

Democracy Builds in Latin America

I. Economic and Social Forces

A. Society

1. Uneven distribution of wealth
2. Population explosion
3. Shortage of lands drives millions to cities.
4. Religions reach out to the poor.

B. Economy

1. Reliance on single cash crop or commodity
2. Policy of import substitution
3. Gradual shift to relying on a variety of cash crops and industry
4. Growth of agribusiness

II. The Difficult Road to Democracy

A. Social unrest leads to rise of military dictators.

1. Harsh, autocratic regimes result.
2. Political parties outlawed, press censored, universities closed.
3. Some writers go into exile.

B. Revolutionary unrest continues.

1. Fidel Castro a model to rebels
2. The Cold War fear of communism complicates moderate efforts at reform.

C. Role of United States

1. Dominates OAS
2. Seeks to defend democracy and human rights
3. U.S. military, economic, and cultural domination feared.
4. Turns over Panama Canal to Panama in the year 2000
5. Backs coup in Chile to overthrow Salvador Allende
6. Supports contras against Sandinistas
7. Declares “war on drugs” in 1980s

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D. Civil wars shake Central America.

1. Guatemala
2. El Salvador

E. Movement toward democracy

1. Military leaders in several countries allow elections.
2. PRI reforms take place in Mexico; opposition candidate elected.

III. Example of Argentina

A. Stability in early 1900s

1. Robust economy based on exports of beef and grain
2. Attracts millions of immigrants

B. Beginning of upheaval during Depression

1. Juan Perón's policies cause many educated people to flee country.
2. Military coup in 1955
3. Another military coup in 1976; beginning of Dirty War
4. Civilian rule restored in 1983.
5. Financial crisis in 2001 devastates Argentina's economy.