In the consideration of the various historical, theoretical, and practical aspects of guerrilla warfare, two things become clear.

The first is that the war of the flea, as it is seen today, is not merely popular war, but the war of the world's have-nots, the natural weapon lending itself to the situation of subjugated and exploited peoples everywhere. In short, it is a revolutionary weapon.

The second is that the United States, by reason of its position of commanding wealth and power, is cast—like it or not—in a counterrevolutionary role. As the world's greatest economic and military power, greatest banker, financier, investor, mercantilist, industrialist, and principal practitioner and guardian of the system of capitalistic free enterprise (of which liberal democracy and constitutional government are considered to be part and parcel), the United States is naturally and necessarily allied with bankers, landlords, and investors everywhere. Despite American tradition and cant, American foreign policy, favoring the peaceful status quo and quiet social evolution as against radical revolution, is anti-popular wherever popular movements run counter to vested economic interest. If at times we seem to oppose vested interest, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that it is expediently in favor of greater economic opportunity—ours.

Cold War considerations stiffen this position. On the one hand, the United States opposes Communism in defense of property and free enterprise; on the other, it opposes it as the agency of Soviet or of Chinese expansionism, viewing the Chinese and the Russian blocs both as rival politico-economic systems and as potential military threats.

Since most of the revolutionary movements now arising in the world are, if not Communist by definition or Marxist-Leninist in ideology, at least socialistically inclined (hence apparent threats to the enterprise system) it is not surprising to find the United States in
opposition to them—Viet Nam and the Congo being the prime examples of the moment. Even where the revolutionary objective is not socialism, but merely a position of economic independence and of political nonalignment, the United States, seeking to secure its investments and to expand its influence and markets, scarcely welcomes revolution.*

[* Washington's attitude is nowhere more strikingly demonstrated than in the recent armed intervention in the Dominican Republic, where fear of "another Cuba" has set the Johnson Administration on the course of aggression in naked disregard of all conventions of national sovereignty and international law. ]

The result: United States interest and policy versus the rising revolution of the submerged masses of the underdeveloped areas of the world. The logical development of the situation suggests further extensions of what is now occurring in South Viet Nam: the confrontation of American wealth, influence, industrial power, and in the show-down, American arms, with guerrilla movements in every major area of United States interest.

The study of guerrilla movements of the postwar era leads to the conclusion that the United States is slowly moving into a worldwide conflict which it cannot win.

The reasons are not mysterious.

As we have seen, guerrilla war is popular war in one form or another. It is the struggle of nations against foreign invaders, or rebellious segments of a society against the ruling classes of that society, of exploited against exploiters, of the governed against the governors.

In Cyprus, as an example that we have already examined, a superficial judgment would have suggested that Grivas blackmailed the British out of the island, rather than forced their withdrawal. So, in a sense, he did. But let us not be misled. The fact is that he and his handful of terrorists could not have done it without the active or passive support of the great majority of Cypriots. EOKA was an expression of the popular will, and, this being so, the British could have remained only by making war on the entire population. Since it did not suit their political and economic objectives to do so, they got out. So in Israel. So in Ireland.

Other examples are even more clear. Batista could not make war on the fidelistas without making war on the Cuban people. In the end, his resources proved inadequate to the task, and his regime collapsed.

The French, seeking to retain their interest in Indochina and again in Algeria, took arms against terrorists and found themselves, in both instances, fighting losing battles against a rising tide of popular insurrection. In theory, they might have subjugated Algeria (as they had done more than a century earlier) by spending more money, employing vastly more military manpower, and adopting sterner methods. But were these means really available to them in 1962? For reasons relating to the economy and internal situation of France and to the international situation as well, they were not. Even had the means and the will existed, it remains in question whether the game would have been worth the candle.

The last is the decisive question in all such contests between military power and popular insurrection in the modern era. It is the question that confronts the United States today, or will tomorrow.

The purpose of maintaining a colony is to exploit it, economically or for some political end. The purpose of supporting one political or economic system against another is to derive some benefit from it. The purpose of governing within a state is to enjoy the fruits of political authority, whatever they may be.

Yet in the modern era it is not possible to colonize or to govern profitably or to keep a
subservient native government in power—in other words, to exploit—without the consent of the exploited. To kill them is self-defeating. To enslave them is, in the light of modern political and economic realities, impractical where it is not impossible. Hence the guaranteed success of any determined popular liberation movement once afoot.

This is the dilemma that will confront American policymakers wherever they come to grips with anti-American guerrilla movements.

In the United States of the last century, the government was able to crush the rebellious North American Indian tribes—because the Indians had no political or economic leverage. They were an inconsequential minority, alien in every way to the burgeoning white population, and what was wanted was their lands—not their labor, their trade, or their good will. Consequently, they could be exterminated wholesale at no appreciable cost. Indeed, it was economically and politically desirable that this be done—and it was done.

Conditions have changed in the world. What is wanted today is manpower and its products. The raw materials of the undeveloped areas are of no use to the industrial powers—the copper of Chile and the petroleum of Venezuela, for example, are of no use to the United States—without the human effort that makes them available; strategic bases require the services and the good will of large populations; industry requires both large labor pools and ever-expanding consumer markets.

Under such conditions, to try to suppress popular resistance movements by force is futile. If inadequate force is applied, the resistance grows. If the overwhelming force necessary to accomplish the task is applied, its object is destroyed. It is a case of shooting the horse because he refuses to pull the cart.

If such a destructive course is adopted, it can be only for one reason: to deny the object of contention, the disputed area, to a third party. This may prove to be the case in South Viet Nam, which has little value to the United States except denial value, as a great rice basket to be kept from the hungry Chinese.

The choices open to Washington in Viet Nam appear obvious. Unless the dissident Vietnamese population can be persuaded to embrace a solution acceptable to the United States (certainly a forlorn hope), the alternatives are: (1) to wage a relentless, full-scale war of subjugation against the Vietnamese people, with the aid of such Vietnamese allies as remain available; (2) seek a solution acceptable to the Vietnamese people, a step that would clearly entail negotiating with the Viet Cong; (3) quit the field and let the Vietnamese work out their own solution.

A fourth possibility does exist. Essentially it is a monstrous variation of the first. The United States can change the character of the war, or its apparent character, by expanding it; that is, by taking arms against Hanoi and, inevitably, against China. To do so, with the right kind of window dressing, could conceivably be justified in the minds of the American people and perhaps of their allies despite the tremendous expense and risk involved, where a losing war in the limited theater of South Viet Nam cannot be justified. Under cover of a general war, the two Viet Nams could, perhaps, be occupied and put under martial law, and the Communist movement suppressed by overwhelmingly superior military force.

But then what? A Southeast Asia held by American troops in the overwhelming numbers that would be required (and it would have to be all of Southeast Asia, not merely Viet Nam) would be a burden almost beyond endurance for the American economy and the American electorate, and would be of no conceivable use under such conditions except as a base for the ensuing war against China. War to what end? It staggers the imagination to think of the vast, interminable, and profitless conflict that would ensue, even assuming that it were confined to
Asia—and we have no such assurance. The bloody, costly Korean war would appear as a child's game by comparison.

* * *

What of the future of guerrilla movements elsewhere?

In black Africa it seemed, not long ago, that the end of European colonialism and the emergence of the new republics could be the beginning of an era of peaceful progress. In fact, the demise of colonialism on most of the continent now appears to have been not the end, but rather the beginning of revolutionary struggle, having as its object the destruction of all alien, or at any rate all Western, interest and influence.

For the moment, a native army led by white mercenaries is able to defend Belgian and American mining interests in Katanga against a powerful if undisciplined insurgency. But the Congo is a vast jungle, big enough to swallow up a dozen South Viet Nams, and far more difficult to control. In the circumstances, it is hard to believe that a few hundred mercenary soldiers and a few dozen American warplanes can make any difference for long.

More troops, more guns, more money could prolong the struggle, but to what purpose? If the object were profitable exploitation of the natural and human resources of the area, then prolonged hostilities would be self-defeating: The cost would be greater than the stake. Yet a protracted war is precisely the kind of war the Congolese rebels are prepared to fight. It is, in fact, the only kind of war they are equipped to win.

If, on the other hand, the object were to deny the Communist bloc access to a strategic area, speaking in terms of Cold War objectives, then the questions would arise: For how long? And at what cost? And, finally, how many other such strategic arenas is the West prepared to defend? For clearly the Congo is not the only object of Cold War contention.

Many if not most of the new African nations remain within the Western orbit temporarily. That is to say, they are under the political and economic influence or control of their former colonial rulers, or of the Western, industrial bloc taken as a whole. Their governments are favorable, for the time being, to arrangements which permit the continued exploitation by the industrial West of their natural and human resources.

In other parts of the continent—Angola, Union of South Africa, Rhodesia—white, colonialist minorities still rule.

In all, without exception, it seems safe to say that revolution, spreading like a subterranean fire by means of guerrilla warfare, is not merely a possibility, but a virtual certainty, as the primitive black people who are the vast majority in Africa, emerging from tribalism and peonage, discover that they can be neither ruled nor exploited without their consent.

What applies to black Africa applies also to much of Asia and the Arab lands, and—of vastly greater importance to the United States—to almost all of Latin America.

The undeveloped countries that occupy three quarters of the globe—underdeveloped is a euphemism—contain by far the bulk of the world's as yet unexploited natural resources, the raw materials of industry. Thus they are the prizes for which the industrialized quarter contends. Yet these same backward areas also contain the greater part of the world's population—the hungriest part, growing at a rate that far outstrips their rate of economic growth, needing, wanting, demanding more with every passing year.

How will that burgeoning population, growing hungrier and at the same time more aware day by day of the extent of the world's wealth, be kept under control once it has learned—and it is learning very rapidly—the lessons of guerrilla warfare? It cannot.
Colonial or native armies, even gendarmerie, could formerly do the job. The Cuban revolution has demonstrated that they can no longer do it, once a determined guerrilla movement is afoot. The mechanized armies of the industrial powers have no better chance, as Viet Nam and Algeria would seem to prove. For both terrain and the distribution of populations, as well as the nature of the struggle, determined by its objectives, favor the potential revolutionaries.

Tomorrow's guerrilla armies, in Africa, in Asia, in Latin America, will be drawn from the ranks of the world's have-nots, the hungry peasants and the urban slum dwellers who meet the first requirement of the guerrilla, having nothing to lose but their lives.

They will come from the productive labor force of the most exploited countries—and here the battle will be half won; for their labor cannot be obtained by killing them.

They will fight over the terrain that they know best and that most favors them, in the mountains and jungles and swamps where tanks and artillery and aircraft have least effect. And their natural camouflage and quartermaster and intelligence service will be the swarming population from which they spring, a population which cannot be destroyed save at the cost of destroying the economy and resources that are the prizes of the struggle.

How will the guerrillas be defeated when they are everywhere?

If technological superiority could defeat guerrillas, the war in South Viet Nam would have been over long ago. At this writing, the United States is spending—at the rate of nearly two million dollars daily—all the money it can usefully spend in the area. And the war is being lost. It is being lost to a poorly armed, numerically inferior enemy because mere technological wealth, translated into arms, aircraft, armor, military supplies, is not enough to defeat popular forces employing guerrilla tactics on their own familiar and friendly terrain.

The Pentagon could easily afford to commit ten or twenty times the number of aircraft and a hundred times the armor, artillery, rockets, napalm, and other weaponry presently being employed in South Viet Nam. It does not do so primarily because the targets for more weapons, more bombs, more napalm do not exist. Short of bombing South Viet Nam off the map, there is no employment for more bombs than the number now being used. Short of destroying all Vietnamese villages, there is no need for more napalm. Short of machine-gunning the Vietnamese peasantry en masse, there is no way to use more machine guns—because the Viet Cong against whom they might be used will not stand up and be shot.

To catch guerrillas requires overwhelming military manpower. For valid political reasons—the apathy and indifference of the nominally pro-Saigon Vietnamese, the American reluctance to commit substantial numbers of American troops—the manpower needed to hunt down and exterminate the Viet Cong simply has not been available.

Yet South Viet Nam is, after all, a limited theater. Its area: about sixty-five thousand square miles. Its population: about sixteen millions. The conflict in South Viet Nam is, in the military jargon of the Pentagon, only a brush-fire war. To date, this single brush fire has cost the United States more than five and a half billions of dollars.

The question, then: What will the cost be when the brush fire becomes a forest fire, consuming all of Southeast Asia, flaring in Africa with its quarter of a billion people, spreading through Latin America with its restless, hungry, fast-breeding two hundred twenty millions?

Latin America, not Southeast Asia, is the area of prime concern for the United States, or should be. Potentially, it contains the explosive ingredients of a revolution that could radically affect the North American economy and the position of the United States among world powers
within a few short years.

At the back door of the United States, stretching nearly six thousand miles from the Rio Grande to Tierra del Fuego, lies the battleground of tomorrow, a teeming continent of tangled jungle, trackless rainforest, towering mountain ranges, arid plains and swarming urban slums that contains all of the components—social, political, ideological, economic, and demographic—of violent revolution.

American arms cannot suppress insurrection in South Viet Nam, with its sixteen million people, then how will they prevail, say, Brazil, with a population of seventy-five millions and a land area, half of it virtually uncharted tropical forest, of 3,286,270 square miles? The question is not rhetorical. Brazil has already come once to the brink of revolution, and is not alone among its neighbors in explosive potential.

If the United States cannot command the manpower to garrison Southeast Asia—and the outcries that arise in Congress with each fresh report of military casualties reveal the political impasse—how will it garrison the Andes, running four thousand miles down the South American continent? Yet this is what is in prospect, if the thinking applied to Southeast Asia is extended to an area much closer and far more vital to the United States.

In all of the twenty Latin American republics, from Mexico to Argentina,* varying only in degree, the same revolution-breeding conditions exist—the same glaring discrepancies in the distribution of wealth, the same ghastly slums, the unemployment, the backwardness of the rural areas, the corruption of nominally democratic government, the surging birth rate outstripping the annual rate of economic growth, and in all, the same high popular anticipation of progress that is in itself the greatest single impetus to radical political action.

In Guatemala, Indians who speak little or no Spanish and live on the most primitive level of subsistence make up two thirds of the population. Feudal landowners, not least among them the United Fruit Company, control the commercial agriculture of this country, and an army led by a corps of officers of whom a third are colonels, the highest rank, puts down the student riots that break out from time to time in the capital, while the jails are filled with political prisoners. The U.S.-directed coup that overthrew the government of Jacobo Arbenz in 1954 canceled the modest social reforms that had been attempted by a politically leftist regime, but failed to provide a solution of social ills that continue to fester. Not surprisingly, a guerrilla movement has long been gathering strength in Guatemala.

In El Salvador, a few vast holdings, banana plantations and coffee fincas, occupy fully half of all cultivated land. Eighty percent of the farms are of fewer than twelve acres, and the two hundred thousand peasants who live on them scratch barely enough from the soil to stay alive.

In Ecuador, per capita income in 1959 was estimated at $160, but two thirds of the families earned $120 or less. In mineral-rich Chile, more than half of the rural population lives on a family income of between $100 and $135 annually, and in Brazil's chronically drought-ridden Northeast Territory, the annual per capita income is less than $75.

The monopoly of the arable land of Latin America by big estates is such that some 10 percent of the landowners own 90 percent of the land, stretching out in huge latifundios of thousands of acres, worked by laborers who live in shacks or barracks and are paid a pittance if they are paid at all, while the remaining 10 percent of the land is fragmented into tens of thousands of minifundios too small to provide the narrow margin of profit that would permit the purchase of fertilizer, of agricultural tools, or of any means of improvement.

Millions of rural Latin Americans live without buying or selling, on the fringes of a society in which they have no share or voice. Hundreds of thousands in the equatorial forests are
the merest squatters, who burn off a patch of jungle, subsist on the meager root crop which it produces until the thin soil is exhausted, and then move on to burn another patch elsewhere, following a primitive pattern that was old when the conquistadores came to the New World.

Population pressures and starvation in the countryside drive hundreds of thousands of peasants to the cities to seek employment, and a new pattern of misery is formed. In Rio de Janeiro, the slums that line the hills ringing the city are called favelas; the waterless shacks of which they consist, one atop the other, house a quarter of a million Brazilians, inhabitants of a human jungle which even the police fear to enter. In Santiago de Chile, the slums that surround the capital are appropriately called callampas, meaning mushrooms; in Lima they are called, ironically, "the City of God"; in Caracas they are ranchos—all of these terms signifying the rat-plagued, disease-ridden, lawless shanty towns of a subculture in which millions of men, women, and children live without a foreseeable future, unless it is in the hope of revolution.

Poverty does not of itself engender revolution. But poverty side by side with progress creates a new amalgam; the hope of social change stimulated by even a little education produces a new social phenomenon: the ambitious poor, the rebellious poor, the cadres of the revolution, who have nothing to lose, and see much to gain around them.

Without a clearly articulated cause, without forceful and persuasive leaders, without political organization, generations of slum dwellers have lived and died in misery, generations of peasants have scratched the soil, and there have been few real revolutions.

What has changed in the twentieth century in Latin America?

First of all, the poor have become poorer and more numerous, and more desperate. There has been an unprecedented growth of population everywhere, a population explosion that has brought with it a corresponding decline in per capita income, in housing units, in the proportionate supply of the staples of common consumption, jobs, even water to drink. In Venezuela for example, the population increase in a single decade is estimated at more than one and a half millions, or 30 percent. In Brazil, the population rose from 52,000,000 to 66,000,000 in the decade between 1945 and 1955, and by 1963 had leaped to a fantastic 75,000,000 or more, for a gain of 44 percent in eighteen years. In the twenty Latin American republics taken together, the population rose from 163,000,000 to 206,000,000 in the years between 1951 and 1961, for an average annual gain of four millions; and the outlook is for a population of 265,000,000 (some say 273,000,000 would be a more realistic estimate) by 1970.

Meanwhile the rate of economic growth lags far behind. In 1960, the population rise was 2.8 percent, while the increase in over-all production was a negligible 0.3 percent and agricultural production dropped a full 2 percent.

Such figures speak for themselves. With every passing day, there are more hungry mouths to feed in Latin America and there is proportionately less food to feed them. And yet, strangely enough, their wants are not less, but greater than formerly.

For while the poor have been getting poorer, they have also become increasingly aware of the wealth around them, the potential in which they might share.

There has been, along with the population explosion, a revolution of communications, and out of it has come what has been aptly described as "the revolution of rising expectations." In Rio, a forest of television antennae rises over the favelas: The slum dwellers are bitterly poor, but not so poor as to lack the means to see the industrial progress and affluence that surrounds' them, not so poor as to fail to understand that promises are being made to them, political programs invoked in their name—and to begin to stir with impatience for the day when the promises will be fulfilled. In the labor barracks of the Brazilian Northeast, radio brings the message of the Cuban revolution, of fighting in Viet Nam and the
Congo, of riots in Panama and Harlem. The plantation workers are poor, but not too poor to know what other men like themselves are doing, and how they are setting about it, and with what results.

Awareness creates, if not a revolutionary class, then a revolutionary base. Economic progress, however limited, is a revolutionary force in itself. Popular education, slowly spreading, stimulates emulation and social ambition. Commerce and industry, on however inadequate a scale, give rise to a certain social mobility. New political alignments are formed. New wealth, edging aside the old feudal elite, strives for political power. A middle class is created. Revolutionary leadership is found, first in the poorer and more ambitious or idealistic sectors of the middle class, then in the spreading new class of poor white-collar workers, who, scorned by both the middle class and the elites, unable to make common cause with them or to aspire to their privileges, follow the only avenue open to their ambition and form a radical political opposition, taking the cause of the humble and the disfranchised as their own.

Thus spreading misery creates a powerful revolutionary base, and progress provides it with incentives and leadership. Political organization follows. Its slogans, its selection of causes, are indicated by the social circumstances. Given the oppressive social and economic conditions of Latin America, it is not surprising to find that the ideological basis of most radical opposition movements there is at once Marxist, nationalistic, and stridently anti-Yankee.

The United States, with its great investment in Latin America, its control of vital industries—the price control which it exerts over the raw materials that the area sells and equally over the manufactured commodities that it must buy—and its history of intervention in Latin America politics, is obviously tailored for the villain's role.

As if this were not enough, Washington has openly declared itself the enemy of liberation movements in Latin America, since the Cuban revolution, by avowing its intention to intervene, militarily if necessary, to prevent any "Communist takeover" in the Hemisphere.

[A vow recently fulfilled in the Dominican Republic]

Since the Latin Americans know very well that almost any change likely to be prejudicial to United States economic interests or political hegemony will be viewed as a "Communist takeover"—Communism, socialism, and anti-imperialism being more or less equivalent terms in the North American lexicon—it follows that war is already declared.

The first skirmishes have, in fact, begun. Sporadic guerrilla fighting has long been in progress in Venezuela, Guatemala, and Colombia; outbreaks have been reported in Bolivia, Chile, Peru, and Argentina; and certainly more will follow. Two million peronista ballots in the last Argentine presidential election can scarcely be taken as votes of confidence in U.S. leadership or in the ambitious but slow-moving and inadequate Alliance for Progress, however good its intentions.

It would be an exaggeration to say that Latin America is, at this writing, on the brink of revolution. The alianza para el Progreso, despite its faults, has had a palliative effect in some areas. Temporarily successful American intervention in Brazil has checked that country's drift to the Left. The Latin American Communists are deeply divided, as are the national Communist parties everywhere in the Western world. The old-line Communist parties in Latin America, which might have been expected to provide leadership to proletarian or peasant movements, are bogged down by their own conservatism, ineptitude, dogmatism, and opportunism; in many instances they have found an accommodation with the incumbent governments, and are content to do nothing and grow fat. The revolutionary following enjoyed, for a brief period, by the Latin American fidelistas has waned in proportion with the failure of the Cuban revolution to fulfill its
first bright promise. Many who at first looked with favor on Fidel Castro, exhilarated by his defiance of the Yankee Colossus and sympathetic to the plight of beleaguered Cuba, have since been alienated by his alliance with Moscow and his involvement in Cold War politics—the missile crisis of October, 1962, being taken as the chilling object lesson of that involvement. The fate of the Cuban middle class, on an island grown gray and austere since the first heady triumphs of the revolution, has also been a disillusionment to middle-class Latin Americans.

The revolutionary base and the revolutionary ferment of Latin America nevertheless exist as potent realities. The seeds of popular insurrection have been sown broadcast. Its techniques are readily available to all. And although large-scale revolution may not be imminent, it seems safe to predict that within the next decade the United States is certain to face grave challenges to its leadership, its diversified economic interests, and perhaps even its security in the Western Hemisphere. Need one add: and in the rest of the undeveloped world?

Central America could become an American Viet Nam tomorrow. Brazil could become an American Congo. Venezuela, with its great petroleum wealth, an American Algeria. And the Andes, to quote Fidel Castro, a greater Sierra Maestra.

What is to stop it?

***

Given the over-all backwardness of the area and the booming birth rate, economic plans on the order of the Alliance for Progress can only be palliative agents, not long-term cures. Land reform is the outstanding, obvious first step. Industrialization—impossible without markets, the elimination of illiteracy, and massive capital investment on an unprecedented scale—is the next.

But before these giants steps toward progress can even be considered, radical political changes must precede them. So long as the United States, in alliance with unrepresentative, oppressive, and corrupt governments, stands in defense of vested interests in Latin America, including its own great, exploitative investment, so long will the tap remain in the bottle and revolutionary pressures continue to build within—until the inevitable explosion.

True, dictatorial governments can be bolstered by military and economic aid. Cooperation can be obtained by bribes and economic coercion. Incipient guerrilla movements can be stamped out before they begin—the first, larval stage is, indeed, the only stage at which they can be stamped out. But, conditions remaining the same, others are certain to arise.

What is needed, then, is an entirely new, long-term approach to the problem of U.S.-Latin American relationships.

A logical beginning would be to abandon so-called military aid—the sop, granted in the name of hemispheric defense, to maintain the good will of military oligarchies whose only need of tanks and warplanes is to intimidate the people they nominally represent.

The next step—also logical but perhaps scarcely feasible in view of the domestic political realities of the United States—would be to declare an economic New Deal for Latin America: Such a New Deal would mean an end to the lopsided commercial relationships, the unilateral trade pacts, the economic extortion by means of which United States industrialists dominate Latin American markets and United States consumers fix the prices of the raw materials, the minerals and cash crops, on which the Latin Americans depend for their lives.

The third and most radical step, and the hardest, would be simply—to embrace the revolution.

Revolution cannot be suppressed. It may be channeled. Does it not make sense to seek to
channel it in the least damaging, most hopeful direction?

Since in most Latin-American countries it is the middle classes and the growing class of white-collar proletariat rather than the workers or the landless peasantry that exercise revolutionary leadership, the chances are good that in many instances popular movements could be diverted into more or less bourgeois-liberal channels; in other words, that oligarchies and military dictatorships could be replaced by liberal democracies based on the limited socialism we mean when we refer to welfare government, and revolutionary pressures siphoned off by means of certain radical reforms, of which land reform would be the most obvious and immediate.

Failing such a solution, the choice would still remain between democratic socialism and its Marxist-Leninist alternatives. Nor does this exhaust the range of choice. On the radical Left still stand two or three main revolutionary groups: the old-line Communist parties, devoted to Moscow, and their Stalinist, pro-Peking offshoots; the more militant of the fidelistas, who also find an affinity for Peking; and the national socialists—using the label in its purest sense—who, while strongly influenced by the Cuban experiment, lean to a kind of American titoism, without Cold War commitments.

Looking back on the Cuban experience since 1958, one sees that the United States, at every stage, failed to pick up options superior to those that remained as the range of choice narrowed.

In 1957 and throughout 1958 Washington might have choked the Cuban revolution to death with cream by openly repudiating Batista and welcoming or actually assisting the democratic, then bourgeois-liberal, reformist movement led by Fidel Castro. To have done so would have been to strengthen the liberal nationalist elements that supported Castro and to have discredited the anti-Yankee extremists and especially the old-line Communists of the Partido Socialista Popular—at that time not at all popular with the 26th of July Movement.

A choice still existed through 1959 and well into 1960. It was too late to abort the revolution, and positive steps would have entailed the sacrifice of considerable immediate U.S. dollar interest: The Cuban land reform inaugurated by the fidelistas was a crying necessity as well as a pledge that could not have been ignored. But Washington would have been wiser to subsidize it than to fight it. Further expropriations of American poverty might and probably would have followed. At its worst, however, the loss related to the socialization of the Cuban economy would have been only a limited dollar loss, and much of value might have been retained: a market for U.S. products then ranked as the sixth largest in the world; important commercial and banking relations; an assured, unfluctuating sugar supply; above all, an amicable if independent Caribbean neighbor instead of a hostile Cold War base.

To embark, instead, on a campaign of diplomatic and economic strangulation was not merely to cut Cuba adrift, but to drive her in the only direction in which she could go: toward utter dependence on the Soviet Union. It makes no difference to argue that Castro and his followers may have wished, or even did wish, to go there. The fact is that it could have been prevented. Every geographical and economic consideration leads to that inevitable conclusion.

Tomorrow, or next year, or the year after that, similar choices will present themselves—they are already indicated—in one or more of the countries of the Hemisphere that North Americans still consider to be theirs. The revolution certainly will not stop with one country or a few. The entire undeveloped "third world" is in transition, and it is all moving in the same direction, under the multiple pressures of economic and social and political necessity.

The United States can make the accommodation that it must make with the forces of revolution. Or it can, in the end, be destroyed. To take the course of accommodation will not be merely to acquiesce to the inevitable, but to declare a partnership with it. That means:
To declare diplomatic and economic war on the Latin American oligarchies as we have declared war on Cuba, and to break with those governments strong enough to resist or retaliate.

To actively assist revolutionary groups—expeditiously selected—with arms and funds and advisers, acting on the premise that if our present military aid program for military dictatorships, our "advisers" in South Viet Nam, our weapons air drops in the Escambray of our Bay of Pigs invasion can be sanctioned under international law or morally justified in violation of it, better and more expeditious causes can be even better justified.

To openly proclaim the United States a champion of revolution so as to steal the thunder of Moscow and Peking and to offer the emerging third world a viable alternative to Marxist-Leninist totalitarianism on the one hand, and Western imperialism, "styled Free World leadership," on the other.

The expedient course might, even at this late date, apply to Cuba. If aid to Tito, then why not aid to Castro? There is a contradiction here that needs to be sorted out. Tito never had atomic missile bases, true. But then, never having been invaded, he seems never to have felt the need.

It may be that Castro can safely be left to stew in his own juice. Cuba isolated is Cuba disarmed—perhaps. But Latin America is not Cuba; it is a continent larger and more populous than our own, and cannot long be left to ferment without producing a great stench and devastating explosions.

To stand against revolution in the Western Hemisphere will be to embark on a profitless and interminable war that cannot be won. It will be to choose rioting, strikes, sabotage, bloody insurrections, and political and economic chaos on an unprecedented scale, culminating inevitably in a series of grueling and protracted guerrilla campaigns from Mexico to Argentina, involving more and yet more American troops in endless offensives without objectives, battles without victories, sacrifice without compensation, and, ultimately, defeat at a cost too fearfully high to be even remotely reckoned.

To compromise with revolution may well be to surrender the greater part of some twenty billions of dollars of vested interest in Latin America: That is indeed the outlook. It will mean, besides, to sacrifice much of the economic advantage of the lopsided trade treaties and coolie labor on which a substantial part of our prosperity is based.

On the other hand, the prospective loss could be considered as another sort of investment. Great as the immediate dollar loss would be, it would merely match the twenty billions that have already been earmarked for the Alliance for Progress. And the long-term dividends would be far greater than any amount of dollars. They would consist, first of all, of continued, certain access to the vast supplies of vital raw materials on which United States industry is absolutely dependent. Continued trade, on a more equitable basis, would be guaranteed, and with it the promise of expanding markets for American manufactured products and agricultural produce, based upon the rising wages and consumption of millions freed from peonage and brought into the twentieth century. And finally there would be the element of security which seems to preoccupy our policymakers. It is inconceivable that the United States can wish to live in a divided Hemisphere, half of it hostile to us; yet the only security to be obtained in this respect must be based on genuine hemispheric co-prosperity, and that in turn must inescapably be based on the social justice which will be the battle cry of the gathering Latin American revolution.

On the one hand, progress, prosperity, and security; on the other, certain disaster. There is only one outcome to guerrilla war, and that is revolution, and there is only one remedy, and that
is peace. Some will call it surrender. If so, it is the surrender of force to reason, based on the understanding that no people can be subdued or kept in subjugation who do not accept defeat.