

United States' Fundamental Interests in Chile and Cuba: A Historical Study

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Abstract

US hegemony as the result of its interventions in Cuba and Chile is a historical reality. The United States used to be scared that imposition of Communism had minimized the Americans dominance over there under the policy of nationalization. Although, the United States had tried his luck in Cuba twice, in decades of 1960's, to vanish communism dangerous roots, but unfortunately faced defeat. Again in 1970's decade the United States faced the same threat of communism (in form of Salvador Allende regime) in Chile. Chile has blessed with such rich mineral resources like Cuba, so the United States also had similarly established their strong hold inform of different significant companies. In order to prevent the power of Salvador Allende and his nationalization policy, the United States had launched military coup in 1973 resulted in success that also helps to minimize the communism threats in region.

Key Words: United States, Latin America, Caribbean, Communism, Capitalism, Cold-War

Economic Interests

First and foremost, target of the United States for economic expansionism was Cuba, who has been considering the closest island of US. Therefore, it provides the closest economic ties among them (William, 2005). Since the beginning, Cuba has been rich in sugar and tobacco productions, among which the sugar productions had been the most influential one. It had been estimated that in the years of 1700 Cuba had started to produce 25 percent sugar of the whole world, then in 1800 there were only one uncanny market for Cuban sugar that was the United States (Teller, 1903). The US had established significant trade agreements with Cuba. With the passage of time, the United States was not only a source of exportation to Cuba but became an import source as well. For instance, the United States consumed its exported sugar, tobacco, tropical fruits, coffee, cacao, iron,

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and copper etc. In return Cuba consumed most of the United States' exported products in terms of cereal, manufactured goods, meat, cheese, vegetable oil and fuel etc. Spain was also a colonial master at that time and Cuba was the Colony of Spanish Empire. Henceforth, Spain imposed such restrictive laws on the United States and Cuban trade, which had made their relations vague. In order to re-secure economic interest in Cuba, the United States had launched a war against Spain in 1898 (Crenshaw, 2001) which lasted approximately for three months, and came to an end with the complete success for United States. The prime motive behind this intercession was only the achievement of economic persistence, as asserted by the several historians (Perez Jr, 1990). The result of the wars was completely in favour of the United States. Moreover, the US had once again maintained its influence not only on the Cuban economy but on Cuban politics too. Even evidences have been witnessed that later on Cuba had started to support the United States in each and every single matter, for instance, Cuba supported the US in both World Wars. Soon after the communist powers had concluded the endless relationship of Cuba with the United States, which had ultimately affected the United States' economy. Thus, the United States had intervened Cuba twice, once in 1961 and again in 1962 (Robinson, 1997).

Apart from this, the United States had also intervened in Chile for the attainment of economic purposes. Geographically, Chile has been blessed with rich minerals. Essentially, it is the central section had been considered as tremendously favourable for agricultural or cultivation. Moreover, it has been producing foods at an extensive level that has not only been enough for Chile but also utilized in export to various parts of the world. Excluding its central section, the northern part of Chile was enriched in terms of gold and silver deposits and copper mines. Principally, these reasons made Chile the centre of attraction for major imperial powers. Initially, Britain maintained its hegemony and then the United States emerged as another imperial power; both of them were in a great struggle to get control over its silver and copper mines. It is significant to note that amongst these Chile mines, there were only the Copper mines which had been playing an effective role in the Chilean economy. Probably, it was exporting approximately twelve thousand tons of copper per year, much of it to export to the United States during the late 19th century. Gradually copper mines of Chile had been dominated by four major United States' companies, Anaconda, Andes Copper, Chile Exploration Company and the Kennecott Corporations Braden Copper. This sort of domination of superpower had ultimately dominated Chilean economy too and laid the strong basis of relations between the United States and Chile for a very long point of time (Ibid, 1997).

With the passage of time the United States maintained its hegemony over every sector of the Chilean economy. For instance, the United States had controlled its 80 percent of copper production, 50 percent of the machinery and equipment, and 60 % of iron, steel and metal production. Apart from these, its firms had been

attaining profits at extensive levels, such as Anaconda earned 500 million dollars on its investment in Chile copper mines. Gradually, in the period of 1970's decade, the consistent economic situation had changed regarding the issue of extraordinary ownership of the United States over Chile copper mines concerns. When Chilean president had initiated a policy known as Nationalization policy, on the basis of that, he nationalized almost all copper industries in Chile (Conry, 1994). Henceforth, for the re-attainment of economic interests the United States had intervened Cuba twice in 1960's decades, while Chile in 1973.

Territorial Expansion

To understand the United States territorial expansionism matter, it is important that its root causes can be evaluated from the two significant ideologies. Those have remained highly important in the US foreign policy known as Manifest Destiny (Cingranelli, 1993), by democrat John L.O Sullivan in 1839 and American Imperialism (1890-1990). Although, the United States was already involved in territorial expansionism, but the doctrine of Manifest Destiny had provided the clearest way to the United States to expand throughout the American continent. Moreover, Americans propagated a belief that their expansionism was not only justified but inevitable to maintain supremacy over entire Western Hemisphere. Gradually with the support of this policy, the United States had started to control over major areas of South America (Ibid, 1993).

Apart from this policy, another ideology named as the United States' imperialism emerged in the late 19th century, ("General Nation", 1989) which was an extension of Manifest Destiny termed as "The New Manifest Destiny". It had primarily sown a seed of territorial expansion for the United States towards the third world, whose glances can be seen in the intervention of Chile and Cuba clearly. Even though Cuba had been intervened by the United States several times but during the Cold War era, its interventions had been considered the most significant in history. Moreover, geographically Cuba is the nearest island to the United States. Therefore, the US was highly interested to expand its sphere of influence over Cuba. At last in the year of 1898, the United States' remained successful in its aim and had free Cuba from the colonial power of Spain completely. After that, the US had started interference in each and every matter of Cuba. This sort of interference had been continuing till the regime of the Cuban President Fulgencio Batista (r.1940-1959). Fundamentally, the United States interference got affected right after the emergence of Fidel Castro. He was a man of revolutionary thoughts. He was highly inspired by the communist school of thoughts, mainly from the Soviet Union, which had considerably pushed him into the direction of communism path. Because of this school of thought, the Fidel Castro initiated a well-known revolution known as Cuban revolution, which provided courage to oppressed Cubans in order to put themselves out of the deep

darkness (Cingranelli, 1993). This movement had maintained communism views over Cuba. Due to its staunch existence, the influences of United States started to fade day by day. Henceforth, it can be concluded that the maintenance of the United States territorial expansion again in Cuba can be its basic motive behind the twice intercession.

As far as the United States' territorial expansion in Chile is concerned, it is necessary to mention over here that geographically Chile is located very far from the United States'. In order to overcome the distance, the United States had tried to build a Central American canal, which would work as a quicker passage between the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean.

Diminution of Communism

The third major interest of the United States in Chile and Cuba interventions can be the threat from communism. Communism in which each and everything related to land, capital and industry has to be under the direct control of State while Capitalism is altogether different from communism, in which every single person can own basic resources and means of productions (Halperen, 1973). Basically, right after the World War II; a strong tussle between Communism and Capitalism had occurred amongst in two superpower - the United States (capitalist) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics USSR (communism). For the very first time, the threat of communism had been felt mainly in the decade of 1940's. Consequently, the reduction of its growth became the dominant motive of the United States' foreign policy. For the achievement of this stance, the United States had taken enormous policies, among which the most significant was taken by President Truman in form of Truman Doctrine which made the United States free to take strict actions against Communist Soviet Union.

Cuba had been important economically, politically as well as militarily to the United States which made it very conscious about the spread of communism over there. For the prevention of communism, the United States had never lost hope. Therefore, he had taken steps against it. First and foremost was the formation of Marshal Plan 1948, in which the United States had given probably thirteen billion dollars to rebuild West for the purposes to counter the further expansion of communism. Although, it had tried to purchase West through various tactics, but, on the other hand, communism had been getting spread on the other side of the world (eastern side) with the support of the Soviet Union. Besides the eastern side of the world, meanwhile Cuba has been situated in the west side of the world was viewed as the greatest threat of communism for the superpower United States (Taffet, 2013). Specifically, communism threat had been initiated by Fidel Castro against the extra imperial power of its neighbour, mainly in form of Cuban revolution with the support of Raul Castro and Che Guevara (Ibid, 2013). After his success in revolution, Fidel Castro had started to administer Cuba in its own style.

First of all, he initiated a policy of nationalization that was considered as milestone of communism school of thought in Cuba. Under this scheme he nationalized almost all major US industries. He had created one-party socialist state. He also had ceased the United States' sugar mills, oil refineries and electric mills etc.

Such policies had turned the United States worst fears into realities in form of the communist dictator, Fidel Castro. Because he had finished United States' capitalism views in Cuba and established communism in depth. Its escalation made the United States frightened, that it might spread further towards Latin America territories. With the passage of time, the prediction of the United States came true. When the richest territory of Latin America had become a Communist state during the 20th century. Mainly, Cuba became communist state due to the excessive incurable financial crisis, frustration by lower class etc. consequently, the *Partido Socialista de Chile* [Chilean Communist Party (PSCH)] had emerged for the rights of Chilean. The rise of communism had affected the overall reputation of Chile in the United States (Hollister, May 1999). On the basis of above discussion, it can be concluded that the existence of Communism roots might primarily push the United States to intervene in Cuba.

Restoration of Political Control

Maintenance of political dominance in Cuba and Chile was another compulsory motive of the United States. Its domination has examined in the Spanish American war, which had been declared in the year of April-May 1898. The result of this war had made Cuba under the indirect control of the United States' imperialism. Gradually this indirect control of the United States had converted in to direct switch with the establishment of Plat Amendment, that later became the part of Cuban Constitution. After this, Cubans were obliged to accept the United States interference legally (Fursenko, 1998). On the basis of this Plat Amendment, every political affair of Cuba was dealt by the United States in its own way. Even it can be viewed from President Roosevelt by these following statements in another treaty named as Treaty of Reciprocity:

"Cuba must always peculiarly relative to the United States in international politics. She must in international affairs be up to a degree a part of one political system. In return, she must have a peculiar relationship with the United States economically. She must be in a sense part of our economic system, we expect her to accept a political attitude toward the United States which we think is wisest for both her and us. In return, we must be prepared to put her in an economic position as regards one tariff system which will give her some measure of the prosperity we enjoy" (Pollack & Rosenkranz, 1986)

The emergence of this treaty between the United States and Cuba became worthwhile because it had given more benefits to the United States trade than any other part of the Americas. Apart from these advancements, the United States

strengthened its hold over its mines, sugar industry, oil refineries, etc. United States had used the tool of political domination in order to fulfil economic benefits from Cuba.

As time went on, bitter agitation had begun among Cubans. There the Fidel Castro's appearance was extremely dominant, who had launched a movement known as 26th July Movement against Fulgencio Batista (Batista, 1962). Fidel got success and established his rule in form of the formation of Socialist State, which had ultimately minimized the rule of the United States politically over Cuba. Accordingly, the restoration of the United States' political control in Cuba was another major motive behind these overwhelmed intercessions.

For to understand the United States political goal in Chile is important to understand the way of its independence. Primarily, like Cuba, Chile was also under the colony of Spanish Empire (Perez Jr, 2008) that got independence with the help of United States, which given a chance to the United States to start inference in the political matters of Chile. But gradually its dominance over politics got faded, right after the emergence of Salvador Allende. He emerged as a strong democrat in Chile in the election of 1970. He was a staunch supporter of Communist school of thought. He also had completely established communist aspects on the surface of Chile. Because of that the United States drop political control over there. On the basis of this account, it can be evaluated that the restoration of political control can be the major motive behind the United States' intercession in Chile (1973).

Military Strength

Since the beginning, Cuba has been considered the strongest island of Americas, because its harbour had been used by the United States for different strategic purposes, most significantly to defend themselves against enemies. Known as the Cuba had remained colonized under Spanish Empire for a long phase. For to get independence from Spanish ruler they had strong army, that was highly organized under the military system of Spanish Empire. For instance, they used to involve in guerilla wars, usually their army was organized into regiments in which each regiment consisted of two battalions of each six companies. The Cuban army was usually based on two types: infantry plus cavalry, Spanish trained soldier were well armed, their uniform had ideally suited to the Cuban climates (Sweig, 2004). It was the only bird eye view to demonstrate the organization of the Spanish army in Cuba. Along with this military factor, Cuba has been blessed with harbour and naval force too, which had attracted the United States to utilize Cuban strength for own defence.

On the basis of above discussions, it has been revealed that the existence of Spanish army and its strategies had gradually inculcated in the minds of Cubans. Later on, they used these strategies against their ruler in Spanish American war in 1898 and got independence. Consequently, the Cuban army had been getting

stronger, becoming famous in the Americas. Cuba had supported the United States in both World Wars. In return, the United States' had provided weapons to Cubans in order to fight against communism power (Alexander, 1978). The support of Cuban army in World Wars was acknowledged by the United States in term of military worth. On the basis of this account, it can be concluded that the attainment of the Cuban military strength was the major motive of the US behind this twice intercession in Cuba of 1960's decades. In contrast to Cuba, Chile also had considerable military strength in comparison to other Latin America States. Even it has been perceived that mainly, the National History of Chilean is the history of its army. Primarily from 1603, which marked as the period of the Chilean foundation, army has played a remarkable role in all defensive matter of regions. Since the beginning, its army had been active, stable, organized as well as permanent just because of sustained reforms taken by government significant institutions in times of critical situations. Certainly, throughout past, Chile had been involved in the list of the wars majorly that occurred from the late 19th century, among which the most significant was the war of the Pacific in 1879 (Konstam, 2009).

According to several historians, it was probably a period when Chilean army was usually under the influence of Germans army. Germans help Chilean in the advancement of Naval, Air and Armed forces. Despite of the fact that Germans were defeated in World Wars, but their influence had maintained over the Chilean army (Clair, Feb. 1921). Under these influences, the Chilean army had remained outstanding in wars and also incredible in politics too. This military factor also motivated the United States' intervene in Chile, for to utilize their armed strength for own benefits (Alexander, 1978)

Conclusion

The motives which have been elaborated in the above discussion are basically considered as the milestones of the United States interventionist foreign policy towards Cuba and Chile. These major concerns were following; firstly, economic expansionism was the major interest of United States in Cuba and Chile. Because, Cuba has been hardly 90 miles off the coast of Florida and is rich in sugar and tobacco production etc., While Chile has been blessed with such rich mineral resources; Copper mines, Nitrate mines, Gold, Silver etc. It has been conceived that mainly for an economic boost the intervention over Cuba and Chile could be the best option for the US. That is why the US had intervened them one after another. Secondly, political control was another significant interests of US, on the basis of that the US for a long period was able to regulate its hold over Chile and Cuba governments successfully significantly, to maintain its economic benefits. Thus, it can be evaluated that economic expansionism and political control interests of the US had been working side by side, just as two sides of one coin.

Thirdly, the territorial expansion was another major interest of US, because they had been working for the enlargement of their everlasting supremacy over other nations. Fourthly, the control on the military strength of Cuba and Chile was also one of the significant interests of the US, because both of them had influence of different armies. Such as Cubans had influence of the Spanish army while Chile had influence of the German army. Thus, it can be concluded that their strategies and tactics had been admired by the US. That is why the US decided to intervene there in order to attain their military support, which would help him in future wars against enemies. Last but not the least was to eliminate the opposite school of thought, Communism.

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