

AMERICA HAS A DESTINY

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By EDUARDO FREY

The present article has new interest because its author, the well known Chilean Christian democratic leader, has become a major contender for the presidential elections in Chile, less than a year from now. Frei's article is taken from a chapter on inter-American relations in his latest book, "The Truth Has Its Hour," which is a best seller in Chile and other Latin countries and embodies the author's ideas, both on Chilean domestic problems and on international affairs. Frei visualizes the America of the future, including the Anglo-Saxon and the Latin continents, as a decisive influence, both economically and politically, on the side of Western civilization.



No picture of America's present or future can be drawn without a consideration of the relationship between the United States of North America and the Disunited States of South America, as someone cleverly put it. The influence of that relationship conditions all the actions of Latin America and will progressively increase within the framework of any policy the United States may choose to follow.

The Mexican scholar Daniel Cosío y Villegas has said: "No one can possibly be surprised at the extraordinary attraction that the United States holds for us. It goes beyond any desire for personal gain, which in itself is quite powerful. It consists of geographic destiny and what we might call historic coincidence. 'Historical coincidence' means simply that we are branches, no matter how dismembered and unimportant, of the great trunk of Western Civilization, just as is the Unit-

ed States. That is why our way of life is similar, in a general way, to that of the United States and not to that of Russia, for example. This tie is much stronger than some might suppose. To me it is as strong as any economic tie and hardly less firm than geographic ties."

Both Americas have inherited Western, Christian civilization. Both branches grew out of the same tree and emerged from the same source. Despite their many differences, they have like thoughts and similar concepts of man. This is the truth that conditions the future, because the nature and definition of relations between North and South America will determine man's destiny on this continent.

In the United States, when the North and South came face to face, a drama was enacted, the outcome of which determined the nation's fate. We are able to see now that the foundation of the strength and

power that today affects the entire world was constructed at that time.

In like manner and on an equally vast scale, though in different form, might such a union between the North and South of this hemisphere take place.

Latin America can continue for a long period of time as a group of nations, each jealously guarding its own political sovereignty, arming against its neighbors, maintaining its nationalistic weaknesses. Each of the American nations presently asserts itself against neighboring nations toward which it should be friendly, and each bows down to those nations that are really trying to dominate it.

Latin America is basically a supplier of raw materials such as coffee, petroleum, iron, copper and wheat. Its progress is very decisively linked to favorable exchange terms in international trade enabling each nation to obtain from ex-

ports enough money to purchase machinery and foodstuffs for its people and for its economic development. These nations, subjected to constant, radical fluctuations in their output of raw materials, are weak because the economy of each depends on one or two products having specific markets.

Industrial Progress

Of course, Latin American countries are making an effort to develop their industries, but progress has been very slow. In some areas, industries have been developed to some extent, but only at the expense of other economic activities and especially at the farmer's expense. Thus, agricultural production is increasingly inadequate to meet the needs of growing populations and of scientific and technical advances. This shortage of food prevents economic development.

If, on the other hand, we observe the formidable increase in capital investment and in wealth in the United States, and if we note the tools that new sources of energy and creative powers place at their disposal, we realize that the gap between the two Americas in relation to power and to living standards is gradually widening. The high per capita income of the United States and the high rate of investment tend to widen the gap still further.

Less than a hundred years ago, ownership of a textile machine was a sign of industrial power. During the past thirty years, most Latin American nations have succeeded in establishing their own textile factories. For more than a century, power was measured by the number of tons of steel produced. Today, practically every major Latin American country has steel works or is planning to establish them. At the present time, power lies in the hands of the nations that eventually can utilize atomic energy. And mastery of this new element by some will increase economic inequalities.

Knowledge has always been the source of supremacy. It is useless to talk in terms of equality if one group has exclusive knowledge and the means to utilize it and the

other lacks even the access to sources from whence this knowledge stems, unless the first group is generous enough to grant such access. All these factors will tend to influence the attitude of the United States, causing it to assume that South America will continue in the future to serve only as a supply source for raw materials to feed its gigantic industrial machinery. The picture of divided nations made to look small by a corrupt and mediocre political climate dominated by uninformed dictators will accentuate this error in United States' thinking. To a certain extent, the present world thinks of us in such terms.

For a Latin America that will have a population of around 500 million by the end of the century and that will have continued to gravitate towards self-expression, it would be tragic if, at that point, its strongest impulse should emerge from a sense of resentment against the United States as a symbol of power and wealth.

Close links with North America

Another attitude no less dangerous than resentment is apparent — the feeling on the part of some that their destinies are so closely linked with that of North America that they forget South America. To these individuals it is practically a crime for the people of South America to formulate a common plan or unite in taking an independent position on a matter. They feel that anything proposed by the United States should be accepted. Independent action disturbs them. It is only necessary to obey to keep our northern neighbors happy. To them the United States is not a nation but simply a military bulwark against Communism. They are hypnotized by its prodigious wealth and look upon it as a land of promise. The road of their reasoning leads to a contented submission to colonization in exchange for an end to rebellion and for the security and well-being of the dollar.

Some of these individuals act in good faith. They are enthusiasts who have the souls of subject people. Others have discovered the advantages of being employed in a

rich home. But such a course would preclude true understanding, because a formula for mutual respect and cooperation is born neither of hate nor of submission. An association of peoples and an American civilization cannot stem from either.

The essence of the message that the people of the United States carry to the world is that of respect for all mankind. This is the source of its power. If the United States loses this respect it will not only corrupt the other nations but will also destroy itself in the act.

The Communist problem forms another barrier to mutual understanding. If, unfortunately, this problem is not viewed in its true light and an attempt is made to solve it only through loans and the benefits of free enterprise, it could rise up not solely as a philosophic and economic formula but as a banner of liberation, and, through a strange paradox, could disguise itself as nationalism fighting the influence of foreign powers. Such vast errors caused the loss of 400,000,000 Chinese to the Communist orbit. Even so, the Communists' political ideal, which to them seems logical, clear, and vigorous, contains a basic weakness in that it does not represent a Latin American view of the matter. Perhaps the masses, who do not reason but act by intuition, have felt that the Communist cause does not appeal to their basic philosophy of life but leads them on as part of a vast game for world domination where they have nothing to gain.

For all these reasons the only system that offers a long range historic perspective is that of a dignified association with the United States. The basis of such an association must be constructed.

The United States has succeeded in creating for its people a way of life of which it is very proud. It is called "The American way of life," and we might say that within certain human limitations its people live in a modern, democratic world where their material needs are met.

If the people of the United States believe in their way of life and if they want the world to think that theirs is the best way of resolving conflicts, they certainly cannot feel

that they can be part of an American continent half of which resists or envies them. Such will inevitably be the case if the gap between the two areas widens and Latin America comes to mean only a good business proposition that yields raw materials and profits.

The people of the United States can help decisively in the realization of a constructive association with Latin America. They must not give aid in exchange for subjugation. The United States has been able to give its people high living standards, but, abroad, the nation must avoid making the same mistakes as other nations who have directed the destinies of the world.

Pressure but not Imperialistic

Americans exercise pressure in proportion to their number, wealth and power; their businessmen behave as might logically be expected, as men in search of business; however, the people have no imperialistic aims. On the contrary, their basic tendency has been to isolate themselves blindly, to pull themselves away from foreign events and to go into their shell where they live very satisfactorily. Only the dramatic struggle for power into which they have been drawn has been able to make them follow another course, and not without strong resistance.

For this reason there is still the possibility of a constructive policy that might lead to a dignified association between North and South America. An association implies equality and a growing equality of opportunity, mutual interest, dignity, and freedom for the participants to adapt their institutions within the association. But, in fact, the two Americas are not equal. The disequilibrium becomes more pronounced; each becomes more dependent on the other because of the structure of international commerce and the rate of the economic development of each.

The obstacles inherent in such an association would be further magnified if relationships were furthered solely through investors who look only towards profits. Such obstacles, nevertheless, can be surmounted by positive values, because

in the overall picture the creation of a true supplementary economy would constitute a major source of wealth and security.

The significance of an extensive market and an equally high productivity remains to be seen. The economic system that permitted the forty-eight states of the United States to expand would be applied on a hemispheric basis, but such relationships would also be determined by the efforts of the people themselves and by ideals that will move them to mobilize their efforts towards superior goals.

Politics can be dominated, and often are, by the mediocre aims of powerful and active interests. Great transformations take place when politics, instead of being controlled by these interests, treat them fairly, and at the same time dominate them by establishing a just goal and by utilizing them more fully and wisely, thereby calling forth more efficient moral and practical reserves.

On the one hand, United States public opinion must be counted upon if this plan is to succeed. On the other, we must organize and awaken desires and goals that would be capable of shaking the people of Latin America into action.

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One Central American official observed that two peaceful but far-reaching revolutions have taken place in the United States within the last years.

The first was the high standard of living and great purchasing power that the workers have succeeded in obtaining and the fact that United States businessmen have become convinced that this factor, rather than impairing the workers' efficiency, has resulted in unparalleled economic advancements due to the rise in consumption. This has been such a tremendous evolution in the structure of capitalism that it has changed its form completely, as compared to the last century.

The second revolution, perhaps the only one of its kind in history, has granted the farmer a minimum price level for his produce, which in turn means a standard of living for farmers equal to that of industrial workers. This is a point worth not-

ing because, in general, the progress of industrial workers has been won only at the expense of the farm laborer.

The third phase of this revolution should be the winning over of all Americans to the idea that a Latin with a high purchasing power, high productivity, and good social conditions is essential to the development of the hemispheric economy.

EDUARDO FREI was born in Santiago, Chile, of Swiss-Spanish extraction. 46 years old. Lawyer, after initial work in teaching and journalism in his youth.

One of the youngest Cabinet appointees in Chilean history, was Minister of Public Works at 34, in 1945. A member of the Chilean Senate since 1949, was reelected last March, after winning the highest popular vote in the nation-wide election. Two months ago was nominated as the presidential candidate, in the 1958 campaign, of vast independent groups and the Christian Democratic party.

Leading exponent of Christian - Democratic ideals in Latin America, following the path represented in Europe by Adenauer, de Gasperi, Schuman, etc. Has made many trips to international gatherings in Latin America, the U.S. and Europe. In 1950 and 1951 was delegate to the U.N. General Assembly in New York. In recent years has participated in various technical meetings of the U. N.'s ECLA (Economic Commission for Latin America) group.

Representative of the new generation of democratic leaders in the Latin nations, the men who are trying to change the old pattern into more progressive social, economic and political conditions.

Has written several books dealing both with Chilean and Latin American problems.

We have begun to progress in that direction. From the reports made by Paley, Capehart, Eisenhower, Malone, and Grace we realize that any expert investigation would come to the same conclusions. We need only initiate an objective and complete study for the brilliant suggestions to start flowering.

It is of fundamental importance to differentiate between the two Americas and between the nations of South America since they do not form a single unit in their psychology and in their stage of evolution. It would be foolish to apply the methods used in the United States during the end of the last century to this continent on the basis of some superficial similarities.

Problem of Capitalism

For the people of the United States, the word "capitalism" means a system that bears little similarity to the era of the great captains of industry, of monopolies, and of the conquest of the West. Present-day capitalism still retains the seeds of the capitalism of old, but it has been substantially modified by the emergence of new forces such as tax and anti-trust laws and of powerful labor organizations.

On the other hand, in Latin America the term "capitalism" still retains the European meaning which corresponds to a definite philosophy as analyzed by Marx, Pope Leo XIII, and Pope Pius XII.

For this reason we need a study that will circumvent superficiality and sensationalism — the kind on which some newspapers and magazines thrive. It is important for us to begin reading comments such as those included in Dr. Milton Eisenhower's 1953 report: "Latin America is just as important a market for our export products as all of Europe and more important than Asia, Africa, and Oceania combined. Our sales to Latin America cover all the articles we produce. The Latin American republics are even more important to us as a source of our importations — far more important than Europe and other parts of the world. Unfortunately, the people of the United States do not seem to realize the importance to us of maintaining a stable economic relationship with Latin America. In fact, some of our actions have forced leaders of these nations to the erroneous conclusion that we only turn toward Latin America in times of crises."

Such a statement would indicate that there do exist men who have

the necessary perspective to understand the mutual advantages of an alliance — and it is evident that they are paving the way. We have heard similar views expressed by a Vice President of the United States. It does indicate that a change is possible.

The responsibility of changing the destiny of this continent ultimately rests with us South Americans. Frequently we blame others for our own mistakes. There is a tendency to expect give-aways and to complain bitterly when they fail to arrive. It is entirely useless to think that an enterprise of association can be undertaken completely through the generosity or understanding of others.

Democracy, if it is to survive in Latin America, must be the genuine fruit of a process of maturity within each of its nations. Existing democracies can create a climate that would facilitate and encourage democracy and would prevent its destruction through treachery, but we cannot expect democracy to become established here through the intervention of outside forces.

The Latin American finds nothing so repugnant as to have to request a large country for aid in overthrowing a government, no matter how bad that government might be. There is only one thing worse; the utilization by a great power of its influence in sustaining such a government, especially when it violates the most basic principles of human rights to do so.

We cannot use the United States as a source of assistance, at the same time bitterly criticizing that nation, and then later asking it to solve all our problems through a loan. How often have South American nations failed to be treated justly and with dignity because their governments were in such haste to sell themselves that they relentlessly pursued potential buyers? Such actions can only create scorn for these nations. Later these same governments attend international meetings and put on such verbal airs of gallantry that one is embarrassed by them.

Quite obviously this is not the way to do things. At times it is surprising that the powerful nation does not even smile, that it just re-

tains the outward forms of etiquette. It is strange that the large nation has restrained itself in acquiring certain human merchandise that is being offered to it so cheaply.

The job of bringing about an association will mean sacrificing certain advantages in the search for a new deal. And since we will not be in quest of some minor objective, it will require time, firmness, and sincerity.

This task has already commenced, a good example being the work of the U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America. For many years this organization has studied and explored with scientific detachment, at the same time avoiding glaring publicity. It has proceeded to draw a full picture of Latin America's economy in which figures, objective studies, and specialization replace vague and empty talk.

Such studies, plus the establishment of university departments of scientific economics for the purpose of training a nucleus of specialists on economic matters, have contributed more to a knowledge of our problems than a hundred years of more or less fruitless shouting.

Throughout Latin America scientific research has created a uniform standard of thinking by uncovering the characteristic and general lines followed in economic development. Such procedure has resulted in a sound diagnosis which constitutes the solution of half the problem. When a study reaches this level the research expert realizes that facts are neutral. They are objective in size and in form. For that reason, the Latin American does not find himself in romantic, vague, and everchanging times. He has documented reports which present the story in an unequivocal fashion. It is no longer a question of one man but a set of ideas on the march, of information which each day feeds a constantly widening current.

Unity—the Question of Survival

An understanding between the two Americas is not enough. The nations of South America must understand one another. It is not a question of living in peace, but one of survival. Unity amongst the

peoples of America was part of Bolivar's dream — a very logical dream that was never realized. Some situations that seem very rational sometimes never take place, but some facts can alter the course of events. If the men of this hemisphere fail to take such facts into consideration, they will be condemning themselves to a subordinate destiny.

We must have no illusions about it. Historically, we present a picture of a series of inorganic, unstable, weak countries incapable of organizing an adequate social life and subjected to periodic upheavals. Our cultural heritage and technical instruments have been superimposed upon us. We use but do not create; we are nations of importers who pay for the merchandise, for the idea, without living these things and giving birth to them, and we receive only the end results.

And now we find ourselves in a world containing large masses of peoples. Can nations that contain six, ten, or twenty million inhabitants have any significance before these blocks of united peoples? The smaller nations are unable to build a solid platform under their economy. They try to find the means of developing their resources through self-government, and at times they have to buy the materials to sustain artificially established industries requiring machinery and raw materials from abroad.

As their populations are small, they produce expensive and poor quality goods for a market which does not justify certain investments, and, after establishing some industries with great difficulty, they must bear the burden of not knowing where to sell the products their own people cannot consume.

As a result, in order to sell these products, the people must pay high prices for poor quality, and products must be defended at national boundaries by high tariffs against cheaper and better merchandise manufactured abroad.

Within our large areas we lack large populations; life goes on in a provincial fashion. The advantages of an authentic regional development that nourished European cities are not found here; alliances of large groups of nations are a

prerequisite for our own development. Latin America could represent a historically important group with international expression. At present, the world gets a confused concept of a number of vaguely similar states where periodic political cataclysms create an upheaval in the lives of its hot-tempered peoples who solve their conflicts with violence because they are incapable of establishing order and stability.

The few exceptions do not succeed in dissipating the image of Latin America held by far-off peoples who are too occupied with activities of great magnitude to distinguish among the various characteristics that separate the Latin American nations.

When we cross from the North to the South of this continent by airplane, each nation appears so small that it looks as though it might be just one province of an entire nation; however, each has its diplomats, its military machinery, its governments, its boundaries, its pride, its suspicions and its prejudices.

Each also has great natural wealth, similar hopes, and similar roots that make them all extraordinarily alike. As one shrewd observer put it, there is more of a similarity between a Chilean, a Colombian, and a Brazilian than between two individuals from Lombardy and Naples. Yet the Italians formed a nation. We satisfy ourselves that we are progressing when each of our nations build a little steel mill. We then affirm the fact that we are industrializing and feel that we are becoming independent, one from the other, although the balance sheets show that we are each day becoming more dependent.

But if these are the South American nation's main features, how can we create new systems, put aside suspicions, and break this hundred-year old impasse on which billions of repetitious and useless words have been thrust?

The Imperative Reasons for Change

The reasons for believing that a change can take place are many. The imperative economic reasons are evident, and sciences, new con-

THE CASE OF DR. CALDERA

The Christian Social Party of Venezuela (COPEI) is relatively the largest Christian Democratic Party on the Latin American continent, but her political and legal position is one of the worst in this region. In the last general elections three years ago, the COPEI gained 25 deputies in the 100-member Parliament, thus becoming the second largest party of Venezuela next to the left-wing Accio Democratica of Romualdo Gallegos. The results of the elections were annuled, however, by the ruling Junta Militar headed by Col. Marcos Perez Jimenez and, instead, a totalitarian system with a one-party parliament of deputies nominated by the Junta was installed in Caracas.

On August 26th of this year, Prof. Rafael Caldera, Secretary General of COPEI, who was nominated as the opposition's candidate for the presidency of Venezuela, was seized on the street by plainclothes policemen and taken to prison, where he is being kept incommunicado. Neither his doctor, nor his lawyer, nor his family can communicate with him. No charges have ever been brought against him, and his continuing imprisonment is causing an evergrowing stream of protests from lay and religious personalities and organizations inside and outside Venezuela.

The II International Congress of Latin American Christian Democrats paid special attention to this alarming offence against personal freedom and democratic rights. On the motion of the Argentinian delegation, the Congress passed a special resolution appealing to Christian Democratic Parties all over the world to initiate in their respective countries a campaign with the following objectives:

1. To let the public know that the Christian Democratic leader of COPEI of Venezuela, Dr. Rafael Caldera, has been held prisoner since August 26, and is being kept incommunicado.

2. To manifest their rejection of the dictatorship of Perez Jimenez which has subjected the people of Venezuela to a reign of terror and to an unjust division of the enormous wealth which Venezuela produces.

quests, and rapid advances in communications have brought about a true realization by the people of the problems that affect all of the Latin American nations.

During the years when its nations were fighting for their independence, America, despite the lack of adequate communications systems, had a conscience because an objective existed. There was the ruling class and the people who, though they might not have understood it fully, felt very deeply the need to undertake the task. Then it seemed very logical for an Argentinian to be a general in Chile and to rule Peru, or for a Columbian or a Venezuelan to liberate other nations and establish new governments. A basic understanding must have existed among these men who were united by a common ideology, who were committed to the same task and who staunchly and passionately thrust themselves into this undertaking. Therefore, despite the times, a movement toward uniting them arose from all their actions and all their writings.

If tomorrow, for example, various Latin American countries were governed by individuals who had a common understanding; if each recognized the others' goals and were united by ties created through having the same ideologies and identical attitudes towards life, there would be hope for some form of rational integration.

It is only natural that in many of these countries the ruling minorities who govern in artificial democracies or in acknowledged dictatorships do not represent the aspirations of the people; they do not have historic perspective but have only one objective — the intensification of nationalism. In this fashion, they can hold on to their own small parcels of land where they are familiar with the skillful maneuverings required to maintain a balance that each day becomes more difficult and unstable.

Appropriate political climates are necessary to bring about integration of the Americas. This will be a difficult task if these nations live under various governmental systems. Some of these governments might be tempted to impose such integration on the people through force rather

than by common agreement. A full understanding of today's events, and the forces that direct the world's fate, would convince us that South America's nations are condemned to become spheres of influence and its people subordinated spectators, if not passive objects, ruled by the decisions of outsiders.

Even a most elementary understanding of today's happenings indicate that today's economy requires vast markets and that it is of vital importance that economic systems be complemented to permit vast development. This constitutes the only way of defeating the obstacles created by insufficient output, a situation that presently impedes the establishment of conditions making it possible to improve the people's economic and social conditions. One step in the right direction would be integration because of geographic necessity. The natural pooling of physical and human resources would permit Latin America to expand its economic and industrial power.

On noting the organic evils that have beset our nations, and the inherent deficiencies in their international trade and exchange conditions, we realize that resolving these problems in each province of the continent would be a long and arduous task. Opposition would progressively increase and social pressures would become increasingly greater. Integration, therefore, would not only undertake problems that each nation would be unable to solve individually, but it would open the way to new social expressions.

And this is where the United States could play a decisive role. In understanding the problems that would face America in the formation of an association of nations with equal opportunities, the United States must realize that integration of the nations of the Southern Hemisphere would create the conditions that would result in the elimination of problems that have been insurmountable up to the present time. Otherwise, the economies of these nations will each day be subjected to greater stress and tension, and this would have social and political repercussions that would affect relationships be-

3. To solicit from other democratic organizations and political parties the condemnation of the dictatorship of Perez Jimenez, which with this arrest is trying to prevent the victory of Dr. Caldera in the next presidential elections of December 15, 1957, as the only candidate of the opposition supported by all democratic political parties of Venezuela.

4. Considering that liberty is one for all of Latin America and that the Venezuelan dictatorship is a threat to continental democracy, to urge their respective governments to employ the appropriate measures to have Dr. Caldera released from prison and to permit the Venezuelan people to freely elect their authorities.

Let us hope that the combined efforts and solidarity of Christian Democratic parties all over the world will remove this shadow on the life of Venezuela and will restore to her people their personal freedom and a democratic order.

tween the two continents. The United States should now push forward the idea of progressive integration of the nations of South America with the same firmness with which it favored the establishment of a united Europe when it saw that such a union would mean Europe's salvation and that it would be a factor in creating world stability.

Those who have a short-range view of the situation might consider such a policy contrary to their interests. These are the people who succumb to the temptation of accepting aid in exchange for subjugation. Those who look at America with the thought of creating a civilization with genuine human qualities will realize that the concept of integration corresponds to their own true interests. The day that such an awakening takes place, America's horizons will expand enormously.

Meanwhile, the material is ready. The opportunity and the space are available. All that is now lacking are the architects to make the blueprints for this new domain wherein the people of America will dwell.