

Latin Democracy

Sir: Nathan Miller's informative article from Rio on November 9, concerning military coups in Latin America, points to a subject which is much neglected—preventive measures. There has been a strong and persistent tendency, not without hypocritical purposefulness in some sectors, to cry wolf only after the obviously exposed chickens had been devoured. I suggest the following steps:

1. The formation of a military council with representatives from all Latin American and Caribbean countries.

2. This council, with the help of international experts, would write a Declaration of Democracy, to which all countries would pledge themselves.

3. Among the statements in this declaration would be one in which all participants swear not to overthrow a freely elected government until the matter had been referred to the council and received its approval.

4. The United States would not be a member of the council. Its part in this historic development would be to pledge in a formal treaty with the council that it would furnish no material or military assistance, train no military personnel in Latin American countries or the United States for any country which did not adhere to the pledge of the council; further, the United States would agree that it would have no secret agents in Latin America—that United States employees, direct or indirect, in the areas would be named on a public list which would be kept up to date and always freely available. The United States would encourage all other nations to conform to this policy.

5. That all council countries would immediately and automatically break all relations with any government which came into existence in violation of the Declaration of Democracy.

Mr. Miller wrote that the anticoups conference might be held in Washington in December. This is absurd. One does not hold a conference on law enforcement in a den of thieves. This is exactly what the United States military and the CIA have been *vis-a-vis* Latin American and Caribbean politics, throughout their existence. I suggest, as a demonstration of absolute freedom from United States machinations, that the conference be organized by the United Nations and that it meet in Havana, at the invitation of the Cuban Government which will, in turn, show that it deserves such an honor by having United Nations supervised national elections to coincide with the meeting. (The bad boys of the Pearl of the Antilles have had their sting; they are ready to come home if the family has sufficiently reformed to accept them with grace and reasonableness.)

The peoples of the Western Hemisphere have pioneered in new patterns of national life. Now is the time for them to take a major step forward to rid themselves of the cancer which has grown from many old scars and bruises, and lapses which have left a wide gap between their ideals and their performance. The population of the New World is composed of great and creative peoples; the time is ripe for this greatness to take a tangible form.

Ben Everingham.

Baltimore, Nov. 10.

STATINT