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Building their own Cold War in their own backyard: the transnational, international conflicts in the greater Caribbean basin, 1944-1954

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Building their own Cold War in their own backyard: the transnational, international conflicts in the greater Caribbean basin, 1944–1954

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Incorporating previously-untapped Dominican, Costa Rican, and Cuban sources, this article reveals how the international Cold War and US policy towards Guatemala overlapped with long-standing regional conflicts in the greater Caribbean basin. During the post-war democratic openings, exiles with patron presidents or dictators composed two loosely-formed networks seeking to destabilise opposing governments. The resulting inter-American conflicts contributed to critical events in the region, most notably US officials' Cold War-influenced policy to overthrow the Guatemalan government of Jacobo Arbenz in the early 1950s. These conflicts persisted and continued overlapping with the international Cold War while often challenging US officials' Cold War goals.

A week before the 1954 Guatemalan coup, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) noted meetings favourable to Operation PBSUCCESS. Guatemalan exile and leader of the coup against the democratically-elected government of Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala City, Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas met with Rafael Ángel Calderón Guardia, leader of the Costa Rican exiles seeking to overthrow the government of José Figueres in San José. The Guatemalan exile requested that Calderón Guardia 'represent' Castillo Armas's interests before General Marcos Pérez Jiménez, head of the Venezuelan military junta in Caracas. As a result of the meeting, Pérez Jiménez sent Pedro Estrada,

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director of Venezuela's National Security department, to meet with Castillo Armas and discuss providing either 3 P-51 World War II-vintage Mustang airplanes or \$200,000 for Operation PBSUCCESS.¹

Less than two months after the Guatemalan coup, US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles noted further meetings between Castillo Armas, Calderón Guardia, and Pérez Jiménez. Reports claimed 'that equipment and personnel used by Castillo Armas in Guatemala [to overthrow Arbenz] would now be turned against Costa Rica' to overthrow Figueres. Having 'funneled Venezuelan financial assistance to Castillo Armas' during Operation PBSUCCESS, Calderón Guardia was now calling in 'Castillo [Armas]'s pledge to aid' Calderón Guardia and Pérez Jiménez in 'overthrowing Figueres.' With Figueres as a key US ally, Dulles and other State Department officials worried that these 'machinations' by Calderón Guardia, Pérez Jiménez, and Castillo Armas threatened US strategic interests.²

These meetings illustrate the complex links between counter-revolutionary leaders and indigenous actors in the greater Caribbean basin. Within two months, meetings between Castillo Armas, Calderón Guardia, and Pérez Jiménez went from contributing to undermining US officials' Cold War policies. Furthermore, the CIA did not take into account the ideological rationale or strategic motivations behind these meetings. To the contrary, the meetings between Castillo Armas, Calderón Guardia, and Pérez Jiménez functioned independently of US motivations and derived from regional conflicts in the greater Caribbean basin in the decade before 1954. Despite an abundant literature on the overthrow of Arbenz and US-Latin American Cold War relations in the 1940s and 1950s, the scholarly community has overlooked these developments and inadvertently marginalised such inter-American relationships and conflicts.

Countless historians have sought to understand the impact of the international Cold War in the greater Caribbean basin. Many scholars adhere to the traditional bipolar Cold War framework and attempt to identify when anti-communism and US-Soviet issues began to shape US policy towards Central America and the Caribbean.³ Within this literature, scholars identify Operation PBSUCCESS as signifying the Cold

¹ Cable 0641Z, LINCOLN to Director, 11 June 1954, Document 136204, in *Guatemala Collection*, Central Intelligence Agency, online at: <http://www.foia.cia.gov/collection/guatemala>.

² Department of State Instruction CA-781, John Foster Dulles, 2 August 1954, in Folder "350 Costa Rica 1953," "Venezuela, US Legation and Embassy, Caracas, Classified General Records, 1935–1961" [Hereafter US Embassy Caracas], Box 91, Record Group 84, Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State [Hereafter RG84], National Archives II, College Park, Maryland, United States [Hereafter NARA2].

³ Stephen G. Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988); Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America*, 2nd Ed. (New York: Norton, 1993); John H. Coatsworth, *Central America and the United States: The Clients and the Colossus* (New York: Twayne, 1994); Michael L. Krenn, *The Chains of Interdependence: U.S. Policy toward Central America, 1945–1954* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1996); James Siekmeier, *Aid, Nationalism, and Inter-American Relations: Guatemala, Bolivia, and the United States, 1945–1961* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1999); David F. Schmitz, *Thank God They're on Our Side: The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorships, 1921–1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999);

War's arrival in the region.⁴ With the opening of Latin American source materials and previously-inaccessible archives galvanising literature on US-Latin American relations in the greater Caribbean basin, Max Paul Friedman celebrated how Latin Americanist scholarship encouraged historians 'restoring Latin America to the equation in terms of both agency and archives.'⁵ Within this historiographical trend, Piero Gleijeses, Jim Handy, and Greg Grandin placed greater emphasis upon the actions of Guatemalan officials, such as presidents Juan José Arévalo and Arbenz and Guatemalan peasants and activists, in shaping their nation's response to the international Cold War and US policies.⁶

In the last decade, though, Latin Americanist scholarship suggested scholars move beyond the traditional structure of the bipolar Cold War and examine the 'Latin American Cold War'. Gilbert Joseph and Daniela Spenser called for new interpretations regarding 'questions of international realpolitik, the ideology of Cold War states, and the "Latin Americanisation" and "transnationalisation" of the 'Latin American Cold War,' as well as 'a conceptualization of the Cold War that is more attuned to the logic of Latin American history and does not merely replicate the standard timeline of the postwar world.'⁷ Despite major contributions from Ariel Armony, Gleijeses, J. Patrice McSherry, and Tanya Harmer, Joseph and Grandin feared a growing distance from analyses of the international Cold War, remarking about the dearth of scholarship on Latin America and the Cold War in leading foreign

Footnote 3 continued

Steven Schwartzberg, *Democracy and U.S. Policy in Latin America during the Truman Years* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003).

⁴ Richard H. Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala: The Foreign Policy of Intervention* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982); Cole Blasler, *The Hovering Giant: U.S. Responses to Revolutionary Change in Latin America, 1910–1985*, 2nd Ed. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985); Bryce Wood, *The Dismantling of the Good Neighbor Policy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985); Nick Cullather, *Secret History: The CIA's Classified Account of Its Operations in Guatemala, 1952–1954* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999); Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer, *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala*, Rev. Ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Michael Grow, *U.S. Presidents and Latin American Interventions: Pursuing Regime Change in the Cold War* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2008).

⁵ Max Paul Friedman, "Retiring the Puppets, Bringing Latin America Back In: Recent Scholarship on United States-Latin American Relations", *Diplomatic History* 27.5 (November 2003): 636.

⁶ Piero Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944–1954* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Jim Handy, *Revolution in the Countryside: Rural Conflict and Agrarian Reform in Guatemala, 1944–1954* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

⁷ Gilbert M. Joseph, "What We Now Know and Should Know: Bringing Latin America More Meaningfully into Cold War Studies", and Daniela Spenser, "Standing Conventional Cold War History on Its Heads", in *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War*, ed. Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniela Spenser (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008): 7, 381–2.

relations and Cold War-specific journals beyond popular episodes such as the Cuban Missile Crisis.⁸

Scholars have yet to take up such suggestions when considering inter-American relations in the greater Caribbean basin in the 1940s and 1950s. The most recent discussions of regional conflicts differ little from their marvellous foundational works that, more often than not, relied upon Latin American newspapers and memoirs due to restrictions on Cold War-era sources.⁹ In fact, the most thorough assessment of the era remains Leslie Bethell and Ian Roxborough's *Latin America between the Second World War and the Cold War, 1944–1948*, a compilation of nation-state analyses.¹⁰ Having to rely upon such studies, James Dunkerley summarised that, while Guatemala shared patterns identified in other countries, the country 'was exceptional within Latin America.'¹¹ Although Harmer and Hal Brands have proposed methodologies to locate 'regional proponents' and the 'multinational and multilayered' history of 'diplomatic and transnational' conflicts in Latin America during the Cold War, their works and those by both Latin Americanist and Cold War scholars have only analysed events after Castro's taking power in 1959.¹² As Dunkerley noted, Guatemala and the overthrow of Arbenz's government remain anomalies separated from any regional developments, patterns, or conflicts during the 1940s and the 1950s in the greater Caribbean basin.

⁸ Ariel Armony, *Argentina, the United States, and the Anti-Communist Crusade in Central America, 1977–1984* (Athens: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1997); Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959–1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); J. Patrice McSherry, *Predatory States: Operation Condor and Covert War in Latin America* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005); Tanya Harmer, *Allende's Chile & the Inter-American Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Greg Grandin, "Off the Beach: The United States, Latin America, and the Cold War", in *A Companion to Post-1945 America*, ed. Jean-Christophe Agnew and Roy Rosenzweig (Malden: Blackwell, 2006): 426; Gilbert M. Joseph, "Latin America's Long Cold War: A Century of Revolutionary Process and U.S. Power", in *A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence during Latin America's Cold War*, ed. Greg Grandin and Gilbert M. Joseph (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010): 400–1.

⁹ Charles D. Ameringer, *The Democratic Left in Exile: The Antidictatorial Struggle in the Caribbean, 1945–1959* (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1974); Thomas M. Leonard, *The United States and Central America, 1944–1949: Perceptions of Political Dynamics* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1984); Charles D. Ameringer, *The Caribbean Legion: Patriots, Politicians, Soldiers of Fortune, 1946–1950* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996); Richard E. Clinton, Jr., *The United States and the Caribbean Legion: Democracy, Dictatorship, and the Origins of the Cold War in Latin America, 1945–1950* (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation: Ohio University, 2001); Jorge Renato Ibarra Guitart, *Las relaciones cubano-dominicanas: su escenario hemisférico, 1944–1948* (Santo Domingo: Archivo General de la Nación, 2011).

¹⁰ Leslie Bethell and Ian Roxborough, Eds., *Latin America between the Second World War and the Cold War, 1944–1948* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

¹¹ James Dunkerley, "Guatemala", in Bethell and Roxborough, *Latin America*: 300–1.

¹² Harmer, *Allende's Chile*: 2; Hal Brands, *Latin America's Cold War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010): 2, 7; see the collections in Joseph and Spenser, *In from the Cold*; Grandin and Joseph, *A Century of Revolution*; Virginia Garrard-Burnett, Mark Atwood Lawrence, and Julio E. Moreno, eds., *Beyond the Eagle's Shadow: New Histories of Latin America's Cold War* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2013).

This article addresses this oversight by demonstrating how the US-sponsored overthrow of the Arbenz government in 1954 represented one of various inter-American regional conflicts throughout the greater Caribbean basin in the 1940s and 1950s. During the democratic openings of the mid-1940s, Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza, Honduran dictator Tiburcio Carías, and Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo monitored movements of anti-dictatorial exiles into Guatemala and Venezuela who networked with students, journalists, and political leaders in support of a transnational anti-fascist ideal. Simultaneously, dissident Guatemalan and Venezuelan exiles reached out to Somoza, Carías, and Trujillo in a transnational and anti-communist opposition to the Guatemalan Revolution and the Venezuelan government of Rómulo Betancourt and the *Acción Democrática* party. What emerged were two loosely-formed transnational networks which 'Latin Americanised' the region's foreign relations by pursuing conspiracies against one another against US officials' policies. A 'revolutionary' network of anti-dictatorial exiles with patron presidents serving as regional proponents carried the ideals of the post-war democratic openings into the 1950s and actively challenged dictatorial and military regimes. A 'counter-revolutionary' network of dissident exiles with patron dictators and military regimes as regional proponents sought to repress and eliminate their opposition through intelligence-sharing and a series of coup plots.

This article is the first to highlight the role of inter-American conflicts in the greater Caribbean basin from the 1940s into the US-sponsored overthrow of the Arbenz government in 1954. A combination of previously-untapped materials in Dominican, Costa Rican, and Cuban archives and recently-declassified US files allows for the incorporation of Central American and Caribbean perspectives, argues for the importance of the post-war era in the region, and provides the 'Latin Americanisation' and 'transnationalisation' of what was traditionally a narrative on US policy towards the greater Caribbean basin and US-Guatemalan relations in the first years of the international Cold War. From numerous conspiracies in 1947 and the 1948 Costa Rican Civil War to the counter-revolutionary networks' opposition to governments in both Guatemala and Costa Rica in the early 1950s, these two networks' members created inter-American conflicts and pursued foreign policies that overlapped with what many scholars have described as the first years of the Cold War. While US officials opposed such conspiracies and plots, the region's presidents and dictators provided resources to exiles, in effect 'Latin Americanising' and 'transnationalising' the region's foreign relations. Such policies demonstrated how indigenous actors pursued their own goals in spite of US policies. Ultimately, it was the counter-revolutionary network's members who emerged as regional proponents lobbying US officials to support their own long-standing policy against the Arbenz government in Guatemala and providing crucial support throughout Operation PBSUCCESS. Even as the counter-revolutionary network and US officials' policies towards Guatemala intersected, though, Central American and Caribbean actors often undermined or challenged US officials' goals, demonstrating the complexity of the overlapping conflicts that shaped the greater Caribbean basin in the early years of the Cold War.

Transnational exiles, international allies: building their networks

In the mid-1940s, democratic openings in the greater Caribbean basin witnessed the removal of notorious dictatorships and brought to power democratic reformers and coalitions.¹³ In 1944, a popular uprising ousted Guatemalan dictator General Jorge Ubico, removed the triumvirate of Ubico's protégés under General Federico Ponce, initiated the Guatemalan Revolution, and elected Arévalo. In 1945, a coalition of dissatisfied military officers with Rómulo Betancourt and *Acción Democrática* (AD) began a three-year democratic period known as the *Trienio Adeco*. In Guatemala and Venezuela, anti-dictatorial exiles lobbied and published against the region's remaining dictatorial regimes. These exiles, many joined by students, women, labour activists, and other groups, utilised the concepts of World War II to condemn Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua, Tiburcio Carías in Honduras, and Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic. From Guatemala, the Nicaraguan exile Gustavo Alemán Bolaños wrote, 'Hitler is less deceitful than Somoza in Nicaragua. In Germany, he claims to be a totalitarian, while the Nicaraguan "Führer" murders the Constitution and screams "Democracy."¹⁴ From Mexico, Honduran exile Ángel Zúñiga Huete translated the Atlantic Charter to criticise Carías.¹⁵ From Venezuela and Cuba, Dominican exiles published various anti-Trujillo texts and incorporated anti-fascist ideas, as seen in the Unión Democrática Antinazista Dominicana's *América contra Trujillo*.¹⁶

Exiles also borrowed from the military component of the war. From Costa Rica, Nicaraguan exile Alfredo Noguera Gómez cited the United Nations after his 1944 military assault against Somoza.¹⁷ The Comité Liberal Demócrata de Honduras en México excoriated the Carías regime for deploying military forces and incarcerating a group of women who protested against Carías on the 'day of victory of the United Nations.'¹⁸ With students in Mexico, Dominican exiles pleaded that the 'imminence of a democratic victory should not be only a military one, but one fundamentally political.'¹⁹

The transnational implications of the anti-dictatorial exiles' associations with students, journalists, and political leaders in neighbouring countries publicly unnerved Somoza, Carías, and Trujillo. Immediately, these dictators summoned

¹³ See Bethell and Roxborough, *Latin America*.

¹⁴ Gustavo Alemán Bolaños, *Un Lombrosiano Somoza, 1939–1944* (Guatemala: Editorial Hispania, 1945): 22.

¹⁵ Ángel Zúñiga Huete, *La Carta del Atlántico* (México: 1943).

¹⁶ Unión Democrática Antinazista Dominicana, *América contra Trujillo* (Havana: 1944), in Expediente "1945, Código 5/C", Secretaría de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores [Hereafter SERREE], IT 2903226, Fechas extremas 1945–1952, Código 93, 606, [Hereafter IT 2903226], Fondo Presidencia, Archivo General de la Nación, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic [Hereafter AGN].

¹⁷ Alfredo Noguera Gómez, *Expediciones Audaces, o el Ocaso del Tirano Somoza* (Costa Rica).

¹⁸ Comité Liberal Demócrata de Honduras en México, *Homenaje a las Víctimas de San Pedro Sula* (Mexico, 1945): 22, 66–7.

¹⁹ Federación Estudiantil Universitaria, *Los Universitarios de Santo Domingo Frente a la Dictadura Trujillista* (Mexico: 1945): 5–6, in Expediente "1945, Código 5/C," SERREE, IT 2903226, AGN.

'communism' as the cause of the region's latest developments. Before the ousting of Ubico, Somoza feared 'that a foothold might be gained in Central America by Communism.'²⁰ Sponsoring local newspaper editors, Carías encouraged publications that accused Soviets in Mexico of 'influenc[ing] recent revolutions in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Paraguay', and 'financing of the leftist movement.'²¹ US ambassador Ellis Brigs noted links between anti-Trujillo activism among exiles, journalists, and students and Trujillo's increasing repression, preoccupations confirmed in Dominican reports.²² Dominican ambassador in Guatemala Roberto Despradel repeatedly warned how anti-Trujillo exiles worked with students and journalists in Guatemala and Venezuela, and British official Cyril Andrews discussed the 'offence' and 'tension' that resulted.²³

Just as anti-dictatorial exiles found transnational allies during the democratic openings, dissident Guatemalan and Venezuelan exiles sought their own alliances. Opposed to the new governments, dissident exiles, generally associated with the Ubico dictatorship and the regime of former Venezuelan dictator Eleazar López Contreras, turned to the region's dictators for ideological and material support. Juan Pinillos, who had served in Ubico's secret police, frequented the US embassy in Tegucigalpa and tried to warn how the 'communist regime' now in Guatemala was organised by Arévalo and Mexican labour leader Vicente Lombardo Toledano 'to spread agitation and unrest' to Nicaragua, Honduras, and El Salvador.²⁴ Ubico's chief of staff and consul in New Orleans, Colonel Arturo Ramírez also appeared at the US embassy in Tegucigalpa and attempted to 'prove that President Arévalo is a tool of Moscow and a threat to Hemisphere Solidarity.' According to US officials, Ramírez travelled between Somoza and Carías.²⁵ US officials found their office inundated with reports in which dissident Guatemalan exile and Ubico's personal physician doctor Carlos Padilla y Padilla appeared in Nicaragua and Honduras. Padilla claimed to have received support from neighbouring dictators against Arévalo, yet Somoza and

²⁰ No. 31, John B. Stewart to Secretary of State, 10 January 1944, in "Nicaragua, US Legation and Embassy, Managua, Classified General Records, 1938–1961", [Hereafter US Embassy Managua], Box 6, RG84, NARA2.

²¹ Report No. R13-45, Guy G. Goddard, 12 February 1945, in "Honduras, Tegucigalpa Legation and Embassy, Classified General Records, 1940–1958", [Hereafter US Embassy Tegucigalpa], Box 26, RG84, NARA2.

²² A-297, Ellis Briggs to Secretary of State, 27 June 1944, in "Dominican Republic, US Embassy and US Consulate, Santo Domingo, Classified General Records, 1944–1961", [Hereafter US Embassy Santo Domingo], Box 2, RG84, NARA2.

²³ Informe 275, Roberto Despradel to Manuel A. Peña, 29 August 1945, in Expediente "Legajo 3348 Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950," SERREE, IT 2903348, Fechas extremas 1944–1950, Código 658, AGN; No. 118, Cyril Andrews to Anthony Eden, 4 October 1944, in File "38298: Dominican Relations with Caribbean Neighbors", in Foreign Office papers 371 [Hereafter FO371], National Archives, London, England [Hereafter NAL].

²⁴ No. 2060-A, John Erwin to Secretary of State, 15 October 1945; Juan Pinillos, 23 May 1945, both in US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 26, RG84, NARA2.

²⁵ Report No. R-88-47, Nathan Brown, 1 August 1947, in US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 33, RG84, NARA2.

Cariás denied such links.²⁶ Although US officials later determined that Padilla was in fact a confidential agent for Cariás, the links remained unclear to US officials in the post-war years.²⁷

Dissident Venezuelan exiles offered their services to Trujillo in a shared opposition to the ‘communist’ Betancourt and AD government. Venezuelan exile General Rafael Simón Urbina shared information on meetings between anti-Trujillo exiles and Betancourt. Urbina also introduced Trujillo’s officials to a fellow Venezuelan exile, doctor José Vicente Pepper.²⁸ After pledging himself to Trujillo, Pepper emerged as a leading agent for Trujillo who received sums of money to travel the Caribbean basin as a spy and provide information on links between Betancourt and anti-Trujillo exiles.²⁹ From the Dominican Republic, Trujillo reissued Urbina’s *Victoria, dolor y tragedia* to level slanders against Betancourt for his alleged feminine and homosexual comportment, and Dominican newspapers published articles on Urbina’s opposition to Betancourt and Pepper’s denouncing Betancourt for helping Stalin and communist conspiracies that threatened the Panama Canal and hemispheric solidarity.³⁰

Revolutionary network, counter-revolutionary network: pursuing their own conflicts

From 1944 to 1947, the two networks manoeuvred against one another, ‘Latin Americanising’ and ‘transnationalising’ regional conflicts in the greater Caribbean basin. Somoza and Cariás repeatedly charged Arévalo for assisting anti-dictatorial Nicaraguan and Honduran exiles in various military expeditions and border crossings. Just as Somoza and Cariás denied to US officials their funding dissident Guatemalan exiles, Arévalo and his officials pledged to US officials their conformity to the non-interventionist ideal and denied their aiding anti-Somoza and anti-Cariás

²⁶ See “Interview with Guatemalan Minister for Foreign Affairs”, Andrew Donovan to Secretary of State, 14 August 1946, in “Guatemala, US Embassy, Guatemala City, Classified General Records, 1937–1961”, [Hereafter US Embassy Guatemala City Classified], Box 14, RG84, NARA2.

²⁷ “Carlos Padilla y Padilla”, Gordon Reid to Ernest Siracusa, 5 January 1951, in Folder “Chronological Memoranda, 1951, “Bureau of Inter-American Affairs/Office of Middle American Affairs, Subject Files, 1947–1956”, Box 3, Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State [Hereafter RG59], NARA2.

²⁸ “Memorandum de conversación sostenida la noche del 28 de diciembre de 1945, en Ciudad Trujillo, por el funcionario que suscribe con el General venezolano Rafael Simón Urbina”, in Expediente “1945, Memorandum de conversación con el general Rafael Simón Urbina, Código 5/c,” SERREE, IT 2903226, AGN.

²⁹ José Vicente Pepper to Emilio Zeller, 12 July 1946, and Emilio Zeller to R. Paíno Pichardo, 14 July 1946, both in Expediente “1946, Cartas de Zeller y Pepper, Código 5/c,” SERREE, IT 2903226, AGN.

³⁰ See Rafael Simón Urbina, *Victoria, dolor y tragedia: relación cronológica y autobiográfica* (Ciudad Trujillo: L. Sánchez Andújar, 1946); “Carta del general Urbina al ‘País,’ de Caracas”, *La Nación* (Ciudad Trujillo), 4 February 1946; No. 26, Charles Burrows to Secretary of State, 07 January 1948, in Folder “710 Venezuela, 1948”, US Embassy Santo Domingo, Box 22, RG84, NARA2.

conspiracies.³¹ US officials struggled to make sense of countless reports of anti-Trujillo conspiracies with Arévalo and Betancourt's providing financial aid and weapons to leading anti-Trujillo exiles Juan Bosch, Ángel Morales, and Juan 'Juancito' Rodríguez.³² However, the region's actors pursued their own goals despite US officials' constant interventions in attempts to establish regional stability.

Links between anti-dictatorial exiles and Arévalo and Betancourt drew from a combination of ideological and political sympathy and a strategy of self-defence. Arévalo's democratic position became well known in the Caribbean basin. 'Guatemala has the first democratic government in its history', Arévalo proclaimed in 1945, 'We hope to soon see the same privilege reach other American lands that wish for it.'³³ Throughout his own time in exile, Betancourt always excoriated dictatorial regimes and associated with fellow exiles such as the Dominican Juan Bosch.³⁴ Although scholarship has touched upon the ideological links between these presidents and anti-dictatorial exiles, their supporting exiles as a policy of self-defence against the region's dictators must also be considered.³⁵ Somoza, Carías, and Trujillo had immediately aided dissident Guatemalan and Venezuelan exiles and financed conspiracies against Arévalo and Betancourt. Consequently, one can now assume that Arévalo and Betancourt's own support of anti-dictatorial exiles emerged from ideological, political, and strategic motivations.

The aborted 1947 anti-Trujillo Cayo Confites expedition represented the anti-fascist ferment and its transnational links among Arévalo, Betancourt, and other democratic leaders and ideological groups in the greater Caribbean basin. From 1946 to 1947, Dominican exiles Juan Bosch, Juan Isidro Jiménez Grullón, Ángel Morales, Luis Mejía, and others travelled between Guatemala, Venezuela, Cuba, and Haiti. Based upon their common ideological sympathies with Arévalo, experiences in exile with Betancourt, association with and support of Cuban president Ramón Grau San Martín and the Partido Revolucionario Cubano-Auténtico [Auténticos], shared animosity with Dumarsais Estimé and many Haitian officials against Trujillo, and Arévalo and Betancourt's pursuit of a policy of self-defence, these exiles began preparing an expedition to invade the Dominican Republic and oust Trujillo. Arévalo even purchased arms from Argentina for the exiles. In preparation, Dominican exiles received more than arms and money; their travels brought them into contact with Honduran, Salvadoran, and Nicaraguan exiles as well as some from Spain. Additionally, their actions held a transnational appeal among other groups, most

³¹ See No. 1558, John Erwin to Secretary of State, 28 December 1944, in US Embassy Guatemala City Classified, Box 10, RG84, NARA2; Report. No. 24-45, Nathan A. Brown, 05 April 1945, in US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 26, RG84, NARA2.

³² No. 9198, Allan Dawson to Secretary of State, 06 September 1946, in US Embassy Santo Domingo, Box 11, RG84, NARA2.

³³ Informe 275, Despradel a Peña Batlle, 29 August 1945, AGN.

³⁴ See the chapter on Betancourt in Schwartzberg, *Democracy and U.S. Policy*, as well as the various writings by Betancourt.

³⁵ Piero Gleijeses, "Juan José Arévalo and the Caribbean Legion", *Journal of Latin American Studies* 21.1 (February 1989): 133-45; Schwartzberg, *Democracy and U.S. Policy*.

notably Cuban students such as the young medical student Fidel Castro, who repeatedly provided speaking opportunities and assistance to Dominican exiles based in Havana. Finally, Dominican exiles Juan ‘Juancito’ Rodríguez and Miguel Ángel Ramírez provided crucial sums of money and military training to the expedition.³⁶

The preparations of what would become known as the Cayo Confites expedition became well known throughout the greater Caribbean basin due to popular affinity with the expedition. In spite of repeated denials issued by Betancourt, Grau San Martín, Arévalo, the exiles, and their associates, the Guatemalan, Venezuelan, Cuban, and Haitian governments lent direct support to the expedition’s preparations. When Trujillo’s officials protested the organisation’s blatant presence due to repeated publications in the Cuban press of the exiles as well as rumours and reports emanating from Dominican officials, Cuban officials ordered the Cuban navy to escort the expedition’s forces and resources to Cayo Confites, an isolated Cuban beach. Ultimately, the expedition acquired 50 machine guns, 200 Thompson submachine guns, over 1,000 Colt .45 automatic pistols, 15 bazookas with 300 rockets, hundreds of bombs, three mortars, three anti-tank guns, and a couple thousand hand grenades alongside seven ships that included a Landing Craft-Tank vessel, a Landing Craft-Infantry vessel, an assault ship, and two patrol torpedo boats and 16 planes that included 6 P-38 fighters, a B-24 bomber, a B-25 Mitchell bomber, and a few troop carriers. The exiles found themselves allied with between 1,200 and 1,300 Cubans, brought together thanks to the help of the Cuban government and the student organisations that supported the exiles’ cause against Trujillo. Although finally terminated in September of 1947 due to Trujillo’s protests and US officials’ interventions, the Cayo Confites expedition demonstrated the potential of this loosely-formed revolutionary network in the greater Caribbean basin in amassing the required materials and working with sympathetic governments and ideologically-aligned organisations. Furthermore, the expedition also accelerated the ideological and personal links between the supporting governments. With the expedition’s termination, Betancourt sent a personal message to Cuban president Grau San Martín expressing their common goals and encouraging him to join Betancourt and Arévalo in a coordinated diplomatic defence against Trujillo’s accusations and reaction, one ‘born of our coinciding views against the anomalous Dominican situation and making use of the cordial friendship that unites us.’³⁷

³⁶ The items obtained concerning the Cayo Confites expedition derive from Record Group 84 for the US Embassies in Havana, Santo Domingo, Port-au-Prince, and Caracas; files at the Archivo Nacional and the Archivo Central del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores in Havana; files at the National Archives in London; and files at the Archivo General de la Nación in Santo Domingo. Histories have been produced about Cayo Confites by José Diego Grullón, Humberto Vázquez García, and Charles Ameringer, but no historian has brought together the sources from all of these countries, as well as those that might be found in Caracas and Guatemala City.

³⁷ Rómulo Betancourt to Ramón Grau San Martín, 21 August 21 1947, in “Expediente 1947”, Caja América Latina/Venezuela/1909–1956/Patrimonio, Archivo Central del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Havana, Cuba [Hereafter ACMINREX].

Whereas a handful of historians have discussed the aborted expedition's impact in the region, previously-untapped materials now reveal that a counter-revolutionary network composed of patron dictators Somoza, Carías, and Trujillo acting as regional proponents financed dissident Guatemalan and Venezuelan exiles in expeditions against Arévalo and Betancourt. Even before the well-publicised Cayo Confites expedition, Trujillo's officials began to lambast not only Betancourt but Arévalo for supposedly supporting Soviet efforts to undermine hemispheric solidarity.³⁸ When Arévalo's government broke relations with Trujillo's regime, a Dominican official released a public report denouncing Arévalo's 'communistic ideology.'³⁹ It seems that the Trujillo regime's anti-communist position against Arévalo caught the attention of transnational allies and dissident Guatemalan exiles, and exacerbated the region's conflicts.

In Tegucigalpa and Mexico City, Dominican officials provided a welcome environment for Guatemalan exiles. From Colonel Arturo Ramírez to General Roderico Anzueto and even General Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes who was still serving the Arévalo government, requests for economic aid to overthrow Arévalo poured into the Dominican embassies. In August 1947, ousted leader of the Guatemalan triumvirate General Federico Ponce sought economic aid from the Dominican ambassador in Mexico in order to overthrow Arévalo. In response, Trujillo sent a one-word personal cable, 'SI.'⁴⁰ Although Arévalo's government uncovered the Trujillo-funded Ponce conspiracy, the government suspended the constitution in order to round up suspects. In fact, Guatemalan officials requested that US officials prevent Ponce's conspiracy from its realisation by grounding planes Ponce had purchased in the United States, a request quickly fulfilled to ensure regional stability.⁴¹ In 1948, Adán Manrique Ríos disclosed information regarding his meetings with Guatemalan officials, Guatemalan exiles, and even Arévalo with Dominican ambassador in Mexico, Joaquín Balaguer.⁴²

But this was not merely a relationship built between Dominican officials and Guatemalan exiles. Other notorious Guatemalan exiles lobbied Trujillo to support conspiracies already involving Somoza and Carías. Rebuffed by US officials, Juan Pinillos instead gave his reports on internal developments in Guatemala to high-level Honduran and Dominican officials.⁴³ In July and August of 1947, Pinillos accompanied Colonel Arturo Ramírez during another meeting with Dominican

³⁸ Arturo Despradel to Rafael Trujillo, 16 July 1947, in SERREE, Caja IT 2903349, Fechas extremas 1947–1950, Código 658, [Hereafter IT 2903349], AGN.

³⁹ "Dominican Republic Foreign Office, Official Announcement", 18 July 1947, in SERREE, IT 2903349, AGN.

⁴⁰ Cable 558, Gustavo Julio Henríquez to Rafael Trujillo, 27 August 1947; and Cable, Rafael Trujillo to Gustavo Julio Henríquez, 28 August 1947, in SERREE, IT 2903349, AGN.

⁴¹ No. 361, Edwin Jackson Kyle to Secretary of State, 9 October 1947, 814.00/10-947, in "Decimal File 814: Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of Guatemala 1945–1949", RG59, NARA2, Roll 1, National Archives Microfilm Publication M1527.

⁴² Joaquín Balaguer to Rafael Trujillo, 18 May 1948, in SERREE, IT 2903349, AGN.

⁴³ 308, Víctor Ant. Fernández J. to Arturo Despradel, 5 August 1947, in SERREE, IT 2903349, AGN.

officials. In a coded message in the middle of Ramírez's report to Trujillo, the Guatemalan exile explained his 'plan that could not fail.' A contingent of Guatemalan exiles would take up arms in Nicaragua 'with the acquiescence of General Tiburcio Carías Andino, as much for their passing as well as the financing of the movement.'⁴⁴ Just as a revolutionary network had supported the Cayo Confites expedition, a counter-revolutionary network began to emerge that was bringing together dissident Guatemalan exiles and the dictators of Nicaragua, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic against Arévalo's government.

In contrast to what currently appears to be their lack of knowledge on anti-Arévalo conspiracies such as that of Ramírez, US officials played central roles in deterring plots to remove Betancourt and AD from Venezuela. Again, US officials sought stability in the greater Caribbean basin. Due to the participation of US citizens, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) built a file on what became known as the Browder and Eisenhart cases in which Trujillo's officials at the Dominican consulate in Miami worked with US gunrunners to purchase P-38s, arms, and explosive materials to support an expedition into Venezuela and overthrow the AD government.⁴⁵ Reported by US and FBI officials and Dominican official José María Nouel, dissident Venezuelan exiles, including former dictator Eleazar López Contreras and López Contreras's former police and intelligence official Pedro Estrada, worked with Trujillo's officials to purchase and smuggle these materials into the Dominican Republic. María Nouel even admitted that the State Department already knew of his providing large sums of money to López Contreras.⁴⁶

It appears that by late 1947 and early 1948 the counter-revolutionary network incorporated these Venezuelan exiles. In January 1948 a transport plane flew from Ciudad Trujillo to Puerto Cabezas in Nicaragua, carrying arms and around 50 Venezuelan exiles. Headed by Leonardo Altuve Carrillo and including Rafael Simón Urbina, the exiles carried weapons and vast amounts of explosives. Coordinating with an attempt to assassinate Betancourt in Bogotá, the exiles planned to air-bomb Caracas, plots deterred by US officials upon Betancourt's request.⁴⁷ Throughout these plots, it becomes apparent that dissident Guatemalan and Venezuelan exiles, even when rejected by US officials, found common cause with and received crucial funding

⁴⁴ Confidencial 290, Víctor Ant. Fernández J. to Emilio García Godoy, 28 July 1947; and "EXPOSICION SOBRE LOS ASUNTOS RELACIONES con GUATEMALA", Arturo Ramírez, 27 July 1947, in SERREE, IT 2903349, AGN.

⁴⁵ As with the Cayo Confites, items regarding the Browder and Eisenhart cases are scattered throughout various US Embassy files and Dominican collections. For US materials, one can consult Boxes 15 through 19 in US Embassy Santo Domingo, RG84, NARA2, as well as Box 5625, Decimal File 1945-1949, RG59, NARA2.

⁴⁶ José María Nouel, 27 June 1947, in Expediente "1947, Memorandum del Ministro Consejero José María Nouel, hijo, Código 5/C", SERREE, IT 2903226, AGN.

⁴⁷ A few reports on this plot are scattered in the US Embassy files, but see No. 116, Maurice Bernbaum to Secretary of State, 3 March 1948; No. 120, Maurice Bernbaum to Secretary of State, 5 March 1948; No. 129, Maurice Bernbaum to Secretary of State, 10 March 1948, in Folder "800 Nicaragua, General Confidential, 1948", US Embassy Managua, Box 26, RG84, NARA2.

from Somoza, Carías, and Trujillo to conspire against the governments in Guatemala and Venezuela. Whereas US officials opposed all conspiracies during these years, the region's dictators served as regional proponents who provided the necessary resources for such plots by counter-revolutionary movements.

Gaining and losing allies: Costa Rican Civil War and Venezuelan coup in 1948

Two events in 1948 further propelled the progress and challenges facing the two networks. First, in March 1948, Costa Rican political leader José Figueres declared war against the country's government when ex-president Rafael Ángel Calderón Guardia's supporters in the National Assembly nullified the 1948 election results and gave the presidency to Calderón Guardia. Over the past months, Figueres had worked with leading Nicaraguan exiles such as Rosendo Argüello and travelled throughout the greater Caribbean basin to network with the veterans of the Cayo Confites affair and Arévalo. As a result, Arévalo delivered the Cayo Confites arms as the Dominican exiles under Juan 'Juancito' Rodríguez and Miguel Ángel Ramírez, joined by their Honduran, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, and Spanish allies, flew into Costa Rica to support Figueres's war. The success of Figueres and the exiles gave rise to the idea of the 'Caribbean Legion,' a loose coalition of Caribbean and Central American exiles that operated in the region and dedicated themselves to overthrowing dictatorial regimes in the greater Caribbean basin.⁴⁸

Although historians have noted that Somoza intervened in the conflict and provided resources to Calderón Guardia against Figueres, Trujillo also played a significant role in Costa Rica. In April, Somoza sent confidential agents Colonel Camilo González of the Guardia Nacional and doctor Carlos Baptista to meet with Trujillo and discuss the civil war in Costa Rica. As Somoza explained in a personal letter to Trujillo,

I am now capable of demonstrating to you that the revolutionary movement in Costa Rica threatens to extend itself to Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic, with the economic and material help of Juan José Arévalo and Rómulo Betancourt.⁴⁹

When the *Calderonista* forces departed Costa Rica for Nicaragua, Somoza and Calderón Guardia continued requesting and receiving the support of Trujillo. As explained by the Cuban attaché in Tegucigalpa and confirmed in cables between Ciudad Trujillo and the Dominican embassy in Mexico City, Trujillo provided economic aid to purchase military equipment in Mexico that was then sent to Nicaragua for Somoza and the *Calderonista* exiles.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ See Ameringer's works and Kyle Longley, *The Sparrow and the Hawk: Costa Rica and the United States during the Rise of José Figueres* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1997).

⁴⁹ Anastasio Somoza to Rafael Trujillo, 17 April 1948; and Anastasio Somoza to Rafael Trujillo, 10 April 1948, in Expediente "1948, Código 5/C", SERREE, IT 2904052, Fechas extremas 1948–1956, Ref. Antigua 2339 [Hereafter IT 2904052], AGN.

⁵⁰ No. 99, René de Lamar y Capó to Carlos Hevia, 14 December 1948, in "Expediente 1948", "Caja A Latina/Costa Rica/1914–1949/Ordinario 1," AADMINREX; Undated Cable, Anastasio Somoza to Rafael

Consequently, the growing role of such international players accelerated the intelligence-sharing and 'Latin Americanisation' of conspiracies in the greater Caribbean basin. US officials pressured Somoza to terminate his participation in the Costa Rican Civil War and links with the *Calderonistas*, but Somoza and his allies persisted. Somoza and Trujillo drew closer to Carías in Honduras. When the Costa Rican Civil War broke out, Somoza explained to US officials that he had entered into an 'anti-communist' pact a year earlier with Carías.⁵¹ As would Somoza, Honduran officials began providing reports to US officials, one of which was subsequently disseminated by Secretary of State George Marshall to all US embassies in the greater Caribbean basin, claiming that Arévalo and Figueres sought to overthrow the Nicaraguan and Honduran regimes.⁵² By the end of 1948, Somoza was able to reassure Trujillo that he was in communication with Carías and would come to Carías's aid if Arévalo attempted to invade Honduras.⁵³

Somoza- and Trujillo-financed *Calderonista* conspiracies undermined Figueres's consolidation of power in Costa Rica and alliance with Arévalo and the Caribbean Legion. From 1948 to 1949, Figueres's officials in Nicaragua and Honduras repeatedly reported on the rampant attacks and escalating violence proliferating in the Costa Rican-Nicaraguan borderlands, and Figueres's agents monitored these acts while trying to gather information on the links between Somoza and the *Calderonista* forces.⁵⁴ Facing this combination of international pressure from the US government and the Organisation of American States and borderland violence, Figueres temporarily severed his official links with the various revolutionary exiles and Arévalo. Although Trujillo and Somoza continued their campaign against Figueres, the counter-revolutionary network had won a victory by temporarily 'containing' Costa Rica and weakening the revolutionary network.

In Venezuela that same year, the counter-revolutionary network won another crucial conflict, albeit indirectly. When the military seized power in November of 1948, numerous dissident Venezuelan exiles who had operated abroad with Trujillo and Somoza's patronage against Betancourt and AD returned to Venezuela and took key positions in the military government. Pedro Estrada became head of the National

Footnote 50 continued

Trujillo'; and Handwritten Note, Telésforo Calderón to Rafael Damirón Díaz, 25 September 1948, in Expediente "1948–1950, Código 5/C"; SERREE, IT 2903961, Fechas extremas 1948–1951, Ref. Antigua 2270, AGN.

⁵¹ "Anti-Communist Pact", with No. 172, Maurice Bernbaum to Secretary of State, 2 April 1948, Folder "800 Nicaragua, General Confidential, 1948", US Embassy Managua, Box 26, RG84, NARA2.

⁵² "MEMORANDUM", with "Unsettled Conditions in Central American-Caribbean Area", George Marshall, 25 June 1948, "Costa Rica, US Embassy, San José, Classified General Records, 1938–1961", Box 64, RG84, NARA2.

⁵³ Cable, Anastasio Somoza to Rafael Trujillo, 25 October 1948, in Expediente "1948–1949, Código 5/C", SERREE, Caja IT 2904052, AGN.

⁵⁴ See Undated Cable, Costa Rican Legation in Managua, in Expediente "2775, Relaciones Exteriores, Nicaragua", Archivo Nacional de Costa Rica, San José, Costa Rica [Hereafter ANCR]; Undated Cable, Costa Rican Legation in Managua, in Expediente "2574-bis, Relaciones Exteriores, Nicaragua", ANCR.

Security department, Leonardo Altuve a Venezuelan ambassador, and Rafael Simón Urbina returned, ultimately assassinating the more moderate Venezuelan military leader Carlos Delgado Chalbaud and facilitating the consolidation of power under General Marcos Pérez Jiménez. Thanks to the patronage of Trujillo and Somoza, these dissident Venezuelan exiles actively plotted abroad and weathered the democratic openings of the mid-1940s. With the military coup, these exiles were in a beneficial position to return to Venezuela and demonstrate their gratitude to their former patrons. In contrast, AD and Betancourt, formerly allies and an important patron for the revolutionary network, now found themselves as Venezuelan exiles and targets of both the Venezuelan military junta and the counter-revolutionary network.

The counter-revolutionary network: containing their enemies, 1949–1952

From 1949 into 1952, the counter-revolutionary network pursued its twin goals of containing Arévalo and Figueres, that is, Guatemala and Costa Rica. A shared ideology and opposition to Betancourt, Figueres, and Arévalo, as well as any exile associated with the ever more anomalous Caribbean Legion, brought the Dominican, Venezuelan, and Nicaraguan regimes together. In October 1950, Dominican ambassador Ramón Brea Messina discussed with Venezuela's National Security political chief Rafael Castro the activities and movements of 'the various enemies of our Government', that is, Dominican and Venezuelan exiles, working with Figueres, Betancourt, and others. During the meeting, Castro shared information obtained by Venezuelan military officials from Guatemalan military attachés in Colombia and Argentina.⁵⁵ In one meeting with Dominican officials, the one-time Venezuelan exile Pedro Estrada discussed his recent meeting with Somoza regarding an alleged organisation of an exile expedition against one of their governments.⁵⁶ Throughout Dominican reports, Estrada, Somoza, Trujillo, and their associates and officials noted every rumour and detail concerning Figueres, Betancourt, Arévalo, and those who supposedly composed the Caribbean Legion. In November 1950, Dominican officials reported a conversation with the Nicaraguan ambassador in Honduras regarding the possibility of the normalisation of relations between Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic. As the Dominican attaché noted, 'if able to establish new in Costa Rica a Dominican diplomatic Mission there, the Dominican Mission would be able to collaborate efficiently with that of the Nicaraguans in the work of observing and counteracting the activities that the agents of Arévalo [are trying to develop] against our country's Government and that of Nicaragua. That is to say, it would be the equivalent of winning a new position or point over the enemy.'⁵⁷

⁵⁵ 381–50, Ramón Brea Messina to Telésforo Calderón, 27 October 1950, in SERREE, IT 2903349, AGN.

⁵⁶ No. 128, Héctor Incháustegui Cabral to Rafael Trujillo, 28 January 1950, in Expediente "1950, Código 5/C", SERREE, IT 2904052, AGN.

⁵⁷ No. 236, Rafael Damirón Díaz to Virgilio Díaz Ordóñez, 26 November 1949, in SERREE, IT 2903349, AGN.

It was this network that set the foundation for the first US government-supported covert operation against the Guatemalan government, Operation PBFORTUNE. As noted in the vast scholarship on US-Guatemalan relations, it was Somoza who approached the Truman administration in 1952 and suggested overthrowing Guatemala. However, while US officials and the CIA deliberated and quietly organised, the counter-revolutionary network's history of intelligence-sharing among its members ensured that reports on Somoza's meetings with Truman officials quickly spread throughout the greater Caribbean basin. Soon after meeting with US officials, Somoza told Trujillo's ambassador in Managua that the US government would support an operation, seeing as 'it was useless [waiting] for Arbenz to liberate himself from Arévalo's influence.' Additionally, Somoza noted that Costa Rican exile leader Rafael Ángel Calderón Guardia had a new plan to overthrow Figueres.⁵⁸ This opposition to both Arbenz in Guatemala and Figueres in Costa Rica brought together not only the governments of Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Venezuela but also that of Colombia. As one US official reported, these governments relied upon information from their intelligence services in the greater Caribbean basin that alleged that Figueres's position in Costa Rica aided dissident exiles and communist elements aimed at overthrowing all of the region's governments.⁵⁹

In fact, US officials faced challenges from the counter-revolutionary network. Although the network supported the US decision to overthrow the Arbenz government, its actors always remained committed to overthrowing Figueres as well. Additionally, the network emerged from its own history of intelligence-sharing. While US officials hoped for a discreet operation, the members of the network immediately disseminated the US decision to overthrow Guatemala with all of its members aware of a so-called 'green light' that greatly perturbed US Assistant Secretary of State Edward Miller and other State Department officials. Miller feared 'whether the movement [of the counter-revolutionary network] is genuinely anti-communist or whether it isn't just a sort of a mutual protection society. The fact that they are more worried about Figueres than Guatemala is an indication of this.'⁶⁰ Despite the abrupt termination of PBFORTUNE, the network remained crucial in Operation PBSUCCESS. From Somoza and Trujillo to Pérez Jiménez, Pedro Estrada, and Calderón Guardia, the network's members joined the US government-led operation and supported Carlos Castillo Armas's rise to power.

While US officials celebrated their triumph in Guatemala, the counter-revolutionary network continued. As Miller forewarned, the network's members kept their focus upon Costa Rica. In the last half of 1954, US officials repeatedly

⁵⁸ Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi to Rafael Trujillo, 21 July 1952, in Expediente "Nicaragua, Sec. Calderón, 1948–1952, Código 5/C", SERREE, IT 2903958, Fechas extremas 1939–1952, Ref. Antigua 2270, AGN.

⁵⁹ Despatch 388, Henry A. Hoyt, 28 August 1952, in Folder "320 Venezuela and Colombia, Jan 1950-Dec 1952", US Embassy Caracas, Box 79, RG84, NARA2.

⁶⁰ Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Fletcher Warren, 8 October 1952, in Folder "350 Caribbean Area, Jan 1950-Dec 1952", in US Embassy Caracas, Box 79, RG84, NARA2.

offered assurances of US intervention, protection, and arms to all parties in the event of an invasion into or emanating from Costa Rica.⁶¹ However, these promises meant little to the network. Even as the conspiracy against Arbenz commenced in early 1954, Figueres's agents reported that many of those involved trained on Somoza's estates in Nicaragua to 'make a simultaneous attack as that into Guatemala.'⁶² Up to the end of 1954, Figueres's officials monitored Pedro Estrada's movements, noting his meetings with Somoza's officials in Washington before flying into Castillo Armas's Guatemala to meet with Calderón Guardia.⁶³ When Jaime Solera, a trusted Costa Rican businessman, met with Somoza in December of 1954 to discuss Nicaraguan-Costa Rican tensions, Somoza utilised the coup in Guatemala to threaten Figueres. 'President Somoza referred to the revolution in Guatemala', Solera found, 'admitting that he had had a direct intervention [in overthrowing Arbenz].'⁶⁴ When Solera shared the meeting's poor results with the US ambassador in Costa Rica, Robert Woodward, the US official hoped that 'despite rebuff this Costa Rican overture may have beneficial effect.'⁶⁵ Twenty days later, *Calderonista* forces, with the aid of Somoza, Trujillo, Pérez Jiménez, and Castillo Armas, invaded Costa Rica. Once again, US officials intervened, although the State Department had to provide planes to Figueres in order to terminate the counter-revolutionary network's invasion.⁶⁶ Although US officials' Cold War policies had intersected with those of the counter-revolutionary network during Operation PBSUCCESS, those same policies stood at cross-purposes with local actors' pursuit of their own policies towards Costa Rica.

Conclusion

With a combination of Latin Americanist and foreign relations methodologies supported by previously-untapped sources, this article has demonstrated that US Cold War policy towards Guatemala intersected with that of a counter-revolutionary

⁶¹ Declassified US embassy files as well as items found in Records of the Office of Middle American Affairs, Records Relating to Costa Rica and Nicaragua, 1951–1955, RG59, NARA2, reveal how State Department officials struggled to prevent the invasion of Costa Rica, even as they noted the actions of the counter-revolutionary network.

⁶² Informe Confidencial, Unnamed to Mario Esquivel, 21 April 1954, in Expediente "2637, Relaciones Exteriores, Nicaragua", ANCR.

⁶³ Roberto Rodríguez Segura to José Figueres, 27 November 1954, Expediente "607, Relaciones Exteriores, Cuba", ANCR.

⁶⁴ Informe, Unnamed, Undated, in Expediente "2711, Relaciones Exteriores, Nicaragua", ANCR. Alberto Cañas, Costa Rica's Ambassador to the United Nations between 1948 and 1949 and Vice-Minister of Foreign Relations between 1955 and 1956, suggested that the individual who met with Somoza and produced this report was Jaime Solera, a trusted confidante of both *Figueristas* and *Calderonistas*, and the US report below confirmed this; Alberto Cañas, interview by author, 9 October 2013.

⁶⁵ Telegram, Robert Woodward to Department of State, 22 December 1954, Document 613, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952–1954: Volume IV, The American Republics* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1983): 1390.

⁶⁶ See Longley, *The Sparrow and the Hawk*.

network in the greater Caribbean basin whose opposition to the Arbenz government derived from previously-unexamined inter-American regional conflicts in the 1940s and 1950s waged independently, and often at odds with, US officials' objectives. Rather than focusing solely upon US-Guatemalan relations, this article has revealed that regional proponents opposed Arévalo and his government, denounced communist infiltrations, shared intelligence, and financed dissident Guatemalan exiles' conspiracies. Somoza, Carías, and Trujillo had worked with various Guatemalan exiles before any known US government-supported operation and against US officials' policies for regional stability in the greater Caribbean basin in the 1940s. In 1952, US Cold War policy towards Guatemala intersected with this regional conflict, and involved leaders and dissident exiles then played pivotal roles in both PBFORTUNE and PBSUCCESS. In moving beyond US-Guatemalan relations and analysing the inter-American conflicts of the post-war democratic openings and the first years of the international Cold War, this article has provided a crucial and overlooked transnational and international dimension in which members of the counter-revolutionary network 'Latin Americanised' the overthrow of Arbenz, the fall of the Guatemalan Revolution, and the Cold War

The article has also suggested that US policy towards Guatemala overlapped with inter-American conflicts between the counter-revolutionary network's members and those of the revolutionary network, most notably Rómulo Betancourt and the AD government in Venezuela and José Figueres in Costa Rica. When Castillo Armas took power, he sent Juan Pinillos, a veteran of the network's conspiracies against Arévalo, to show the Venezuelan military junta his gratitude, opposition against Figueres, and support for Calderón Guardia.⁶⁷ Venezuelan and former exile Pedro Estrada networked between Venezuela, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Colombia against Figueres. Less than a year after the overthrow of Arbenz, Somoza, Trujillo, the Venezuelan military junta, and the newly-installed Castillo Armas government in Guatemala came together once again in the January 1955 invasion of Costa Rica, in spite of the goals and efforts of US officials. For this counter-revolutionary network, its members' opposition to Figueres and Betancourt was part of a regional conflict that overlapped yet conflicted with US Cold War policy. From the counter-revolutionary network's perspective, the US government operation against Arbenz served as an opportunity to not simply realise their long-standing goal of 'containing' Guatemala but to continue their own policies of 'containment' against Figueres, Betancourt, and any remaining members of the Caribbean Legion. Their 1955 invasion of Costa Rica illustrates how these actors 'Latin Americanised' Operation PBSUCCESS in order to overthrow Figueres. Although meriting further in-depth examination, this article has presented a crucial consideration of the role of Betancourt, Figueres, and their allies and enemies in shaping events during these years.

⁶⁷ See items in Folder "320 Venezuela and Guatemala 1953", US Embassy Caracas, Box 89, RG84, NARA2.

Ultimately, this article serves to promote further exploration into how these inter-American conflicts shaped Latin America's Cold War. Examinations into regional alliances and conflicts in the greater Caribbean basin during the democratic openings and the early stages of the international Cold War could place a greater role upon events and actors in Colombia, Cuba, Haiti, Mexico, Panama, and El Salvador. Future analyses need to determine the intersections between nation-state, regional, and international events. Scholars must also further assess the region's definitions of 'communism' and 'anti-communism.' As this article demonstrated, Somoza, Carías, Trujillo, and dissident Guatemalan and Venezuelan exiles directed their anti-communist invectives and opposition to the 'influence' of the Mexican Revolution against Arévalo, Betancourt, and Figueres in the mid- to late 1940s, before US officials vocally expressed similar concerns. As such individuals utilised 'anti-communism' to legitimise their regimes since the 1920s and 1930s, further examinations are required to determine whether and how their definitions of 'anti-communism' evolved from the 1930s, or even from the Mexican Revolution, into the Cold War. Such an analysis would add to our understanding of the indigenous origins of anti-communism in the greater Caribbean basin and the impact of the post-war democratic openings. This would also contribute to the growing scholarship on the New Right in Latin America by assessing the movement's predecessors and identifying influences and divergences between the New Right and the counter-revolutionary network.

Finally, this article's outline serves as a foundation for further inquiry into conflicts throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s. Whereas most analyses of inter-American relations in the greater Caribbean basin currently stress events following the impact of Fidel Castro and the Cuban Revolution, numerous leaders were products of the inter-American conflicts that predated and possibly overlapped with events in and beyond Cuba. By 1955, Castro, a participant of the Cayo Confites expedition, and Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, an observer of the US government-sponsored overthrow of Arbenz, met and began to discuss overthrowing Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista with former Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas, whose name appeared in anti-dictatorial conspiracies in the 1940s and early 1950s. Moreover, Trujillo and Batista's officials spent the whole of the 1950s monitoring Caribbean Legion veterans and their allies. Former patrons Arévalo and Betancourt met with deposed Cuban president Carlos Prío Socarrás. Cayo Confites veterans, Dominican exiles, and Guatemalan exiles met with Cuban exiles Eufemio Fernández Ortega and Aureliano Sánchez Arango, who had all once assisted anti-dictatorial expeditions in the 1940s.⁶⁸ Even in 1958, Batista's officials monitored meetings with Figueres and Dominican exile and former Caribbean Legion leader Miguel Ángel Ramírez due to their conspiracies against

⁶⁸ See Informe Confidencial, Nicolás Cartaya Gómez, 30 April 1955, in Expediente "C-4 Programa oficial para la toma de posesión de Batista", "Jefe del Departamento de Dirección, Departamento de Dirección, Marina de Guerra", [Hereafter JDDDDMG], Archivo del Instituto de Historia de Cuba, Havana, Cuba [Hereafter AIHC]; No. 94-955, E. A. Cantillo, 1 May 1955, in Expediente "C-5 Actividades subversivas desde México", JDDDMG, AIHC.

Batista and ties to Betancourt, who had returned to the Venezuelan presidency.⁶⁹ Further scholarship could elaborate upon how these inter-American conflicts came to overlap with those concerning Batista and Castro. In examining the ‘Latin Americanisation’ and ‘transnationalisation’ of regional conflicts, this research could assess the agency of Latin America’s own revolutionary and counter-revolutionary regional proponents while acknowledging the influential presence of the US government in the Caribbean basin, evidenced by US resources and officials’ central role in facilitating the end of the Guatemalan Revolution and impeding plots and invasions against Figueres’s governments. As has this article, such contributions hopefully could decentre, without deemphasising, both the overthrow of Arbenz and the Cuban Revolution, crucial conflicts in both the Cold War and Latin America’s Cold War shaped not only by US policy towards the greater Caribbean basin but the foreign policies of local Latin American actors.

⁶⁹ Guillermo Salazar, 27 April 1958, in Expediente “1958”, “Caja: A Latina/Costa Rica/1950–1961/Ordinario 2”, ACOMINREX.