

RS#07: Source 4 - Secretary of State John F. Dulles, Radio Address, 1954

John Foster Dulles served as President Eisenhower's Secretary of State from 1953-1957. This excerpt is from an address that was broadcast to the American public on radio and television a week after the resignation of Guatemalan President Jacobo Arbenz on June 27, 1954. Dulles was known as an aggressive anti-communist. His law firm represented the United Fruit Company. In addition, his brother, Allen Dulles, director of the CIA, owned shares of the company.

"Tonight I should like to talk with you about Guatemala. It is the scene of dramatic events. They expose the evil purpose of the Kremlin [Soviet Union] to destroy the inter-American system, and they test the ability of the American states to maintain the peaceful integrity of this hemisphere. For several years international communism has been probing here and there for nesting places in the Americas. It finally chooses Guatemala as a spot which it could turn into an official base from which to breed subversion which could extend to other America Republics.

This intrusion of Soviet despotism [absolute rule] was, of course, a direct challenge to our Monroe Doctrine, the first and most fundamental of our foreign policies...In Guatemala, international communism had an initial success. It began 10 years ago, when a revolution occurred in Guatemala. The revolution was not without justification. But the Communists seized on it, not as an opportunity for real reforms, but as a chance to gain political power. Communist agitators devoted themselves to infiltrating the public and private organizations of Guatemala. They sent recruits to Russia and other Communist countries for revolutionary training and indoctrination in such institutions as the Lenin School of Moscow. Operating in the guise of "reformers" they organized the workers and the peasants under Communist leadership. Having gained control of what they call "mass organizations" they moved on to take over the official press and radio of the Guatemalan Government. They dominated the social security organization and ran the agrarian land reform program. Through the technique of the "popular front" they dictated to Congress and the President...

If world communism captures any American State, however small, a new and perilous [dangerous] front is established which will increase the danger to the entire free world and require even greater sacrifices from the American people...

Despite the armaments [weapons] piled up by the Arbenz government, it was unable to enlist the spiritual cooperation of the people ... Last Sunday, President Arbenz of Guatemala resigned and seeks asylum.

In conclusion, let me assure the people of Guatemala. As peace and freedom are restored to that sister Republic, the government of the United States will continue to support the just aspirations of the Guatemalan people. A prosperous and progressive Guatemala is vital to a healthy hemisphere. The United States pledges itself not merely to political opposition to communism but to help to alleviate conditions in Guatemala and elsewhere which might afford Communism an opportunity to spread its tentacles throughout the hemisphere. Thus we shall seek in positive ways to make our Americas an example which will inspire men everywhere."