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News Focus:

Reversing Latin Animosity

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By CHARLES BARTLETT

WASHINGTON: A thin ray of hopeful assurance has recently pried through the frustration which marked the early stages of the Alliance for Progress:

This new hopefulness comes from several developments. Most important is a sense that the organizational aspect of the Alliance is moving at last into shape. The Puerto Rican director, Theodore Moscoso, flailed around in helpless disproof of his reputation as an administrator for many months until he recently began to find a footing in the bureaucracy.



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He has learned now to pat the powers and fend off the vultures and other exercises necessary for survival. His hand had been strengthened by the emergence of an impressive Assistant Secretary of State for Latin Affairs, Edwin Martin. The two men are working side by side with mounting effect.

Some of the freneticism which characterized the past period will be calmed by the withdrawal of Richard Goodwin, an able young Kennedy aide who was put on the scene as an agitator. He moved hard into the official vacuum on Latin Affairs, roundly insulted the slow-movers, and made enemies. He has now been taken off the scene to avert an explosion.

The greater assurance at home has helped to make the prospects abroad seem brighter. Some of the Alliance projects have taken physical shape and are stirring the native populations. The housing program has achieved the momentum of \$100 million in loans and widely acknowledged progress has been made in stabilizing commodity markets.

In regard to the stabilization of governments, the Alliance can point thus far to real achievement only in El Salvador but its impact was also visible

in the reception for President Kennedy in Mexico City.

Broad reaches of political chaos remain but it is also true that the force of Castroism has faded considerably. The Communists do not appear to have either the momentum or the prospects that were theirs a year ago. They seem in fact to have been moved into a defensive posture.

This shift cannot be totally credited to the Alliance. The improvement is seen to hang on a number of factors. One is the sag in Communist fortunes observed in other parts of the world and another is the brighter view of the United States stirred in the masses by recent space accomplishments. There is broad agreement that this nation's influence is up and the Communists' is down and that the picture has brightened perceptibly since the stoning of Richard Nixon in 1958.

But the new optimism is marked by some new and many old concerns. The pattern of recent Latin politics has produced an emergence of the military. While generals have brought stability to some Asian countries, their advent in South America has tended to mean repression of the non-Communist liberals on whom the Alliance is hanging its hopes. Their move to the front in Peru and Argentina is not viewed therefore as helpful.

One problem is the constant shrilling by Latin politicians, who seem much quicker to question efforts to help them than they have been to help themselves.

The Alliance's architects are seeking to obscure Uncle Sam's hand in the reshaping process by dealing when possible through international bodies. But this will be constantly tricky because international groups like UNESCO and ECOSOC include Communist specialists, whose participation may be damaging.

The battle to save South America from its own foibles still looks long and grim but the spirits which drooped until recently have risen.