

## SECTION 1

# FORCES SHAPING MODERN LATIN AMERICA

### TEXT SUMMARY

Latin America has a history of inequality. A small group of people has always held most of the wealth. Others lived in poverty. In many nations, inequality, along with a rigid social class structure, a swiftly growing population, and urbanization, led to unrest.

Catholic priests and nuns started a liberation theology movement that called for social justice and an end to poverty. Most military dictators were against social reform. They said strict control would bring order. In the 1960s and 1970s, rebels fought for a socialist revolution that would bring equality.

After World War II, leaders worked to build economic development. New local industries cut the need for imported

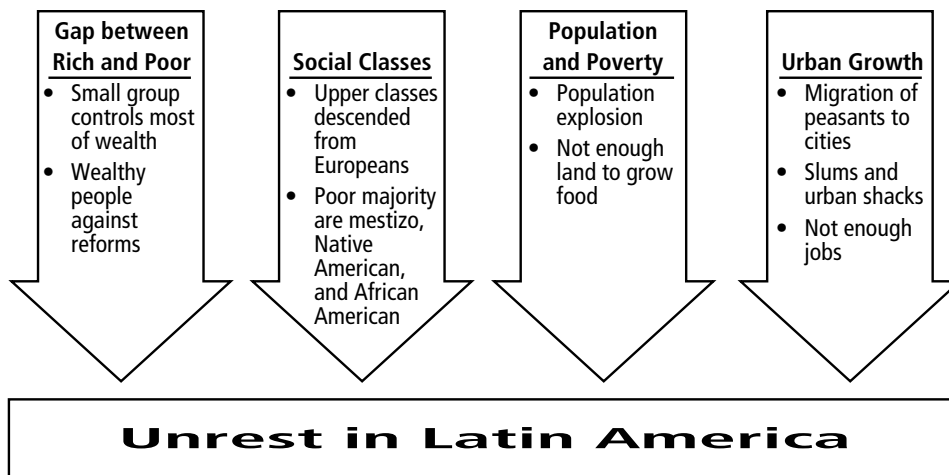
goods. However, many factories put out poor quality goods. Farming became big business. Companies grew cash crops on the best farmlands. As a result, more food had to be imported. In the 1980s, economies slowed. Governments cut spending, raised prices, and welcomed foreign business. Many economies picked up in the 1990s.

In Latin America, as in Africa, an urban migration brought change. It broke up families and weakened cultural traditions. Many city women took jobs outside the home. Some entered politics. Women became a force for social change, working for better schools and health care.

### THE BIG IDEA

**Social inequality, population growth, and rapid urbanization all contributed to unrest in Latin America.**

### GRAPHIC SUMMARY: *Unrest in Latin America*



After World War II, inequality, poverty, and unemployment led to unrest.

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What were the answers to problems in Latin America as seen by (a) military leaders, and (b) rebels?
2. **Diagram Skills** Describe one reason many Latin Americans were unhappy with their lives and leaders.

# LATIN AMERICA, THE UNITED STATES, AND THE WORLD

## TEXT SUMMARY

After World War II, the United States wanted to keep communism out of the Western Hemisphere. In 1948, it joined the countries of Latin America in the Organization of American States (OAS).

Members pledged to promote democracy and human rights. Each nation promised to stay out of the affairs of the others.

Before World War II, the United States and the island nation of Cuba were friendly. Then, in 1959, Fidel Castro led a communist revolt against a dictator that the United States government supported. Castro took control of Cuba and formed ties with the Soviet Union. Cold War tensions

flared when the Soviets placed nuclear missiles on Cuban bases.

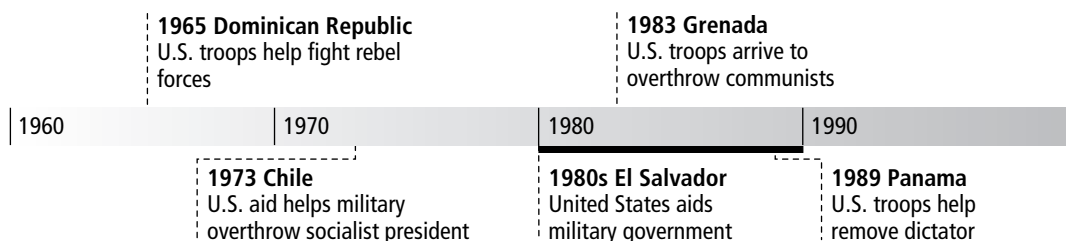
Castro tried to stir revolt in other lands. In response, the United States turned to a policy of **intervention**, or involvement, in Latin America. United States money, arms, and troops helped crush communist rebels. At times, the aid went to harsh noncommunist rulers. Many people spoke out against the United States policy.

Today, Latin America has links throughout the world. Venezuela joined with Arab nations to set oil prices. Brazil worked with African lands to protect coffee prices. Regions signed pacts to end tariffs and allow free trade. The Americas joined forces to control the drug trade and save the rain forests.

### THE BIG IDEA

Throughout the 1900s, Latin American nations tried to limit United States influence and exercise greater independence.

## GRAPHIC SUMMARY: *United States Intervention in Latin America*



United States power influenced events in these, and other, Latin American nations.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What were two results of the revolution in Cuba?
2. **Time Line Skills** When did the United States intervene in Chile? In El Salvador?

# MEXICO, CENTRAL AMERICA, AND THE CARIBBEAN

## TEXT SUMMARY

After World War II, Mexico worked to cut foreign influence. It built the second largest economy in Latin America. What had been a farm economy became a mostly urban, industrial one. Mexico enjoyed success, but faced troubles, too. (See chart below.) In the late 1970s, new oil fields and high oil prices meant economic boom. When the 1980s brought a world **recession**, a time when business is poor, oil prices fell and Mexico went into debt. Although foreign factories were built to make use of cheap Mexican labor, there were never enough jobs. The gap between rich and poor remained.

Central America, too, had gaps between rich and poor. Leaders stole from the people and killed those who spoke out against

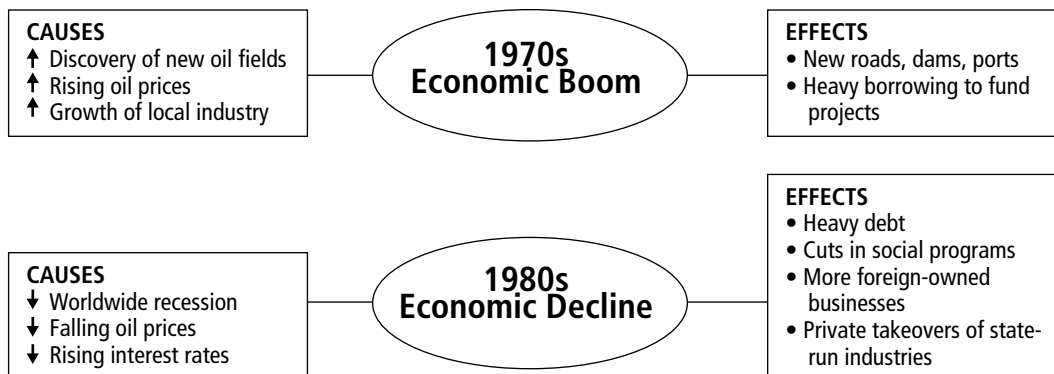
them. Cruelty, corrupt rule, and poverty sparked civil wars in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador. Because the United States saw most rebels as communist threats, it helped some military dictators hold power.

After a period of harsh rule, the island of Haiti held free elections in 1990. A priest, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, won the election but was exiled in a military coup. The United States helped bring Aristide back to build a democracy. It was a hard job. Haiti was the poorest nation in Latin America. The old ruling class did not care about human rights. People wondered if the new democracy could survive.

## THE BIG IDEA

**During the postwar era, several Central American countries were battered by civil wars, while Mexico had little turmoil.**

## GRAPHIC SUMMARY: *Ups and Downs of the Mexican Economy*



Even during the economic boom, most Mexicans remained poor.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why did many Central American countries have civil wars?

2. **Chart Skills** How did global oil prices affect the economy of Mexico?

# FOCUS ON ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL

## TEXT SUMMARY

Argentina and Brazil are the largest South American nations. Each has had ups and downs while building democracy and a strong economy.

In 1946, Argentina made Juan Perón president. Nationalists liked his bans on foreign-owned business. The urban poor liked higher wages, strong labor unions, and social reforms. Perón and his wife Eva worked to be popular. Eva helped the poor, building clinics and child-care centers. To gain votes for her husband, she helped women win the vote. While Perón wooed the urban poor, he put down opposition to his strict rule. His economic policies led to huge debts, and in 1955 he lost power in a military coup.

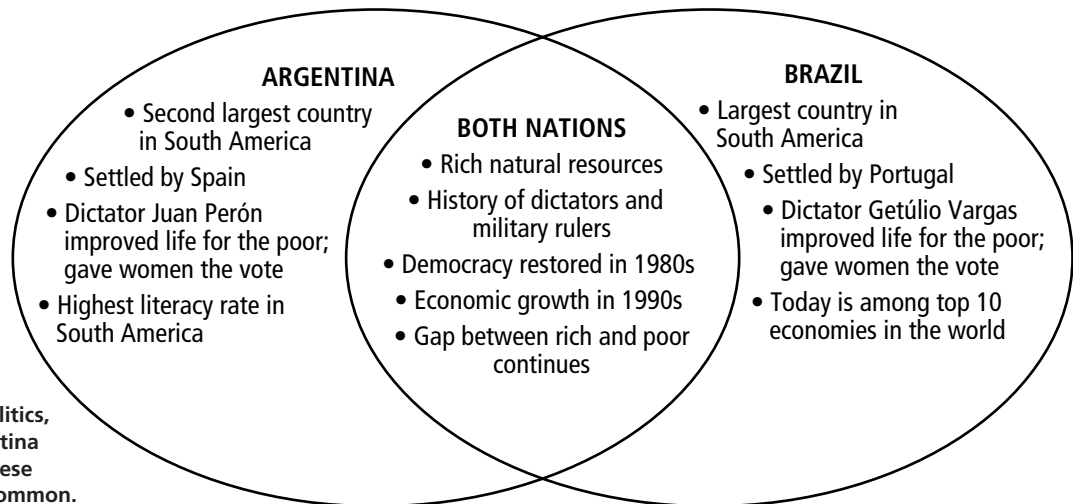
In Brazil and Argentina, economic hard times led to military coups. Military leaders in both countries killed their critics. In the 1980s, democracy returned to Argentina and Brazil through elections. It has survived.

The 1990s also brought economic growth. Brazil had learned it could not count on exports of rubber and coffee. In the 1930s, it began to **diversify**, or make different products. The government built an inland capital. It also settled new land and pushed development in the Amazon. This spurred economic growth and helped ease crowded cities, but hurt the rain forests. In Argentina, a good economy paid for new social programs. The country soon had the highest literacy rate in Latin America. Still, wealth belonged to the few.

### THE BIG IDEA

History and geography have shaped Argentina's and Brazil's efforts to develop stable governments and strong economies.

## GRAPHIC SUMMARY: *The Giants of South America*



A look at the people, politics, and economies of Argentina and Brazil shows that these countries have a lot in common.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. In Argentina and Brazil, what often happened to leadership during economic hard times?

2. **Diagram Skills** What is one way Argentina and Brazil differ from other South American countries?