

## Latin American Press Review, Program 1973-12

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14 minutes, 8 seconds

- Speaker 1: Welcome to Latin American Press Review, a weekly selection and analysis of important events and issues in Latin America, as seen by leading world newspapers, with special emphasis on the Latin American Press. This program is produced by the Latin American Policy Alternatives Group.
- Speaker 2: Miami Herald reports from Guatemala City. "Tensions remained high in Eastern Guatemala on Monday, after a gun battle between squatters and troops. At least 17 persons were reported killed. Police and troops surrounded the hamlet of Palo Verde, 72 miles east of the capital, in an attempt to head off further violence, but hundreds of peasants were reported holding onto the land they had seized during the weekend. On Saturday, a group of 1000 landless peasants seized privately-owned agricultural plots outside Palo Verde. Military policemen were sent into the area and started arresting the peasants. The police in the army said the peasants opened fire and authorities said military policemen and 11 peasants were killed."
- Speaker 1: "Area residents said the peasants claim the landowners took their grazing lands many years ago. The army spokesman said, 'Many of the peasants received military training in 1954, when the government recruited them to fight rebel army forces.'" This from the Miami Herald.
- Speaker 2: Miami Herald also reports from the Hague. "The new socialist prime minister of the Netherlands says he hoped soon to initiate conversations aimed at granting full independence to Suriname and the Netherland Antilles, Dutch possessions in the western hemisphere. Suriname, formerly Dutch Guiana, is on the northeast coast of South America. The Netherlands Antilles consist of six Caribbean islands, with Curaçao as their administrative center. The prime minister, who heads a new center-left coalition, told the lower house of the Dutch parliament that the independence talks would begin as soon as a special commission on the subject could be formed." This from the Miami Herald.
- Speaker 1: "The growing feeling of nationalism in every country he visited is the most significant impression reported after a 17-day trip to Latin America by Secretary of State William P. Rogers. 'We do not see why we can't cooperate fully with this sense of nationalism,' he said. Rogers, who recently returned from an eight-country tour, said that, 'Contrary to some news reports, the nationalistic feelings apparent in the countries he visited carry no anti-American overtones.' The secretary said that there was not one hostile act directed at him during his trip. Roger said the United States will participate actively in efforts to modernize the organization of American states and emphasized United States willingness to encourage hemispheric regional development efforts." This from the Miami Herald.

Speaker 2: "There were several comments in the Latin American press concerning Secretary of State Rogers' visit to the continent. Secretary Rogers' trip was ostensibly aimed at ending paternalism in the hemisphere. However, Brazil's weekly *OpinYon* found little change in the fundamental nature of United States policy. While Rogers' words were different from those of other US officials, his basic attitudes on things that really matter seemed the same. *OpinYon* points to two specific cases, what it considers an intransigent and unreasonable United States position on the international coffee agreement, something of vital importance to Brazil. Second, Rogers promised favorable tariffs on Latin American goods, but failed to mention that the US would reserve its right to unilaterally revoke these concessions without consultation. *OpinYon* in short found Rogers' promise of a new partnership in the hemisphere to be the same old wine in new bottles."

Speaker 1: "La Nación of Santiago, Chile was even more caustic. It accused the Nixon administration of talking about ideological pluralism and accepting diversity in the world while at the same time intensifying the Cold War in Latin America by maintaining the blockade of Cuba and reinforcing the anti-communist role of the organization of American states. La Nación concludes that the United States is the apostle of conciliation in Europe and Asia, but in Latin America it is the angel of collision, the guardian of ideological barriers. La Opinión Of Bueno Aires was less critical of Rogers' trip. It felt that the US Secretary of State was in Latin America to repair some of the damage done to Latin American US relations by Washington's excessive admiration for the Brazilian model of development, and also to prepare the way for President Nixon's possible visit, now set tentatively for early next year."

Speaker 2: "'Rogers showed some enthusiasm for the wrong things,' according to La Opinión, 'such as the Colombian development, which is very uneven and foreign investment in Argentina, which is not especially welcome. Rogers also ignored many important things such as the Peruvian revolution, but,' La Opinión concludes, 'even if Rogers' trip was not a spectacular success, something significant may come of it in the future.' This report from La Opinión of Rio de Janeiro, La Nación of Santiago, Chile and La Opinión of Bueno Aires."

Speaker 1: The London News weekly, Latin America reports on Brazil. "A new and perhaps decisive phase in the conflict between the military government and the church has been initiated by three archbishops and 10 bishops from the northeast, the poorest and most backward part of Brazil. In a lengthy declaration, the 13 Prelates, who included archbishops Hélder Câmara of Recife and Avelar Brandão of Salvador, issued a blistering attack on the government and all its works. The statement which because of the government's strict censorship did not become generally known to the public for 10 days after it had been issued on the 6th of May is notable for its strongly political tone. This and its highly political criticisms have convinced most observers that the open conflict, which already exists between the government and the church has moved into a new and altogether more dangerous stage. Such a development could hardly have occurred in the view of many observers without the green light from the Vatican, something which may give Brazil's military rulers even more cause for concern."

Speaker 2: Latin America continues, "The May 6th declaration not only attacked the government for repression and the use of torture, it also held it responsible for poverty, starvation wages, unemployment, infant mortality, and illiteracy. In broader terms, it openly denounced the country's much-vaunted economic miracle, which it said benefited a mere 20% of the population while the gap between rich and poor continued to grow. There were also derogatory references to the intervention of foreign capitalists in Brazil. Indeed, the whole system of capitalism was attacked and the government accused of developing its policy of repression merely to bolster it up."

Speaker 1: Latin America continues, "In the view of most observers, the church has now got the bit well and truly between its teeth and is effectively demanding a return to some kind of democratic government with an emphasis on social justice. Up to now, the censorship has been able to prevent proposals of such a revolutionary kind from being publicized in anything but a clandestine way. But with the prospect of every pulpit and parish magazine in the country becoming vehicles for such revolutionary propaganda, it would appear that the censorship is powerless. Whether by design or from pure force of circumstances, the church is on the verge of becoming the focal point of all opposition, whether social, economic, or political, to Brazil's present regime. Furthermore, the declaration of May 6th appears to show that in contrast with its previous policy, the church is no longer afraid of stepping into the political arena." This from Latin America.

Speaker 2: Latin America also reports on the ideological and economic developments in the Peruvian Revolution. "Peru's military rulers have come under pressure recently, which they, at any rate, seem to feel threatens their image as the independent inventors of a new development strategy that is neither communist nor capitalist. There has been a spate of declarations by senior officers emphasizing the Peruvian Revolution's peculiar characteristic and last week the Prime Minister declared, 'It is very easy to copy, to imitate, but very hard to create.'"

Speaker 1: "The government's revolutionary credentials have come under doubt, not least because of recent labor troubles. Suspicions on the left were also aroused by some interpretations of last week's visit to Lima by the United States Secretary of State, Rogers. This has been seen in some quarters as the first sign of warmer relations between the two countries, particularly as it coincided with confirmation that the Inter-American Development Bank was ending its long boycott of Peru with a \$23.3 million loan for agricultural development. Further doubts have been aroused by the government's decision to postpone its proposed petroleum comunidades which would have brought into the petroleum industry the kind of workers' participation it is trying to develop for mining and industry. The well-informed Peruvian Times suggested that this was due to the dismay among the petroleum companies working here as contractors. This would clearly be particularly unwelcome to the government when it is on the verge of signing new contracts with foreign oil companies."

Speaker 2: Latin America continues, "The foreign business fraternity however, is currently deeply suspicious of the government's intentions as a result of the nationalization of the fishing industry earlier this month. Uncertainty is being expressed about the part reserved by the government for foreign investors and the private sector as a whole in the country's development. In fact, public investment in the economy rose by 22.4% overall in 1972

while private investments were down by 8.9%, according to official figures. Government spokesman continued to express their faith in the compatibility of predominant state and social property sectors with a reformed private sector in a new kind of mixed economic model. However, the figures seemed to indicate that the private sector is no more keen on being reformed by way of [foreign language 00:10:13] than the unions are by being supplanted by participation devices dreamed up by the government."

Speaker 1: "An economy in which the private sector competes freely with the state and social sectors is quite contrary to the advice given by foreign experts on workers' control who do not believe in the viability of such a mixed formula or in the predominance of wage labor, which is at the very root of the present government's economic reforms. To make their scheme work, the Peruvian military authorities and their civilian theoreticians will either have to produce prodigious feats of persuasion or else modify one or more of its components. Some observers believe this modification may now have come about with the state takeover of the anchovy fishing industry. That the takeover has taken the form of state rather than workers' control signifies a political triumph for the Minister of Fisheries, General Vanini, a brilliant shirt-sleeves populist and one of the recent Peruvian pilgrims to Cuba. The state company is clearly seen as preferable to self-managing units, which would certainly have resisted the forthcoming rationalization program. This hardly makes the government look like left wing extremists." This from Latin America.

Speaker 2: Excélsior of Mexico City reports on the political situation in Uruguay. "President Juan Bordaberry established a new civic military regime last week, decreeing several measures to combat subversion and economic crimes. He also intervened in several state organizations with the help of the armed forces. The radical, though not surprising measures arose largely because of the weakening of political and parliamentary support for the President."

Speaker 1: "After the rebellion of the armed forces in February, several generals confronted parliament with the support of Bordaberry. It seems that the President has chosen to follow the strong leadership of the army rather than be responsive to the legislative bodies. The Uruguayan regime seems to be teetering on the narrow edge between formal democracy and defacto dictatorship. The new government decrees simplify the apprehension of suspected political enemies by virtually dropping all limitations on police in such cases. They also prohibited any news concerning sedition or political protest unless it was an official release. This report came from Mexico City's Excélsior.

Speaker 2: From Venezuela, Latin America reports on a recent political development. "While the guerrillas are a dying force, the student movement, or more accurately, the secondary school pupils movement, is becoming a serious headache for the government. Hardly a week now passes without one high school or another going on strike. The reason behind the strikes are generally not complex. Overcrowding in the schools, a rigid old-fashioned syllabus, harassed teachers, and a lack of funds have caused the strikes rather than any political motives. In fact, difficulties in getting into higher education particularly universities have been the major irritant in the last few months, but neither the university authorities nor the government have seen fit to tackle the problem. This week, however, the riots were provoked by the visit of William Rogers, and particularly

by the fact that his main purpose was to discuss the Orinoco heavy oil belt." This from Latin America.

Speaker 1: Chile Oye also commented this week on the political situation in Venezuela. "Although the Christian Democratic government has kept a low political profile, several recent reports indicate that there is a significant amount of repression taking place. There are 250 political prisoners, there have been several assassinations of leftist leaders as well as anti-guerrilla campaigns. A Venezuelan press agency has also pointed out that a daily newspaper, Punto, has been censored and its editor detained." This report taken from Chile Oye of Santiago.