alliance for Progress, the development of an entire continent, is a far greater task than any we have ever undertaken in our history. It will require difficult and painful labor over a long period of time.

Despite the enormity of these problems, and our heavy responsibility, the people of the United States have been asked to sacrifice relatively little. Less than 1 percent of our Federal budget is allocated to assist half a hemisphere. It is the people of Latin America who must undergo the agonizing process of reshaping institutions, not the people of the United States. It is the people of Latin America who must draw up development programs and mobilize their total resources to finance those programs, not the people of the United States. It is the people of Latin America whose cities and farms, homes, and hails of government will bear the shock wave of rapid change and progress, not the people of the United States. It is the people of Latin America who will have to modify the traditions of centuries, not the people of the United States.

Certainly we in the United States cannot fail to do so little when so much is at stake for so many. The last 2 1/2 years have been a time of trial and experiment. We have labored to build a structure of cooperation and common effort for years to come. No nation in the Americas can deny that much more must be done to strengthen and speed our efforts, that there have not been setbacks and disappointments.

That is why we intend to support strongly the leadership of the new Inter-American Committee for the Alliance for Progress, and why we are working to clear away unnecessary obstacles to the swift administration of United States contributions. But necessary concentration on obstacles and improvements should not obscure the fact that the Alianza para el Progreso has also made important progress. We have created new machinery for inter-American cooperation. The United States has committed \$2.3 billion to the Alianza, and the Latin American nations have committed billions more. In many countries there have been new efforts at land reforms and tax reforms, education, and agriculture.

The basic issues of progress and reform, long ignored, have become the battleground of the political forces of the hemisphere. And, on the economic front, last year 10 of the 19 Latin American countries exceeded the per capita growth of 2.5 percent established by the charter of Punta del Este. Nor can the failure of some to meet the goals of the charter be placed wholly on the shortcomings of the Alliance. No amount of external resources, no stabilization of commodity prices, no new inter-American institutions, can bring progress to nations which do not have political stability and determined leadership. No series of hemispheric agreements or elaborate machinery can help those who lack internal discipline, who are unwilling to make sacrifices and renounce privileges. No one who sends his money abroad, who is unwilling to invest in the future of his country, can blame others for the deluge which threatens to overcome and overwhelm him.

For the Alianza para el Progreso is not an external aid program. It is more than a cooperative effort to finance development plans. It is a battle for the progress and freedom of all of our nations. And it must be fought on every front of national interest and national need.

First, is the front of social justice. It is impossible to have real progress as long as millions are shut out from

opportunities, and others forgiven obligations. In my own country we have prepared legislation and mobilized the strength of the Federal Government to insure to American Negroes--and all other minorities--access to the benefits of American society. Others must also do the same for the landless campesino, the underprivileged slum dweller, the oppressed Indian. Privilege is not easily yielded up. But until the interests of a few yield to the needs of the Nation, the promise and modernization of our society will remain a mockery to millions of our citizens.

The second front is the front of economic welfare: the principle that every American has the right to a decent life for himself and a better life for his children. This means we must continue to perfect national development plans, to improve financing machinery and institutions. It means that every nation must be willing to make sacrifices and mobilize its own resources for development. It also means that the United States of America must live up to the full its commitment to provide continuing help. I have pledged the full energies of this Government to insure that commitment will be met, and it is my hope that the Congress of the United States and the people of the United States will recognize not only the obligation that lies upon them, but also the opportunity.

In pursuit of economic welfare the Alianza does not dictate to any nation how to organize its economic life. Every nation is free to shape its own economic institutions in accordance with its own national needs and will. However, just as no country can tell another how it must order its economy, no nation should act within its own borders so as to violate the rights of others under accepted principles of international law. Private enterprise also has an important place in the Alliance for Progress.

There is not enough available public capital either in the United States or in Latin America to carry development forward at the pace that is demanded. Yet the net flow of foreign capital alone was almost \$250 million less this year than last, a third as much as the entire request to the United States Congress for assistance funds in this hemisphere. If encouraged, private investment, responsive to the needs, the laws, and the interests of the Nation, can cooperate with public activity to provide the vital margin of success as it did in the development of all the nations of the West, and most especially in the development of the United States of America. This country would not have achieved its present growth rate if it had not been for the development capital, the private development capital, that came to this country, especially in the years prior to World War I, when the United States was an underdeveloped country.

If we are to have the growth essential to the requirements of our people in this hemisphere, then an atmosphere must be developed and maintained that will encourage the flow of capital in response to opportunity. Today that capital is moving into growth here in the United States and into Western Europe. Together we must provide the environment that will encourage its flow to Latin America.

And third, is the front of political democracy and stability. This is at the core of our hopes for the future. There can be no progress and stability if people do not have hope for a better life tomorrow. That faith is undermined when men seek the reins of power and ignore the restraints of constitutional procedures. They may even do so out of a sincere desire to benefit their own country. But democratic governments demand that those in opposition accept the defects of today and work towards remedying them within the machinery of peaceful change. Otherwise, in return for momentary satisfaction, we tear apart the fabric and the hope of lasting democracy.

The charter of the Organization of American States calls for "the consolidation on this continent, within the framework of democratic institutions, a system of individual liberty and social justice based on respect for the essential rights of man." The United States is committed to this proposition. Whatever may be the case in other parts of the world, this is a hemisphere of free men capable of self-government. It is in accordance with this belief that the United States will continue to support the efforts of those seeking to establish and maintain constitutional democracy.

And fourth, is the front of international responsibility. We must honor our commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes, the principle of collective action, and the strengthening of the inter-American system. We must also continue to invite and urge the participation of other Western nations in development programs. And the United States will continue to urge upon its allies the necessity of expanding the markets for Latin American products.

But just as we have friends abroad, we also have enemies. Communism is struggling to subvert and destroy the process of democratic development, to extend its rule to other nations of this hemisphere. If the Alliance is to succeed, we must continue to support measures to halt Communist infiltration and subversion, and to assist governments menaced from abroad. The American States must be ready to come to the aid of any government requesting aid to prevent a take-over linked to the policies of foreign communism rather than to an internal desire for change. My own country is prepared to do this. We in this hemisphere must also use every resource at our command to prevent the establishment of another Cuba in this hemisphere. For if there is one principle which has run through the long history of this hemisphere it is our common determination to prevent the rule of foreign systems or nations in the Americas.

We have ultimately won this battle against every great power in the past. We will continue to wage it and win it. And as we gain momentum and strength, the appeal and force of communism will greatly diminish. This has already begun to happen. Castroism, which a few years ago commanded the allegiance of thousands in almost every country, today has far fewer followers scattered across the continent. Experience in China, the Soviet Union, and in Cuba itself has revealed that the promises of abundance under tyranny are false. We ourselves can prove that democratic progress is the surest answer to the promises of the totalitarians.

These are the many fronts of the Alliance for Progress. The conduct of those fronts, the steady conquest of the surely yielding enemies of misery and hopelessness, hunger, and injustice is the central task for the Americas in our time. But no sense of confidence, of optimism in the future of the hemisphere as a whole, can conceal our feelings at the self-inflicted exile of Cuba from the society of American Republics. The genuine Cuban revolution, because it was against the tyranny and corruption of the past, had the support of many whose aims and concepts were democratic. But that hope for freedom and progress was destroyed. The goals proclaimed in the Sierra Maestra were betrayed in Havana.

It is important to restate what now divides Cuba from my country and from the other countries of this hemisphere. It is the fact that a small band of conspirators has stripped the Cuban people of their freedom and handed over the independence and sovereignty of the Cuban nation to forces beyond the hemisphere. They have made Cuba a victim of foreign imperialism, an instrument of the policy of others, a weapon in an effort dictated by external powers to subvert the other American Republics. This, and this alone, divides us. As long as this is true, nothing is possible. Without it, everything is possible. Once this barrier is removed, we will be ready and anxious to work with the Cuban people in pursuit of those progressive goals which a few short years ago stirred their hopes and the sympathy of many people throughout the hemisphere.

No Cuban need feel trapped between dependence on the broken promises of foreign communism and the hostility of the rest of the hemisphere. For once Cuban sovereignty has been restored we will extend the hand of friendship and assistance to a Cuba whose political and economic institutions have been shaped by the will of the Cuban people. But our pursuit of the goals of the Alianza para el Progreso does not wait on that day.

In 1961 the American nations signed the charter of Punta del Este. Today, more than 2 years later, despite dangers and difficulties, I support and believe in the Alliance for Progress more strongly than ever before. With the Alliance

the inter-American system, the American nations can look forward to a decade of growing hope and liberty. Without it, the people of this hemisphere would be left to a life of misery, with independence finally gone and freedom a futile dream.

I am well aware that there are some who, fearing the size of the obstacles, the resistance to progress, the pace of achievement, despair of the Alliance. But that same note of despair has been sounded before. In 1948, a distinguished Senator rose on the floor of the American Congress and said of the Marshall plan, "If I believed there were any good chance of accomplishing these purposes, I should support the bill, but in the light of history, in the light of the history of this very Congress and its predecessors, we cannot say there is a chance of success. All the evidence points to failure."

Despite this, we pressed ahead. The result is modern Europe. I do not discount the difficulties of the Alliance for Progress, difficulties far greater than those confronted by the Marshall plan. Then we helped rebuild a shattered economy whose human and social foundation remained. Today we are trying to create a basic new foundation, capable of reshaping the centuries of old societies and economies of half a hemisphere. But those who know our hemisphere, like those who knew Europe in 1948, have little doubt that, if we do not lose heart, the gloomy prophecies of today can once again fade in the achievements of tomorrow. For although the problems are huge the greatest danger is not in our circumstances or in our enemies, but in our own doubts and fears.

Robert Frost wrote 50 years ago, "Nothing is true except a man or men adhere to to live for it, to spend themselves on it, to die for it." We need this spirit even more than money or institutions or agreements. With it we can make the Alianza para el Progreso a reality for generations who are coming in this hemisphere. And ultimately we will hold a continent where more than 20 strong nations live in peace, their people in hope, and liberty, and believing strongly in a free future.

Thank you.

Note: The President spoke at the Americana Hotel in Miami Beach, Fla. His opening words referred to Romulo O'Farrill, President of the Inter-American Press Association, and Governor Farris Bryant of Florida. Later he referred to two former Prime Ministers of Peru--Pedro Beltran and Manuel Cisneros.

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