

Truman in Latin America

Past Examination Question: “In what ways, and with what results, did the Cold War influence relations between Latin America with the United States in the period **1945 to 1957**?” (note: covers Truman AND Eisenhower)

This question can be rephrased with the command term **Evaluate**:

“Evaluate the influence of the Cold War on relations between Latin America and the United States in the period **1945 to 1957**.”

Introduction

The historical relationship between the USA and Latin America prior to 1933 was dominated by policies such as the **Monroe Doctrine**, the **Roosevelt Corollary** and **Dollar Diplomacy**, as expressed through events like the **Spanish American War** and the **Panama Canal**.

Task 1

Develop the above paragraph to provide substantiating detail about each of the highlighted factors. Aim to bring it up to about **200 words** in length.

Task 2

- I. Before reading the information which follows, discuss as a class
 - (a) What do you recall about Truman’s foreign policy objectives?
 - (b) What do you therefore anticipate will be his policies in Latin America?

- II. Read through each of the following three sections, then make extra notes using the weblinks provided.

- III. Finally, answer the following questions in three paragraphs, using what you have learned.
 1. What were the main features of Truman’s policy towards in Latin America?
 2. To what extent was Truman’s policy in Latin America the same as his policy elsewhere in the world?
 3. How successfully did Truman achieve his objectives in Latin America?

Rio Treaty and the 9th Pan-American Conference at Bogota

The Rio Treaty of 1947 was the first sign that the relationship between the USA and Latin America would become weighted in favour of the US. It formalized the idea of hemispheric solidarity and defence and that an attack on one country in the Americas was an attack on them all. In the light of the beginning of the Cold War (Churchill made his famous 'Iron Curtain' speech in 1946 and the Truman Doctrine had been announced earlier in 1947), it was clear to many that Latin American nations were now "compulsory, automatic allies of the United States" (Garcia). Many Latin American and Caribbean Governments moved away from democracy to autocratic, right-leaning regimes and countries like Brazil, Chile and Cuba even cut off relations with the USSR.

There seemed to be no reciprocal benefits to this relationship for Latin American nations as they received only 2% of all US overseas aid, which would eventually rise to 3% (and this was overwhelmingly military in nature), despite the fact that the US State Department recognized the need to fund economic development and infrastructure in Latin America. At the Pan-American Conference in Bogota in 1948, the US delegation attended with only security concerns in mind. It was in Bogota that the Organization of American States was formed (OAS), a collective security organization that was the continent's equivalent of NATO. This conference occurred against a background of local protest and riots about socio-economic grievances following the assassination of a prominent Colombian politician.

Weblink	TWO extra points of information
▪ http://www.nytimes.com/1982/04/21/world/the-rio-pact-at-a-glance.html	
▪ http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/organization-of-american-states-established	

The 'Point Four Programs' and 'Mr. Y'

The “**Point Four Programs**” announced during Truman’s inaugural speech in 1949 hinted at change of emphasis in US policy in Latin America, from defence to support for socio- economic reform. Truman announced that there would scientific technical assistance and economic aid for developing countries but this was aimed mainly at African and Asian countries. The apparent return to “dollar diplomacy”- supporting US private enterprise at the expense of local Latin American populations - prompted a response from Louis Joseph Halle of the Policy Planning Staff at the State Department. He wrote an anonymous article in 1950 for Foreign Affairs magazine as ‘Mr Y’. In it, he condemned the lack of economic support for Latin America. After the "fall of China" in 1949, there was even less attention paid to Latin America.

In 1951 there was a special meeting of the OAS that proclaimed communism to be threat to the peoples of Latin America and the Mutual Security Act provided \$38 million of military assistance specifically for Latin America. Surplus WWII weaponry was made available as well, however emphasis was still on stability and internal security rather than economic assistance.

Suggested Weblink	TWO extra points of information
https://www.britannica.com/event/Point-Four-Program	
http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/04/13/the-y-article/	

The Bolivian Election and NSC-141

Following the results of a legitimate election in 1951, the Truman administration withheld recognition of left-leaning Bolivian Government that came to power in 1952. Eventually, the previous government, a right-wing autocracy, annulled the results, but this resulted in a leftist revolution. The new government pursued policies such as universal suffrage and land reforms.

In 1952, National Security Council issued a secret document, NSC-141. This was similar to NSC-68 (an important Cold War containment document) except with a focus in Latin America. Crucially, NSC-141 called for hemispheric stability first before socio-economic reforms.

Weblink	TWO extra points of information
http://www.voltairenet.org/article178471.html	