

**Juan Bosch, Oral History Interview – 6/9/1964**  
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Bosch, president of the Dominican Republic in 1963, discusses coups and revolutions in Cuba, Brazil, and other Latin American countries; the United States' relationship with the Dominican Republic; and the Alliance for Progress, among other issues.

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Juan Bosch

Table of Contents

<u>Page</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1	Meeting John F. Kennedy (JFK) in January 1963
5	Cuba
7	Brazil
9	JFK's opposition to revolutions
11	JFK's death
12	Reasons for frequent coups and revolutions in Latin America
13	Bosch's attempts at political reconciliation in the Dominican Republic
15	Ways to foster democracy and capitalism in Latin America
17	Alliance for Progress
19, 22	Latin America's views of JFK and the U.S.
21	Lyndon Baines Johnson and Latin America

Oral History Interview

with

Juan Bosch  
Former President of the Dominican Republic

June 9, 1964  
Washington, D.C.

By Lloyd N. Cutler

For the John F. Kennedy Library

CUTLER: My name is Lloyd Cutler, and I am speaking to Mr. Juan Bosch, former President of the Dominican Republic. Juan, when did you first meet President Kennedy [John F. Kennedy]?

BOSCH: Well, I came to Washington and was in the White House early in January, 1963. I came as President-elect of the Dominican Republic, and I had a talk with President Kennedy that lasted one hour and fifteen minutes.

CUTLER: Was he the kind of man that you expected to find as the President?

BOSCH: No, I knew President Kennedy through his book *Profiles in Courage*. I knew him from the statements he made, first as a presidential candidate, and then as President of the Republic, and I knew him from his inaugural address. I was unprepared to find a young man who had a universal concept of his functions as the head of the United States Government and who saw Latin American problems from a point of view that, in my judgment, no other American Chief of State had had. This was my personal impression of the rare, I repeat, almost unprecedented case of a man who did not represent the abstract concept of the State, but who

imparted a new dimension to the governing function, and that dimension, in my opinion, was the result of his sensitivity, a rare, very masculine, very virile sensitivity. I would say that President Kennedy loved his country, the United States, as if the United States had been really a physical being, his mother, father, or older brother. And he had a guilt complex about what the United States may have done to the detriment of other countries in the past. The impression he made on me.... Of course, I had formed an image of President Kennedy on the basis of all those statements. But when I met President Kennedy, I found myself in the presence of a human being far more intense than I had expected—a type of Chief of State never before known, I believe, in United States history, and perhaps even in the history of Europe, perhaps in the Western world, since the days of Greece; there may have been a few like him, but not in modern times, because the head of government usually places the interests of the state above his personality and his personal feelings. He represents an abstract value, which is the State.

In my judgment, this was not true in President Kennedy's case. He tried to rectify all the damage the United States may have caused and to create a new image of his country. And this profound identification, so deeply felt, between a head of State and his people had never before occurred, I believe, in the history of his country, not even in the case of Abraham Lincoln.

CUTLER: As a Dominican exile and democrat and an opponent of the Trujillo Regime [Rafael Trujillo], what have you thought of the attitude of the United States, of the policy of the United States before President Kennedy?

BOSCH: There had always been a policy (in the time of Roosevelt [Franklin Delano Roosevelt], for instance) typical of those Chiefs of State who represent the State as an abstract value. President Roosevelt, who inaugurated the Good Neighbor policy, failed to convert his thinking into action, because, to President Roosevelt, the interests of the United States were above everything else. Mr. Truman [Harry S. Truman] followed more or less President Roosevelt's policy. Mr. Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower], toward the end of his administration, wanted to adopt a policy of cool relations with Trujillo, but actually

Trujillo had to face this new kind of Chief of State, President Kennedy. And President Kennedy wanted—in the case of the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Argentina, and Cuba—as I said, to erase the image of a great country that accepted a situation but made no attempt to rectify it, the situation beyond its border. That is to say, President Roosevelt, President Truman, and President Eisenhower would say, more or less, the Dominican situation is there, and we shall put up with that situation.

Of course, this concept of President Kennedy's attitude was a concept that I formed of him after meeting with him for an hour and fifteen minutes, and this impression was

created not only by what he said, but by his attitude. He was a man whose attitude was one of compassion, something that was hardly to be expected between a citizen of the United States and a citizen of the Dominican Republic or of Africa. I should mention that, in our conversation, during the many points we discussed, there was a moment when we spoke of the war danger, and, at that moment, President Kennedy reacted as if war, the idea that war could reach America, not the United States, but Latin America, pained him personally. It hurt him as much as it could hurt me, a Latin American.

CUTLER: Did you have the feeling in the election that the United States was favoring your opponents?

BOSCH: Yes, we had the impression that there were interests in the United States helping our opponents. There were no concrete facts, but we could not fail to note in the press dispatches, for instance, that they were excessively favorable to forces that we knew were in the minority in comparison with our party. And we also noted the conduct of certain diplomatic officials in the United States. But I must say that immediately after the elections were over, I noticed a truly sincere willingness on the part of the White House, not just President Kennedy, but also his assistants, to help.

And I must say that—you know this very well, because you were one of those who took part in the task of helping the Dominican Government, which I headed—there was something in the conduct of Ambassador Martin, naturally in that of Mr. Rusk [Dean Rusk], Teddy Moscoso [Teodoro Moscoso], the employees of the Alliance for Progress, Mr. Williams, for instance, but I knew what it was and was

[-3-]

aware that the impulse behind that attitude had a central focus, and that center was called John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

CUTLER: When you came to the United States in February, 1963, I guess in January...

BOSCH: In January.

CUTLER: January. At the time I saw you I got the feeling that you did not fully trust the United States and our Government, Mr. Kennedy's Government. What happened in your meeting with the President and with Ralph Dungan [Ralph A. Dungan] and his other assistants that gave you confidence?

BOSCH: Well, as I explained before, I found myself in the presence of a Chief of State who was not a president of the United States ready to defend the interests of a great country without taking into the slightest consideration the interests and rights of a small country like mine. In a word, I found a man as fully concerned about the fate of the Latin American people as he might be concerned about the fate of Arkansas, Georgia, or his native state, Massachusetts. And I had not expected to find

such an attitude in the United States, as I said, nor in any great country of the Western World, because the Chief of State was always detached from any event that did not involve the defense of the country.

CUTLER: But before you came to this country, you had read the principles of the *Alianza* and you had read President Kennedy's Inaugural Address and his other statements, and still you had some questions in your mind about the United States. There must have been something about the President himself and what he said to you and the way his people treated you that helped. Can you tell us what that was?

BOSCH: Well, I had believed before that President Kennedy, from his speeches and his book *Profiles in Courage*, from my point of view—I am an impassioned democrat, but as a Dominican I put the interests of the Dominican people above everything else in life—and I thought that President Kennedy would have the same attitude as a head of state as I had as a political leader. Instead, I found a man conscious of the fact that the great power of the United States did not need to be

[-4-]

defended against the small countries—that the attitude I had had in the Dominican Republic as a Dominican, President Kennedy had as head of government of the United States with respect to the Soviet rulers, or the Chinese, which are also great powers, but he did not have this attitude, the same attitude, in relation to the Dominican Republic. In the course of an hour and fifteen minutes of conversation, President Kennedy had said nothing that was not in defense of the Dominican people, or the Dominican Republic, either from the point of view of Dominican national policy or from the Dominican international point of view vis-à-vis the American policy. He spent the entire time that he talked to me defending the Dominican Republic. That is to say, it seemed that the one who was talking was not he, but myself, and this impressed me greatly.

CUTLER: Will you tell us one of the things that Mr. Kennedy said to you at the meeting that you remember very well?

BOSCH: Yes, indeed. We spoke among other things of the state-owned enterprises, the companies that had belonged to the Trujillo family. President Kennedy offered me all kinds of technical and other assistance in order to prevent those companies from being sold to private individuals, and especially to American companies. If it should some become necessary to sell them owing to a lack of technical know-how or capital in my country, it would be preferable that they not be sold to American interest. But he was in favor of not selling those companies.

The kind of general assistance that President Kennedy offered me for the development of the Dominican Republic and not for the benefit of the United States, was generous, and, moreover, that help was actually given to such an extent that American officials—and this you know—even went to offer assistance to the Dominican Government. They did not come to discuss plans to see how they could help us.

In the case of Cuba, for instance, I brought up the Cuban problem with President Kennedy, my concern over the Cuban problem. I requested that when the United States did adopt a course of action with regard to Cuba, I thought that certain of the Latin American Chiefs of State, some of those most affected by the Cuban problem, should be consulted in order to unite their points of view, and President Kennedy replied more or

[-5-]

less as follows: "The Cuban problem may lead to war. I hope that war does not come to Latin America."

CUTLER: Very good. You spent a great deal of time in Cuba yourself. Tell me, looking back, what you think of President Kennedy's policies toward Cuba?

BOSCH: Of course, it would perhaps be silly to say that the events of history could have happened some other way. But I am certain that if John Fitzgerald Kennedy had been elected President in 1956 instead of being elected in 1960, there would be no Communist in Cuba today. Fifteen years before Fidel Castro came down from the Sierra, I wrote while in Cuba a series of articles saying that the road of Latin American dictatorship would lead us into Communism, for many reasons, as I explained then. And although our countries have little basis on which to maintain democracy, the truth is that with such determined and positive help from the United States as Kennedy was giving Latin American democracy, some of the Latin American countries, and above all, Cuba, could find a more open road to a democratic regime. I believe that, where there is true democracy, Communism should not be feared—there should be no fear of democracy. If there had been a true democracy in Cuba, there would have been no possibility of establishing a Communist regime.

CUTLER: Tell me, why do you think it is that the Latin American democratic intellectual groups, of which you are a leading member, have always been reluctant for their governments to adopt a strong position towards Cuba, corresponding, let us say, to the position of the United States after the Bay of Pigs invasion, that is, a position of trying to confine the revolution to Cuba and preventing Cuba from growing stronger and influencing the other countries?

BOSCH: There are many reasons. The first of these lies in the Cubans themselves. The Cubans are so divided and so confused, and many of their leaders have such poor genuine democratic basis, that any Latin American Chief of State has to measure his steps very carefully before committing himself to an action that is doomed to fail—to fail ideologically, I mean, not militarily.

In the particular case of the Dominican Republic, the

[-6-]

situation is more complicated because Dominican young people, I would say—I speak of the responsible youth from the middle class, which is the responsible class, and for that very reason the dangerous one—I would say that out of every one hundred young people who were fifteen years old in 1956, ninety-nine have dreamed of being Fidel Castro. Not Fidel Castro the Communist leader, but Fidel Castro the revolutionary leader who overthrew a dictator named Fulgencio Batista; the image of a guerrilla who went up into the mountains and came down victorious. He still lives in the hearts of nearly all Dominican young people and all the parties. It is very hard to touch that image without producing a reaction prejudicial to democracy. But those Dominican young people don't know what democracy was. They thought democracy was Trujillo, Batista, and Perez Jimenez [Marcos Perez Jimenez], and the entire corrupt spectacle of Latin America dictatorship. The word democracy is associated in Latin America with the worst political periods of our countries because those dictators always spoke in the name of democracy, and because in the United States itself, the [truly] democratic country, they were referred to as the rulers of the free world, and in the Dominican Republic, these young people had to learn what democracy was before democracy was pitted against the hero that they admired then and continue to admire now.

CUTLER: Do you think our present policy towards Cuba is correct?

BOSCH: I am unfamiliar with the present American United States policy towards Cuba, but if it is the policy of President Kennedy, which was to isolate Cuba, it is the only correct policy to be followed with respect to Cuba. A policy of military aggression would produce throughout Latin America a generation of admirers no longer of Fidel the hero, but of Communists, because that admiration that is felt in the hearts of those young people would go much further, and the image of Fidel would drag them into Communism.

CUTLER: Tell me, what do you think about our policy towards the revolution in Brazil?

BOSCH: The revolution in Brazil is not actually a revolution, in the sense of the mere overthrow of Goulart [João Goulart]. Undoubtedly, it had the widespread backing of the Brazilian people. With Goulart, they had a state of permanent

[-7-]

agitation in the country, without clearly drawing lines, and the economic situation was obviously going from bad to worse. But the statement made by President Johnson [Lyndon Baines Johnson] 24 hours after the fall of Goulart was a statement that will damage the image of President Kennedy's policy. There have been two great presidents in the United States who have thoroughly understood Latin America. One was called Abraham Lincoln. His attitude during the invasion of Mexico was that of a Latin American leader. The other was John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt adopted a policy suited to the United States, but not to Latin America. That is to say, when he adopted it, he was thinking of the United States, rather than of benefits for Latin America. But John Fitzgerald Kennedy adopted for Latin America a policy of usefulness for Latin America without considering whether it was advantageous to the United States or not. Naturally, when one thinks with such a universal, zealous attitude, the results are also beneficial to the United States.

Not to follow the policies of John Fitzgerald Kennedy in every case in Latin America will sooner or later bring tragic consequences. Latin America, above all, is a region where the rulers return to power. Grau San Martín [Ramón Grau San Martín] returned to power in Cuba. Rómulo Betancourt to power in Colombia. Sooner or later Frondizi [Arturo Frondizi] will return to Argentina. It is also possible that Goulart will return to Brazil, and the movement that takes Goulart to Brazil will carry that mark.

President Johnson's statement was not very necessary. Military men throughout Latin America were encouraged by that statement. Fortunately, in a later speech, he smoothed over the incident a little, but I consider the statement very rash, and I am sorry for President Johnson's sake and for the sake of Latin American democracy.

CUTLER: We are once again in the same difficulty of choosing between the military revolutions we like because we did not like the prior government, and those we don't like because we did not like the prior government. Do you see any solution of this problem for us? Do you think we should be against all military revolutions, even when the prior government was a very bad one, or a very weak one, as in Brazil?

BOSCH: I believe that.... I believe that it is better,

[-8-]

although the United States cannot afford not to have relations with a Latin American government, because Latin America is now an "arena of decisions," and all the diplomatic fronts must be occupied. It is possible, however, to express constantly, in one way or another, the reservation that if the United States does maintain relations with governments that have not gained power through popular elections, it does so because it is a nation and not because it likes to do so.

CUTLER: Do you think Mr. Kennedy was correct in opposing military revolutions as a moral matter? The United States, as you know, spoke up very sharply against the revolution in Argentina and in the Dominican Republic and in Honduras. Or do you think we should have gone further and tried to reverse those revolutions by military or economic forces?

BOSCH: I believe that what President Kennedy's government was doing was right. It issued statements against military governments brought about by military coups; and, in addition, it tried to maintain relations with those governments and force the military element to return to constitutional procedures. It was a

policy that encouraged and stimulated the democrats, and it was, moreover, a policy that weakened Latin American military power. I believe that that was the only time that the United States ever followed a correct policy in Latin America, and that if this policy is continued for some time, it can save democracy in some Latin American countries.

CUTLER: But you do not think that the United States should use force to upset a military regime?

BOSCH: Under no circumstances. Latin Americans have two basic sentiments: nationalism and a love of the public liberties. If Mr. Johnson has lost, as I believe he has, the support of public opinion in Latin America and in his own country, it is because he has put an end to the public liberties in Cuba. But if he has not entirely lost all support, it is because he has remained firm as the defender of Cuba against the American military authorities. That is, United States military strength must not be used in Latin America, because that Latin American nationalist sentiment is stronger than any other. It is, indeed, a passion.

[ -9- ]

CUTLER: What would you think, Juan, of a treaty agreement among democratic governments in the Western Hemisphere, in which the governments would go to the help of one government such as your own, which was overthrown by a military “golpe”? Do you think such a treaty would make any sense?

BOSCH: The only international and inter-American measure that could help democracy internationally would be that type of agreement. But there are many countries that would not participate in such an agreement. They would have to be regional agreements in Latin America because nonintervention is a very strong principle in Latin American diplomacy, which has now been revived owing to Fidel Castro, for instance. The principle of nonintervention is not particularly pleasing to me, but in the face of what could come from Cuba to countries such as the Dominican Republic—this has been seen in the case of Venezuela with the shipping of weapons there—the Latin American countries, especially those situated in the Caribbean, must return to the nonintervention principle, not on account of the United States now, but on account of Cuba. And, on the basis of the principle of nonintervention, certain countries, for instance Mexico, probably Chile, and maybe Argentina, would join together to participate in the general agreement for the maintenance of democracy, I believe. But regional agreements could be made. Venezuela, Colombia, Costa Rica, Santo Domingo, could sign such an agreement—the United States.

CUTLER: Suppose there were an agreement among Venezuela, your Dominican Government, Salvador, Costa Rica, and the United States, and Colombia, under which if there was a military overthrow of one of the governments, the head of that government could ask the countries to come to his help. Perhaps the rule then would be that they could take a vote of the majority of the other countries before they decide

to go to the help of the government that was overthrown. Do you think such an agreement would be accepted by the Latin American governments?

BOSCH: Under those circumstances, military forces could indeed be used. What cannot be done is to use the United States military forces, not even to support the democracies. If the United States government now were to say to me, "Let us use the Navy in order that you may again

[-10-]

be the Constitutional president of the Republic," I would say no. But if there were a Venezuelan destroyer, three Colombian planes, a Costa Rican infantry force, and an American warship, then I would accept. I believe that the idea of the use of strength jointly for the defense of democracy in Latin America would be successful, and with the advantage that such a force could, in a few years, be used to defend democracy against all kinds of aggressors, not just military, whereas today it is difficult to obtain the cooperation of the military forces of Argentina, Venezuela, Brazil, or Mexico to defend democracy in Cuba, for instance.

CUTLER: Let us go back to your administration in Santo Domingo. Looking back, do you think there is anything that the United States could have done that we did not do that would have helped you stay in power as the legal government?

BOSCH: I am certain that President Kennedy and you, his associates, did all that could be done to help the Dominican Republic. I believe that it was an example. I also believe that it is very difficult to establish a stable, sound democracy in the Dominican Republic after so many years of tyranny and corruption.

CUTLER: Now, I will ask you a harder question. Looking back, do you think there is anything which you could have done or should have done that would have helped your government to stay in power?

BOSCH: Perhaps. Perhaps I made many mistakes, but it is very difficult for a head of state not to make mistakes. Now, there is one thing about which I am very much pleased, and that is that the fundamental error of my government was to establish a democracy that was too broad. Yet that experience is what has saved Dominican democracy for the future. I must say that when I received the news of President Kennedy's death, I reflected that it had been good fortune for me personally to have been overthrown before President Kennedy's death. Because, with such an example, no one knows what might have happened in the Dominican Republic.

I should also mention that on the very day Kennedy died I received a message from him. He was already dead when a person

[-11-]

carrying a message from President Kennedy came to my house, and as can be readily understood, this messenger was weeping, because the situation was very dramatic.

In my own home, the name of President Kennedy is mentioned every day as if he were a member of the family, and I am not exaggerating. I believe that the death of President Kennedy, together with that of Lincoln, were the ones most deeply felt in Latin America, with the difference that today there is more awareness, more communication in Latin America so that everyone, from men in high positions to the humblest Indian, learned almost instantly of the tragedy that had befallen the Western world.

CUTLER:           What do you think it is in the character of the Dominican people, and perhaps in the character of the Latin Americans generally, that make them hate each other so much? I mean in a political sense. Why is it that they are so unwilling to compromise and work things out in a democratic manner and permit a government that they do not like to serve out its term and then reelect another one? What is it, do you think, in Latin spirit that even though they say at all times they are dedicated to democracy and freedom, why do they keep turning away from it on every occasion so that when presidents are overthrown, many of the people very often are glad that they are overthrown? Certainly, the Goulart overthrow was popular, the Frondizi overthrow was popular. Why is that?

BOSCH:           We cannot say that this happens throughout Latin America because it does not happen in Mexico, for instance, Costa Rica, Uruguay, or Chile. And yet the Uruguayans, Chileans, Mexicans, and Costa Ricans are all Latin Americans. But it so happens that the Mexican, the Costa Rican, the Uruguayan, and the Chilean already have a democratic tradition. They have become accustomed to the democratic game. We, the remaining countries, are burdened with nothing but hatred for dictatorships. When the dictator disappears, we are already trained to hate the ruler, and we transfer this hatred to the one currently in power, and so, if dictators were to disappear for a time, that hatred would also disappear. And the proof of this is that it disappeared in Mexico, Costa Rica, Uruguay, and Chile, but in Brazil, where the dictator Getulio Vargas [Getulio Dornelles Vargas] governed until a short time ago; in the Dominican Republic, where Trujillo governed until a short while ago; in

[-12-]

Venezuela, where Perez Jimenez governed until a short time ago; in Argentina, where Peron [Juan Peron] was in power—in those countries, in general, we still need a number of years of democratic regimes in order that the accumulated political hatred may gradually disappear. In the early years, the people of the United States also had that hatred. The hatred of the Federalists for Jefferson [Thomas Jefferson], for the John Adamses [John Adams; John Quincy Adams], or vice-versa, was as great as the hatred in Latin America.

CUTLER:           You are very correct about that. But it seems to me from my experience in the Dominican Republic that after the election there was no feeling of

drawing together on either side. Did you consider, for example, a cabinet of national union, or making some effort to bring all of the parties into the Cabinet, or coming to terms with the business people or the military people in an effort to consolidate in a new administration?

BOSCH: Yes. I offered posts in the Cabinet to all parties, including a party such as the Union Civica. I offered two posts to parties that had polled only 12,000 votes, as in the case of Dr. Jimenes Grullon. I offered him a post in the Cabinet. I wanted to form a national coalition cabinet, but they all refused. Only the National Party accepted, taking the post of labor.

But what happened was that unconsciously they still looked with favor on Trujillo, which is one of the reasons why I had to maintain a very broad democracy in the Dominican Republic, and why I could not, under any circumstances, accuse anybody of being a communist. Because Trujillo had accused everybody of being Communist and harassed everybody, I had to create an entirely different image in Santo Domingo, so that the people could gradually realize that democracy was not Trujillo. Those politicians continued to look with favor on Trujillo, but today the majority of the people knows that democracy was something quite different from what it was under Trujillo.

CUTLER: But were the people ready to accept democracy? And by the people, I do not mean simply the majority of voters, or the poor *paisano*, but the people who have power and education and play a prominent role in the life of the country. Were they really ready to accept democracy?

[-13-]

BOSCH: At this moment, I would say that a part, which might be estimated at more than 50 percent, of the physicians, engineers, lawyers, and businessmen would be willing to support a democracy. But there is the other 50 percent that would not be willing, now or ever, because they were trained under the dictatorship and because their interests are stronger than the Dominican people in general.

Now, democracy does not teach the way a school teacher does. Democracy teaches through practice. Of this 50 percent that today would support democracy, there is a high percentage that would support it because by experience they know that when democracy in Santo Domingo disappeared, they were hurt. Not because they are intellectually or emotionally convinced that democracy is better, but rather because the absence of democracy has hurt their interests. But that is how one learns democracy.

CUTLER: What groups were represented in the “golpe” that overthrew you? Was it only the military?

BOSCH: No, no.

CUTLER: Was it also the Union Civica leaders?

BOSCH: Yes. Union Civica. The former Council of State...

CUTLER: The business community?

BOSCH: Yes. The businessmen and some of the industrialists and a very small number of the military leaders. Nevertheless, all together they held the power. They had more power than the government. Never in the history of the Dominican Republic had the people held the power, and the people would still need many years before they could hold the power. I can tell you that the same thing that happened in the Dominican Republic could have happened in Puerto Rico if Puerto Rico had had its own armed forces. Because in Puerto Rico, too, the industrialists and the businessmen would have used the military to overthrow the government of the island.

CUTLER: I have thought, myself, that if we could change the past course of history, and if the Dominican Republic had become a commonwealth of the United States just as Puerto Rico has become, the Dominican Republic would have come just as far as Puerto Rico.

[-14-]

BOSCH: Yes, yes. Maybe farther. In 1930, Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico were two very similar countries culturally, economically, and socially. Yet today Puerto Rico has gone much farther. Today, if Puerto Rico had its own armed forces, democracy would still not be overthrown because in the past twenty years a very responsible middle class has been formed. In Venezuela it will be very difficult to overthrow democracy because a very responsible middle class is being formed. But until such a middle class is formed economically, socially, and politically, democracy will not have the necessary strength to stand along.

CUTLER: Is it practical to think of Santo Domingo becoming a commonwealth of the United States?

BOSCH: Impossible.

CUTLER: Impossible.

BOSCH: Impossible. If the people of Santo Domingo were consulted, most Dominicans would say yes, but there are other points to consider. The Latin American public, in general, would take a very jaundiced view of such a move, and you people would not accept it, because the United States has no reason to burden itself with all the problems of the Dominican Republic.

CUTLER: If I understand you correctly, Juan, you believe, as I think I do, that the United States cannot bring democracy and economic progress to Latin

America with simply a wave of the hand, or a few hundred million dollars' worth of economic development, or some universities, or technical training. But, as the seeds of democracy need to grow for many years, the solution are in the hands of the *Latinos* themselves. If you agree with that, what are the things that we can do that will most influence the results? Perhaps we have a 10 percent effect on how things will come out in the Latin American area. What are the things we can do?

BOSCH: First of all, the United States and Latin America should do something jointly to prevent *coups d'etats*, because the most important thing is that the inhabitants of the Latin American countries become accustomed to the fact that it is the majority of the people that can make decisions.

[-15-]

And then, something that will enable us to develop the technical know-how we do not have. Latin America produces a total of only four thousand engineers per year, and we need to produce as many as twenty-five thousand to achieve one-third of the development we need, and we don't have the means for producing the engineers, doctors, or economists we need. Now, I am concerned about this. In 1980, we shall have a population of four hundred million people in Latin America. That is only sixteen years away. I believe that if President Kennedy has remained in office for eight years, he would have left a tradition of political unity between the two Americas, of working together. It did not happen that way. The fatal bullet did much harm to you, but greater harm to us. We have but sixteen years in which to prepare the development necessary to feed and educate four hundred million Latin Americans. I do not believe that anyone at this moment is thinking about getting ready for this great task, and if we fail to meet this challenge, in sixteen or twenty years Latin America will be involved in a fantastic revolution, and that will mean revolution for you people, for the United States.

CUTLER: In the last four years, do you think that democracy or communism has made more progress in Latin America?

BOSCH: Communism, obviously, because we have a Communist country ninety miles from the United States, but with this detail, which to me is fundamental: Communism was not established in Cuba by the Russians, the Chinese, or politicians, but by the Cubans. This means that the Brazilians also can establish Communism, and the Argentines, and the Chileans.

CUTLER: There would be national communism.

BOSCH: There can be, there can be.

CUTLER: But do you think we are losing ground?

BOSCH: Yes, obviously ground is being lost. Ground is being lost, and even in a democratic country like Chile ground is being lost.

CUTLER: We are hopeful that things will work out in Chile in this election. It's very close.

[-16-]

BOSCH: I also believe that Mr. Frei [Eduardo Frei Montalva] will win the election, as I understand that a large number of Chileans decided that the last minute to vote for Frei in order to prevent a *coup d'etat*. But if that happens, it will be due to the democratic feelings of the Chilean people, who want to avoid a *coup d'etat*. But Chile is a country with an old democratic tradition. Now, in the countries where democracy is unknown, something must be done so that the people will conduct themselves in the same way as the Chileans. Because if in Chile, with a democratic tradition, it has been feared that the elections would be won by Allende [Salvador Allende], what is then the situation of Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic? The danger is real, and I believe that when a fever appears in a human body, it is because it is a disease is there. And we are already familiar with the fever in Latin America. The temperature there in Cuba means that the Latin American body is ill, and it must be cured.

CUTLER: If we look ahead, do you think that the three all too short Kennedy years will leave a major mark on Latin America?

BOSCH: I am certain. I am convinced of it, and I would say that you people should endeavor to arrange for some American students to study Kennedy's Latin American policy in certain American universities for the purpose of preparing qualified people who would have the same concept that Kennedy and his team had.

CUTLER: In this country, as you know, we hear a great deal of criticism of some of the objectives of the *Alianza*, and many of those objectives are now being modified or held in abeyance. Do you think that the structure, the ideas, of the *Alianza* were correct?

BOSCH: Absolutely correct. I believe that the implementation of that idea needed reform, but not the idea itself. The idea must be retained. No one should be ahead of the United States in the quest for democratic reforms in Latin America, even though these be placed above American interests, and above the interests of those who believe that history has come to a halt in Latin America, and that the oligarchies now in power will endure forever. This is not so. History does not repeat itself.

[-17-]

CUTLER: Yes. Many of us believe, you know, that while the reforms are very desirable, if the reforms result in a larger number of state enterprises and a flight of private capital away from the country—not only of foreign capital staying away, but of the domestic capital leaving in the country and going to New York or

Switzerland—the reforms will defeat themselves. They will stagnate economic growth even though they achieve a better social equality, and to me the principal problem has been how to achieve reform and at the same time prevent the flight of capital and maintain the confidence of the businessmen and somehow get them involved in helping to achieve the reforms. Now, how can that be done?

BOSCH: We have example of Mexico. Mexico has as state enterprises only PEMEX and the railways. Nevertheless, Mexico now has more offers of capital than it needs. There are more offers of foreign capital than Mexico needs. But Mexico requires that 51 percent of the capital invested in each enterprise be Mexican capital. State enterprises are not necessary where all enterprises are controlled by the citizens of the country.

Neither is it permissible to sell to private interests haphazardly. An effort must be made, in case it becomes necessary to sell the enterprises, an effort must be made to see that the stock goes to the greatest number of persons, and if possible, to the workers and other employees of those same enterprises, but that does not mean that the reforms scare away capital as such. Why? Because in Mexico the revolution put an end to the system of the latifundio, and yet Mexico has considerable capital now and may offers of capital.

CUTLER: And much domestic capital also.

BOSCH: And foreign, both.

CUTLER: But in Mexico this came about only after ten or twenty years of political stability and democratic stability.

BOSCH: Actually, Mexico has had forty years of political stability, and those forty years have sufficed for Mexico to be completely changed. Mexico today bears no resemblance to the Mexico I knew in 1939.

[-18-]

CUTLER: Now Mexico, interestingly enough, has what is for all practical purposes a one-party system, and Mexico also has a military force. Do you find any lesson in that? Do you find that perhaps what we think of as democracy and reform may best be achieved in a one-party system? How can that be?

BOSCH: No, because in Uruguay there is more than one party; in Costa Rica there are several parties; in Chile also there are several parties. What Mexico has done is to adapt democracy to the character and tradition of the Mexican people. But it is not necessary to follow that example. In any other place it would be a very dangerous example. Having a single party in Mexico has never meant the disappearance of the individual liberties. However, in other places the existence of a single party could mean the disappearance even of individual liberties, and from there to

Communism only a change in leadership is needed. A change in leaders, and we have a Communist state in operation.

CUTLER: Let me come back to something I asked you in the beginning. When you first came here in early 1963 after Mr. Kennedy had been in office two years and the Alliance had been born and you had read all of the things he had said, still you remained unconvinced that the policy of the United States was a good one for Latin America and for your people. And it was not until after you met the President and talked to him for an hour and a quarter, and met his aides, that you personally became convinced that this was a good man with a good program. Now, what about the rest of the intellectuals and democrats in Latin America who have not met the President? Do they, do you think, do they share the same sense of suspicion or reserve about the Alliance and what Mr. Kennedy stood for?

BOSCH: Yes, I think so. It is something... I believe that Latin American intellectuals had reservations. What I am going to tell you now is very curious. The Latin American nations instinctively realized that Kennedy was going to change the situation, but we intellectuals and political leaders feared that the change would always be conditioned by United States pressures on the Kennedy Government. Of course, we in Latin America know that in the United States there is scanty knowledge of the profound realities of Latin America, and that in recent years, especially, thanks to the attitude of the Kennedy group, that situation has been changing. The Americans

[-19-]

are gradually seeing the Latin American situation more clearly. But until the Kennedy group rose to power, there existed a great divorce between Latin America and the United States because we all remembered that Mr. Dulles decorated Pedro Estrada, the Chief of Perez Jimenez' Political Police, and that Mr. Eisenhower decorated Perez Jimenez. Those are wounds that remain unhealed in the soul of Latin America, and I believe that the public returned to that position of distrust after November 22. I believe that now there is trust, not only in the minds of the intellectuals, but also in the minds of the people. It would be interesting for an American to go with a tape recorder to talk to people in Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, and Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico, and Mexico, to talk to ordinary men and women and ask them what they feel since the death of Kennedy concerning the United States. And the replies of perhaps ninety out of a hundred would be that it is no longer the same.

CUTLER: Then, coming back again to what we think of here as the anti-American feeling, anti-North American feelings of many Latin American intellectuals and democrats. What do you think the roots of it are? Do you think it is what they see of American businessmen up close, or is it the policies of the Government in Washington they see, or is it their own sense of nationalism, feelings of resentment?

BOSCH: No, the roots of that feeling lies in the independence era. The War of American Independence influenced Latin America greatly. At that time, the United States government failed to respond to that friendship felt by the Latin American leaders, did not, any time, help those idealists of the Latin American struggle for independence whose aim was to establish, in each country, a copy of the United States, who has been educated by reading Thomas Paine and Benjamin Franklin, who considered the Declaration of Independence a holy Bible. They then found that Mr. Adams, and later Mr. Monroe [James Monroe], and then Mr. Roosevelt [Theodore Roosevelt]—that none of those presidents wanted to offer help to Latin American. They followed Washington's [George Washington] isolation policy. When we are small and begin to study the history of our country and of Latin America, we find that the United States did not want to attend Bolivar's [Simón Bolívar] Panama Congress; that the United States did not want to help the Chileans; that the United States occupied a large part of Mexico, and all that unconsciously gradually forms in a child of great sensitivity, in the one who is to become a leader—the leader is always a rebel—gradually forms a certain feeling. Men like Kennedy would have endorsed that feeling.

[-20-]

CUTLER: So if we can put it in a few words, would you say it is really the Latin American intellectual who desires rapport, and who comes to believe that the United States is opposing the reform or supporting the government he is trying to change?

BOSCH: For the past 140 or 150 years.

CUTLER: And you think that John Kennedy was on the way of changing that?

BOSCH: For the first time we found in the United States a man who felt as we did, who suffered with us. That is what Kennedy signified. To us he was not just an American President. He was a Latin American leader. That was the great transformation he produced in Latin America. Unfortunately, he is dead. But I believe that Kennedy's message must continue in American young people. I believe that the Peace Corps has done much more for good relations between Latin America and the United States than all the United States ambassadors who have been appointed since 1820. And the Peace Corps, what is it? Kennedy in action.

CUTLER: The Peace Corps is a good example.

BOSCH: It is an example.

CUTLER: The students who come here...

BOSCH: That is another example. And the statements made by the President of the United States, when the President spoke when my government fell, the

statements of Kennedy were the same as the statements of Romulo Betancourt, Munoz Marin [Luis Muñoz Marin], or Victor Raul Haya de la Torre. It was very different from a President decorating a Perez Jimenez, or a Secretary of State saying that the government of Perez Jimenez was a model of the government that the United States wants for Latin America. It is the difference between night and day.

CUTLER: President Johnson is a good man, with the same motivation as Mr. Kennedy, and he participated in the formulation of the Alliance. If you were to advise Mr. Johnson today on what he could do today to maintain this confidence of the Latin American democracies, the Organization of

[-21-]

American States, what would you say he should do?

BOSCH: I cannot tell you. The image of President Johnson in Latin America is not the same as that of President Kennedy.

CUTLER: So he is an unknown quantity today, just as Kennedy in 1961 was an unknown.

BOSCH: But there have been some attitudes that have impressed Latin America very much. For example, certain statements made by President Johnson have created the impression that he is not going to follow the Alliance of Progress policy.

CUTLER: You say that is the impression.

BOSCH: That is the general impression of the masses.

CUTLER: Well, then, I think it is a matter of changing the impression because I believe he does intend to continue that policy. How would you advise him to make that clear? Do you think he should visit the countries?

BOSCH: He would have to speak the language of President Kennedy, and this he has not done.

CUTLER: Tell us, we only have a few moments left on this tape, what you spoke of in the beginning, the sensibility of President Kennedy. If you were to single out the few characteristics that made him appeal to the Latin American more than so many other people, what would you say they were? These ideas which he used so vigorously?

BOSCH: That President Kennedy was fighting for the right of the masses, the unknown man, not as a politician who wanted to avoid conflicts in his

country, but as a man of the people who wanted to put culture and prosperity within reach of the common man. President Kennedy and President Lincoln were the only presidents who were two things at the same time: ruler and common man. Such a phenomenon is seldom seen in history.

[-22-]

CUTLER: I thought myself that part of his gifts was his youth, and that he brought to power a group of people who were in their forties such as himself. And that all of us in our forties—you are really better people, you are not as tired. We are more vigorous. We carry out large ideas and of the good movements come from younger people. Do you agree with that?

BOSCH: Of course. Of course. He was the representative of a new nation. Our desire in Latin America is that those young people preserve that spirit in the next ten to twenty years; that they not grow old, because that generation will return to power in the United States, and the image of Kennedy will return. John Fitzgerald Kennedy will again win the elections in the United States.

CUTLER: Thank you very much, Juan.

[-23-]

[END OF INTERVIEW]

Juan Bosch Oral History Transcript  
Name Index

**A**

Adams, John, 13, 20  
Adams, John Quincy, 13  
Allende, Salvador, 17

**B**

Batista, Fulgencio, 7  
Betancourt, Rómulo, 8, 21  
Bolívar, Simón, 20

**C**

Castro, Fidel, 6, 7, 10

**D**

Dulles, Mr., 20  
Dungan, Ralph A., 4

**E**

Eisenhower, Dwight D., 2, 3, 20  
Estrada, Pedro, 20

**F**

Franklin, Benjamin, 20  
Frei Montalva, Eduardo, 17  
Frondizi, Arturo, 8, 12

**G**

Goulart, João, 7, 8, 12  
Grau San Martin, Ramón, 8

**H**

Haya de la Torre, Victor Raul, 21

**J**

Jefferson, Thomas, 13  
Jimines Grullon, Dr., 13  
Johnson, Lyndon Baines, 8, 9, 21, 22

**K**

Kennedy, John F., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12,  
16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23

**L**

Lincoln, Abraham, 2, 8, 12, 22

**M**

Martin, John Bartlow, 3  
Monroe, James, 20  
Moscoso, Teodoro, 3  
Muñoz Marin, Luis, 21

**P**

Paine, Thomas, 20  
Perez Jimenez, Marcos, 7, 13, 20, 21  
Peron, Juan, 13

**R**

Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, 2, 3, 8  
Roosevelt, Theodore, 20  
Rusk, Dean, 3

**T**

Trujillo, Rafael, 2, 3, 7, 12, 13  
Truman, Harry S., 2, 3

**V**

Vargas, Getulio Dornelles, 12

**W**

Washington, George, 20  
Williams, Mr., 3