

Learn More – Teach More
Content Module
Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan in Latin America
CLASSROOM ACTIVITY #1
Maps and Dates of the Cold War in Latin America

Objectives

Content

Students will learn the countries of Central America and how the policies of the Cold War sparked conflict between the United States and both Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Skill

Students will expand their geographical knowledge and construct historical chronologies.

Materials

Lecture by Dr. Nancy Mitchell of North Carolina State University

Free Blank Outline Map of Central America and the Caribbean located at About.com

<http://geography.about.com/library/blank/blxcamerica.htm>

Political map of Central America and the Caribbean located on the website of the Perry-Castañeda Library Map collection at the University of Texas Library System

http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/camerica_caribbean_95.jpg

“Time Line of U.S.-Latin American Relations” prepared by Richard Slatta, Professor of History at North Carolina State University

<http://legacy.ncsu.edu/classes/hi300001/hi453time.htm>

“Central and South America: the Conflicts during the Cold War and After” located at the Cold War webpage of the CNN Interactive website for the Perspectives Series Episode 18 Backyard: 1954-1990.

<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cold.war/episodes/18/maps/>

Activities

Assign the class to examine a world map (circa the Cold War era if possible). Have the students identify the United States and the location of the political region known as Central America.

Ask individual students to volunteer to go up to the map and identify specific Central American countries (and Mexico) from the list below:

British Honduras (Belize)	Honduras
Costa Rica	Mexico
El Salvador	Nicaragua
Guatemala	Panama

When each country has been correctly identified and located, provide each student with a blank map of Central America.

<http://geography.about.com/library/blank/blxcamerica.htm>

Assign each student to label all the above Central American countries, using the information from the class map exercise. If students need additional help, they might refer to the Political Map of Central America and the Caribbean.

http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/camerica_caribbean_95.jpg

Once all students have a correctly labeled map of the Central American nations, ask a student to go back to the World Map and locate the nations of Cuba and Haiti. Ask all of the students to correctly label these two Caribbean nations on the outline map.

Assign students to examine the “Timeline of United States-Latin American Relations” prepared by Richard Slatta for his history courses.

<http://legacy.ncsu.edu/classes/hi300001/hi453time.htm>

Assign the class to examine and explore the interactive map on Central America associated with the CNN Perspectives Series Episode 18.

The ideal format would be to project the image in front of the entire class and as the cursor rolls across a country click to read the text explaining the involvement of the United States in the history of each respective nation. An alternative would be to have the students examine the map in pairs in the computer lab.

<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cold.war/episodes/18/maps/>

Assign pairs of students to construct a timeline to demonstrate the involvement of the United States in the affairs of Nicaragua and El Salvador between 1900 and 1990. Students should use information from Richard Slatta’s Time Line and the CNN Interactive Map.

Hold a whole class discussion focused on the following question:

How did the Cold War influence the nature of United States involvement in Nicaragua and El Salvador?

Assessment

- √+ Outline Map and Time Line reflect accurate and relevant geographic and historical information.
- √ Outline Map and Time Line are generally complete although some information may be inaccurate.
- √- Outline Map and Time Line are incomplete and contain little relevant geographic or historical information.

Learn More – Teach More
Content Module
Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan in Latin America
CLASSROOM ACTIVITY #2
American Doctrines Regarding Central America

Objectives

Content

Students will compare the historical context and the political rationale behind the Monroe Doctrine, the Roosevelt Corollary, and the Reagan Doctrine as they relate to the Americas.

Skill

Students will interpret primary documents and place them in historical context.

Materials

Lecture by Dr. Nancy Mitchell of North Carolina State University

“The Monroe Doctrine” located at the “Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy” of the Avalon Project at Yale Law School.

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/monroe.htm>

“The Roosevelt Corollary,” excerpted from Theodore Roosevelt’s Annual Message to Congress, December 6, 1904, located on the “Our Documents” website of the 100 Milestone Documents compiled by the National Archives and Records Administration.

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=56>

“President Ronald Reagan’s Address before a Joint Session of Congress on the State of the Union” (February 6, 1985) located at the website of the Archives of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library.

<http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1985/20685e.htm>

Discussion of the “Reagan Doctrine” located at the website of the Bureau of Public Affairs Office of the Historian Timeline of U.S. Diplomatic History 1969-1989 of the United States Department of State.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/dr/17741.htm>

Activities

Distribute a copy of the Comparison Chart, attached below, to each student.

Distribute a copy of the Monroe Doctrine, attached below, to each pair of students.

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/monroe.htm>

Assign them to read and analyze the Monroe Doctrine by responding to the prompts in the Comparison Chart in the appropriate boxes.

Hold a brief whole class discussion to review the historical context of the Monroe Doctrine focusing on the following questions:

What was President Monroe declaring to the European powers?

Why was he making this statement in 1823?

Distribute a copy of the “The Roosevelt Corollary,” excerpted from Theodore Roosevelt’s Annual Message to Congress, December 6, 1904 to each pair of students. The students should read and analyze the Roosevelt Corollary by responding to the prompts in the Comparison Chart in the appropriate boxes.

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=56>

Hold a brief whole class discussion to review the historical context of the Roosevelt Corollary focusing on the following question:

What was President Theodore Roosevelt stating about the United States role in Central and South America? Why?

With information from Dr. Nancy Mitchell's script or videostream conduct a brief lecture/discussion for the whole class to provide an overview of the Cold War issues impacting United States relations with the nations of Central America.

Read aloud the following brief "Reagan Doctrine" excerpt from Ronald Reagan's Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on the State of the Union, February 6, 1985.

We must stand by all our democratic allies. And we must not break faith with those who are risking their lives -- on every continent, from Afghanistan to Nicaragua -- to defy Soviet-supported aggression and secure rights which have been ours from birth.

The Sandinista dictatorship of Nicaragua, with full Cuban-Soviet bloc support, not only persecutes its people, the church, and denies a free press, but arms and provides bases for Communist terrorists attacking neighboring states. Support for freedom fighters is self-defense and totally consistent with the OAS and U.N. Charters. It is essential that the Congress continue all facets of our assistance to Central America. I want to work with you to support the democratic forces whose struggle is tied to our own security.

<http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1985/20685e.htm>

Distribute a copy of the "Reagan Doctrine," attached below from the Bureau of Public Affairs of the United States Department of State to each pair of students. The students should read and analyze the "Reagan Doctrine" by responding to the prompts in the Comparison Chart in the appropriate boxes.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/dr/17741.htm>

Assign each student to write a paragraph assessing the major differences in the Monroe Doctrine, the Roosevelt Corollary, and the Reagan Doctrine.

Assessment

- √+ Comparison Chart contains historically accurate and relevant information in all six boxes.
- √ Comparison Chart contains historically accurate and relevant information in four or five boxes.
- √- Comparison Chart contains historically accurate and relevant information in three or less boxes.

Monroe Doctrine; December 2, 1823

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/monroe.htm>

The Avalon Project of the Yale Law School

The Monroe Doctrine was expressed during President Monroe's seventh annual message to Congress, December 2, 1823:

. . . At the proposal of the Russian Imperial Government, made through the minister of the Emperor residing here, a full power and instructions have been transmitted to the minister of the United States at St. Petersburg to arrange by amicable negotiation the respective rights and interests of the two nations on the northwest coast of this continent. A similar proposal has been made by His Imperial Majesty to the Government of Great Britain, which has likewise been acceded to. The Government of the United States has been desirous by this friendly proceeding of manifesting the great value which they have invariably attached to the friendship of the Emperor and their solicitude to cultivate the best understanding with his Government. In the discussions to which this interest has given rise and in the arrangements by which they may terminate the occasion has been judged proper for asserting, as a principle in which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers. . .

It was stated at the commencement of the last session that a great effort was then making in Spain and Portugal to improve the condition of the people of those countries, and that it appeared to be conducted with extraordinary moderation. It need scarcely be remarked that the results have been so far very different from what was then anticipated. Of events in that quarter of the globe, with which we have so much intercourse and from which we derive our origin, we have always been anxious and interested spectators. The citizens of the United States cherish sentiments the most friendly in favor of the liberty and happiness of their fellow-men on that side of the Atlantic. In the wars of the European powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to do so. It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced that we resent injuries or make preparation for our defense. With the movements in this hemisphere we are of necessity more immediately connected, and by causes which must be obvious to all enlightened and impartial observers. The political system of the allied powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America. This difference proceeds from that which exists in their respective Governments; and to the defense of our own, which has been achieved by the loss of so much blood and treasure, and matured by the wisdom of their most enlightened citizens, and under which we have enjoyed unexampled felicity, this whole nation is devoted. We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintain it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States. In the war between those new Governments and Spain we declared our neutrality at the time of their recognition, and to

this we have adhered, and shall continue to adhere, provided no change shall occur which, in the judgement of the competent authorities of this Government, shall make a corresponding change on the part of the United States indispensable to their security.

The late events in Spain and Portugal shew that Europe is still unsettled. Of this important fact no stronger proof can be adduced than that the allied powers should have thought it proper, on any principle satisfactory to themselves, to have interposed by force in the internal concerns of Spain. To what extent such interposition may be carried, on the same principle, is a question in which all independent powers whose governments differ from theirs are interested, even those most remote, and surely none of them more so than the United States. Our policy in regard to Europe, which was adopted at an early stage of the wars which have so long agitated that quarter of the globe, nevertheless remains the same, which is, not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its powers; to consider the government de facto as the legitimate government for us; to cultivate friendly relations with it, and to preserve those relations by a frank, firm, and manly policy, meeting in all instances the just claims of every power, submitting to injuries from none. But in regard to those continents circumstances are eminently and conspicuously different.

It is impossible that the allied powers should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness; nor can anyone believe that our southern brethren, if left to themselves, would adopt it of their own accord. It is equally impossible, therefore, that we should behold such interposition in any form with indifference. If we look to the comparative strength and resources of Spain and those new Governments, and their distance from each other, it must be obvious that she can never subdue them. It is still the true policy of the United States to leave the parties to themselves, in hope that other powers will pursue the same course. . . .

Transcript of Theodore Roosevelt's Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine (1905)
(Excerpted from Theodore Roosevelt's Annual Message to Congress, December 6, 1904)
<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=56&page=transcript>

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In treating of our foreign policy and of the attitude that this great Nation should assume in the world at large, it is absolutely necessary to consider the Army and the Navy, and the Congress, through which the thought of the Nation finds its expression, should keep ever vividly in mind the fundamental fact that it is impossible to treat our foreign policy, whether this policy takes shape in the effort to secure justice for others or justice for ourselves, save as conditioned upon the attitude we are willing to take toward our Army, and especially toward our Navy. It is not merely unwise, it is contemptible, for a nation, as for an individual, to use high-sounding language to proclaim its purposes, or to take positions which are ridiculous if unsupported by potential force, and then to refuse to provide this force. If there is no intention of providing and keeping the force necessary to back up a strong attitude, then it is far better not to assume such an attitude.

The steady aim of this Nation, as of all enlightened nations, should be to strive to bring ever nearer the day when there shall prevail throughout the world the peace of justice. There are kinds of peace which are highly undesirable, which are in the long run as destructive as any war. Tyrants and oppressors have many times made a wilderness and called it peace. Many times peoples who were slothful or timid or shortsighted, who had been enervated by ease or by luxury, or misled by false teachings, have shrunk in unmanly fashion from doing duty that was stern and that needed self-sacrifice, and have sought to hide from their own minds their shortcomings, their ignoble motives, by calling them love of peace. The peace of tyrannous terror, the peace of craven weakness, the peace of injustice, all these should be shunned as we shun unrighteous war. The goal to set before us as a nation, the goal which should be set before all mankind, is the attainment of the peace of justice, of the peace which comes when each nation is not merely safe-guarded in its own rights, but scrupulously recognizes and performs its duty toward others. Generally peace tells for righteousness; but if there is conflict between the two, then our fealty is due first to the cause of righteousness. Unrighteous wars are common, and unrighteous peace is rare; but both should be shunned. The right of freedom and the responsibility for the exercise of that right can not be divorced. One of our great poets has well and finely said that freedom is not a gift that tarries long in the hands of cowards. Neither does it tarry long in the hands of those too slothful, too dishonest, or too unintelligent to exercise it. The eternal vigilance which is the price of liberty must be exercised, sometimes to guard against outside foes; although of course far more often to guard against our own selfish or thoughtless shortcomings.

If these self-evident truths are kept before us, and only if they are so kept before us, we shall have a clear idea of what our foreign policy in its larger aspects should be. It is our duty to remember that a nation has no more right to do injustice to another nation, strong or weak, than an individual has to do injustice to another individual; that the same moral law applies in one case as in the other. But we must also remember that it is as much the duty of the Nation to guard its own rights and its own interests as it is the duty of the individual so to do. Within the Nation the individual has now delegated this right to the State, that is, to the representative of all the individuals, and it is a maxim of the law that for every wrong there is a remedy. But in international law we have not advanced by any means as far as we have advanced in municipal

law. There is as yet no judicial way of enforcing a right in international law. When one nation wrongs another or wrongs many others, there is no tribunal before which the wrongdoer can be brought. Either it is necessary supinely to acquiesce in the wrong, and thus put a premium upon brutality and aggression, or else it is necessary for the aggrieved nation valiantly to stand up for its rights. Until some method is devised by which there shall be a degree of international control over offending nations, it would be a wicked thing for the most civilized powers, for those with most sense of international obligations and with keenest and most generous appreciation of the difference between right and wrong, to disarm. If the great civilized nations of the present day should completely disarm, the result would mean an immediate recrudescence of barbarism in one form or another. Under any circumstances a sufficient armament would have to be kept up to serve the purposes of international police; and until international cohesion and the sense of international duties and rights are far more advanced than at present, a nation desirous both of securing respect for itself and of doing good to others must have a force adequate for the work which it feels is allotted to it as its part of the general world duty. Therefore it follows that a self-respecting, just, and far-seeing nation should on the one hand endeavor by every means to aid in the development of the various movements which tend to provide substitutes for war, which tend to render nations in their actions toward one another, and indeed toward their own peoples, more responsive to the general sentiment of humane and civilized mankind; and on the other hand that it should keep prepared, while scrupulously avoiding wrongdoing itself, to repel any wrong, and in exceptional cases to take action which in a more advanced stage of international relations would come under the head of the exercise of the international police. A great free people owes it to itself and to all mankind not to sink into helplessness before the powers of evil.

We are in every way endeavoring to help on, with cordial good will, every movement which will tend to bring us into more friendly relations with the rest of mankind. In pursuance of this policy I shall shortly lay before the Senate treaties of arbitration with all powers which are willing to enter into these treaties with us. It is not possible at this period of the world's development to agree to arbitrate all matters, but there are many matters of possible difference between us and other nations which can be thus arbitrated. Furthermore, at the request of the Interparliamentary Union, an eminent body composed of practical statesmen from all countries, I have asked the Powers to join with this Government in a second Hague conference, at which it is hoped that the work already so happily begun at The Hague may be carried some steps further toward completion. This carries out the desire expressed by the first Hague conference itself.

It is not true that the United States feels any land hunger or entertains any projects as regards the other nations of the Western Hemisphere save such as are for their welfare. All that this country desires is to see the neighboring countries stable, orderly, and prosperous. Any country whose people conduct themselves well can count upon our hearty friendship. If a nation shows that it knows how to act with reasonable efficiency and decency in social and political matters, if it keeps order and pays its obligations, it need fear no interference from the United States. Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power. If every country washed by the Caribbean Sea would show the progress in stable and just civilization which with the aid of the Platt Amendment Cuba has shown since our troops left the island, and which so many of the republics in both Americas are constantly and brilliantly showing, all question of

interference by this Nation with their affairs would be at an end. Our interests and those of our southern neighbors are in reality identical. They have great natural riches, and if within their borders the reign of law and justice obtains, prosperity is sure to come to them. While they thus obey the primary laws of civilized society they may rest assured that they will be treated by us in a spirit of cordial and helpful sympathy. We would interfere with them only in the last resort, and then only if it became evident that their inability or unwillingness to do justice at home and abroad had violated the rights of the United States or had invited foreign aggression to the detriment of the entire body of American nations. It is a mere truism to say that every nation, whether in America or anywhere else, which desires to maintain its freedom, its independence, must ultimately realize that the right of such independence can not be separated from the responsibility of making good use of it.

In asserting the Monroe Doctrine, in taking such steps as we have taken in regard to Cuba, Venezuela, and Panama, and in endeavoring to circumscribe the theater of war in the Far East, and to secure the open door in China, we have acted in our own interest as well as in the interest of humanity at large. There are, however, cases in which, while our own interests are not greatly involved, strong appeal is made to our sympathies. Ordinarily it is very much wiser and more useful for us to concern ourselves with striving for our own moral and material betterment here at home than to concern ourselves with trying to better the condition of things in other nations. We have plenty of sins of our own to war against, and under ordinary circumstances we can do more for the general uplifting of humanity by striving with heart and soul to put a stop to civic corruption, to brutal lawlessness and violent race prejudices here at home than by passing resolutions and wrongdoing elsewhere. Nevertheless there are occasional crimes committed on so vast a scale and of such peculiar horror as to make us doubt whether it is not our manifest duty to endeavor at least to show our disapproval of the deed and our sympathy with those who have suffered by it. The cases must be extreme in which such a course is justifiable. There must be no effort made to remove the mote from our brother's eye if we refuse to remove the beam from our own. But in extreme cases action may be justifiable and proper. What form the action shall take must depend upon the circumstances of the case; that is, upon the degree of the atrocity and upon our power to remedy it. The cases in which we could interfere by force of arms as we interfered to put a stop to intolerable conditions in Cuba are necessarily very few. Yet it is not to be expected that a people like ours, which in spite of certain very obvious shortcomings, nevertheless as a whole shows by its consistent practice its belief in the principles of civil and religious liberty and of orderly freedom, a people among whom even the worst crime, like the crime of lynching, is never more than sporadic, so that individuals and not classes are molested in their fundamental rights--it is inevitable that such a nation should desire eagerly to give expression to its horror on an occasion like that of the massacre of the Jews in Kishenev, or when it witnesses such systematic and long-extended cruelty and oppression as the cruelty and oppression of which the Armenians have been the victims, and which have won for them the indignant pity of the civilized world.

Reagan Doctrine

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/dr/17741.htm>

Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State

The “Reagan Doctrine” was used to characterize the Reagan administration’s (1981-1988) policy of supporting anti-Communist insurgents wherever they might be. In his 1985 State of the Union address, President Ronald Reagan called upon Congress and the American people to stand up to the Soviet Union, what he had previously called the “Evil Empire”:

"We must stand by all our democratic allies. And we must not break faith with those who are risking their lives—on every continent, from Afghanistan to Nicaragua—to defy Soviet-supported aggression and secure rights which have been ours from birth."

Breaking with the doctrine of “Containment,” established during the Truman administration—President Ronald Reagan’s foreign policy was based on John Foster Dulles’ “Roll-Back” strategy from the 1950s in which the United States would actively push back the influence of the Soviet Union. Reagan’s policy differed, however, in the sense that he relied primarily on the overt support of those fighting Soviet dominance. This strategy was perhaps best encapsulated in NSC National Security Decision Directive 75. This 1983 directive stated that a central priority of the U.S. in its policy toward the Soviet Union would be “to contain and over time reverse Soviet expansionism,” particularly in the developing world. As the directive noted:

"The U.S. must rebuild the credibility of its commitment to resist Soviet encroachment on U.S. interests and those of its Allies and friends, and to support effectively those Third World states that are willing to resist Soviet pressures or oppose Soviet initiatives hostile to the United States, or are special targets of Soviet policy."

To that end, the Reagan administration focused much of its energy on supporting proxy armies to curtail Soviet influence. Among the more prominent examples of the Reagan Doctrine’s application, in Nicaragua, the United States sponsored the contra movement in an effort to force the leftist Sandinista government from power. And in Afghanistan, the United States provided material support to Afghan rebels—known as the mujahadeen—helping them end Soviet occupation of their country.

Comparison Chart

	Geographic Regions Targeted	Expected Role of the United States in the Region(s) Targeted	Rationale for United States Involvement in the Region(s) Targeted
Monroe Doctrine			
Roosevelt Corollary			
Reagan Doctrine			