2017

How to be a Good Neighbor: Christianity's Role in Enacting Non-interventionist Policies in Latin America During the 1930s and 1940s

Joelle Leib
Scripps College

Recommended Citation
Leib, Joelle, "How to be a Good Neighbor: Christianity's Role in Enacting Non-interventionist Policies in Latin America During the 1930s and 1940s" (2017). Scripps Senior Theses. 1069.
http://scholarship.claremont.edu/scripps_theses/1069
Acknowledgements

Professor Miguel Tinker Salas, reader: I cannot thank you enough for all of your guidance on this project. You helped me tremendously throughout the entire process and always provided me with suggestions for useful sources and insightful feedback. Your expertise on Latin America is astounding.

Professor Laura Redford, reader: You are a superstar! I always loved attending your seminar last semester and am very thankful that I was able to continue working with you this semester. You always gave the best advice, from suggesting how I should organize my research to showing me how to access online databases for historical newspapers.

Professor Rita Roberts, adviser: When I had no idea where to even begin, you helped me take the concrete steps necessary to start. Thank you for keeping me on track and encouraging me to work harder.

Mom: Thank you for encouraging me to pursue this subject. Until our visit to the Margaret Herrick Library in 2015, I had never visited a historical archive before. That experience inspired me to write a historical thesis, and I am very glad I had the opportunity to do this.
Table of Contents:

Introduction........................................................................................................................................5

Chapter I: Making Peace Popular: How Hubert Herring helped shape American public opinion in favor of non-interventionism during the Coolidge and Hoover administrations...................................................................................................................12

Chapter II: The Era of the Good Neighbor......................................................................................37

Chapter III: The Rise and Fall of the Good Neighbor.....................................................................60

Conclusion.........................................................................................................................................78

Bibliography.....................................................................................................................................82
Introduction

Hubert Herring founded and served as the director of the Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America (CCRLA) in 1928 in conjunction with his role as the Social Coordinator for the Congregationalist Church. Herring’s committee dedicated itself to fostering mutual respect between the U.S. and Central and South American countries through the formation of personal relationships between U.S. citizens and citizens of Latin American nations. During this era, the American collective imagination reconfigured its spatial understanding of the Western Hemisphere to classify Latin America as the U.S.’s neighbor, and because biblical texts command Christians to love their neighbors, peace-loving Christians like Herring believed the U.S. should treat Latin American nations with greater respect for their autonomy. The CCRLA promoted non-interventionism by organizing annual month-long seminars to Mexico and other Latin American republics during which Herring brought distinguished and oftentimes progressive U.S. citizens to these countries to meet with prominent Latin American artists, professors, and intellectuals on a variety of topics ranging from history to culture and art. Through direct engagement, Herring hoped the Americans who attended his seminars would return home and educate others on the true nature of Latin America in order to shift public opinion in favor of creating a more conciliatory climate with the region. These sentiments, he believed, would help bring about the end to U.S. military intervention in the Western Hemisphere in accordance with his religious beliefs that promoted love for one’s neighbor and condemned physical violence.

Although some of the ideas and strategies set forth by the CCRLA were partially adopted by the Coolidge administration, such as the appointment of Dwight Morrow as
the ambassador to Mexico in 1927, most were not fully embraced by the government until the late 1930s under President Roosevelt. Roosevelt believed that a non-interventionist approach to U.S. policy in Latin America was instrumental in winning over the hearts and minds of its peoples, whom he knew the U.S. needed in its fight against the Axis powers. Roosevelt sought to shift popular Latin American sentiment towards the Allied powers even before the U.S. officially entered the Second World War in 1942. Roosevelt dubbed his more friendly approach to U.S. foreign policy as the Good Neighbor policy because of its attempt to be less bellicose towards the peoples of Latin America by ways of non-interventionism and the creation of cultural exchange programs through the newly established Office of the Coordinator of Inter American Affairs (OCIAA). Thus while the Good Neighbor policy did benefit Latin America by providing its nations with greater autonomy, it ultimately served U.S. military interests by preventing Axis hegemony in the region.

While some sources cite Herring and the CCRLA as an inspiration for Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor policy,1 his name, committee, and work remain largely absent from the existing literature on the history of the Good Neighbor policy. Also missing from current scholarly articles is a direct connection between Christian organizations and official U.S. foreign policy. As an organization created through the Congregationalist Church, the CCRLA offers a concrete example as to how Congregationalism inspired a non-interventionist approach to U.S. policy that was ultimately adopted by the U.S. government. Herring, who became a professor at Pomona College in 1944, was instrumental to the formation of the Good Neighbor policy as both a

2 Robert David Johnson, “Anti-Imperialism and the Peace Movement,” in The Peace Progressives and
Christian and a progressive activist and as such should not be excluded or subjected to only brief mention in literature about the Good Neighbor policy.

Robert David Johnson’s *The Peace Progressives and American Foreign Relations* (1995)\(^2\) and Helen Delpar’s *The Enormous Vogue of Things Mexico: Cultural Relations between the United States and Mexico, 1920-1935* (1992)\(^3\) are two of the small number of books that specifically cite Herring by name and mention some of his direct contributions to the promotion on non-interventionism in U.S. foreign affairs. Both monographs detail a meeting in 1927 between Herring, his seminar attendees and President Calles of Mexico who expressed his desire to improve U.S./Mexican diplomatic relations. American media outlets, including *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times*, widely covered this meeting, generating immense public pressure for renewed negotiations between President Calvin Coolidge and President Calles. Johnson briefly writes how Herring’s coordination of this meeting is illustrative of the great influence prominent progressives exercised in the formation of U.S. foreign policy on the eve of World War II, but does not elaborate as to how Herring’s tactics ultimately helped shaped the Good Neighbor policy. It also does not attribute Herring’s progressive values to his religiosity, even though his work with the Congregationalist Church directly inspired his non-interventionist approach. Delpar includes the testimonies of numerous U.S. officials who initially denounced the seminars as propaganda sponsored by the Mexican government. While critical of Herring, these accounts prove that the U.S. government was aware of the CCRLA, demonstrating his prominence in the political


arena. Due to its emphasis on Mexico, Delpar’s book inherently cannot offer a detailed account of how Herring influenced Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor policy, but it does provide valuable insight into his seminars in Mexico.

Edward Guerrant’s *Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor Policy* (1950)⁴ and Bryce Wood’s *The Making of the Good Neighbor Policy* (1961)⁵ both fail to mention Hubert Herring or the CCRLA in their detailed historical accounts of the formation of the Good Neighbor policy. Yet Herring’s omission from these texts, both written shortly after the collapse of the Good Neighbor policy, points to the reality that more progressive figures like Herring are oftentimes largely ignored in scholarly texts until a later date when their beliefs are no longer seen as controversial. Wood specifically cites Herring’s 1927 meeting with President Calles without referencing Herring or the CCRLA by name. Similarly, Guerrant received his PhD from the University of Southern California while Herring was a professor of Latin American studies at the nearby Pomona College. Thus it is safe to assume that Guerrant was familiar with Herring’s work, as Herring often gave lectures in the Los Angeles area and attended conferences about Latin America at USC. Guerrant and Wood’s exclusion of Herring from their histories of the Good Neighbor policy suggests a hesitation to initially include the work of liberal outsiders from the historical canon. Although these monographs do not specifically cite Herring, they are useful in the understanding of the Good Neighbor Policy from a broader historical perspective.

Numerous scholarly articles point to a strong religious influence on the creation of the Good Neighbor policy, none, however, identify a concrete connection between Christianity and official U.S. policy such as Herring’s involvement in the

---

Congregationalist Church and founding of the CCRLA. In her article for *American Studies*, “Mapping the Metaphor of the Good Neighbor: Geography, Globalism, and Pan-Americanism during the 1940s,” Amy Spellacy outlines how the Christianized concept of “respecting thy neighbor” played into the collective consciousness of the American public in order to enhance public support for the Good Neighbor policy and improve relations between the U.S. and Latin America. By referring to Latin America as the U.S.’s “neighbor,” the U.S. attempted to normalize Pan-American solidarity by linking North and South America as natural allies. This article mainly relies on theory to justify its claims of Christian influence on the Good Neighbor policy rather than concrete evidence.

In a similar vein, David Zietsma writes in “Building the Kingdom of God: Religious Discourse, National Identity, and the Good Neighbor Policy, 1930-1938” that modern Protestant interpretations were instrumental in the promotion of non-interventionism due to their preference of altruism over the conversion of indigenous peoples to Christianity. Herring’s ideology very much falls in line with the ideas espoused by Zietsma, as he explicitly wrote that his desire to sincerely help the peoples of Latin America motivated his work rather than conversion rates. James Parker also references altruism as an integral factor in the Good Neighbor Policy in his article “The Rise and Fall of the Good Neighbor Policy: The North American View.” Parker writes that altruism inspired a non-interventionist approach to U.S. foreign policy and

---

specifically cites Herring as one such expert who found the desire to improve the lives of others as the most salient aspect of the Good Neighbor policy. While all three of these texts highlight Christianity’s influence on Roosevelt and the implementation of the Good Neighbor Policy, none specifically outline how Christianity directly altered U.S. foreign policy as clearly as the CCRLA did.

Although Herring is not prominently featured in historical accounts of the creation of the Good Neighbor policy, his work and writings were influential to its implementation and subsequent success in winning the support of many Latin American nations from 1943-1945. Herring’s Christian background inspired him to work towards finding peace in Latin America through the promotion of non-interventionism and the improvement of inter-continental cultural relations. His innovative strategies, including hosting seminars in Latin America, helped mobilize popular support for an end to military intervention, pressuring the U.S. government to adopt such measures in the hopes of strengthening U.S./Latin American relations. This thesis attempts to demonstrate how Herring’s religious persuasions motivated him to advocate for the autonomy of Latin American nations through the pursuit of non-interventionist policies, an approach the U.S. government ultimately adopted when it best suited its interests during World War II.

In Chapter I, I outline how Herring’s early career as a minister of the Congregationalist Church and Director of the Church’s Council on Social Action Activities inspired him to form the CCRLA in an effort to enhance intercontinental relations and encourage the U.S. government to cease its military interventions in Latin American nations. I write how the CCRLA’s first Seminar in Mexico in 1927 led to the
replacement of James Sheffield as ambassador to Mexico with Dwight Morrow, the first concrete action by the U.S. government to improve relations with Latin America. While the CCRLA faced some criticism as a propaganda group sponsored by the Mexican government, it continued to grow in the 1930s.

In Chapter II, I describe how President Roosevelt adopted the Good Neighbor policy as the foundation of his policy objectives in Latin America. This celebration of non-interventionism further legitimized the opinions of more progressive experts like Herring and allowed his ideas to gain greater prominence, as demonstrated by the publication of his articles in *Harper’s Magazine* and that of his book, *And So to War*.

In Chapter III, I detail how the U.S. government ultimately adopted Herring’s strategies, as illustrated by the creation of the Office of Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs in 1940, whose cultural relations division used similar tactics as the CCRLA. At this time, Herring served as a consultant to the State Department and to Vice President Henry Wallace, who was active in Latin American affairs. Thus while Herring had once been an outsider trying to shape popular opinion, he had become an insider by the 1940s, demonstrating how non-interventionism was now official U.S. policy. After the attacks on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, hemispheric solidarity became a necessary endeavor in ensuring defeat of the Axis powers. Although the Good Neighbor policy ultimately deteriorated after the war’s end as the Cold War became the U.S.’s primary focus, Herring continued to be a renowned expert on Latin American history and affairs, as both a professor at Pomona College and as a prominent author.
Chapter I: Making Peace Popular: How Hubert Herring helped shape American public opinion in favor of non-interventionism during the Coolidge and Hoover administrations (1926-1932)

Although Herring’s name is largely absent from discussions on the Good Neighbor policy and only sparingly mentioned in historical records from the Congregationalist Church, his work as a minister for the order left a lasting impact on U.S./Latin American relations. Christian scripture, which frequently invokes the sacredness of peace, likely inspired Rev. Hubert Herring to dedicate himself to the realization of nonviolence in Latin America, a region riddled with violence perpetrated by the U.S. military. He believed the goal of Christian ministers visiting Latin America should not be to convert the greatest amount of natives, but to improve the lives of Latin Americans through the promotion of peace. Herring brought public-opinion makers like prominent journalists, professors and university presidents to Latin America to foster mutual respect and understanding between these elite Americans and their Latin American counterparts. When the Americans returned home, he hoped they would extoll the virtues of Latin America and persuade those they influenced to support non-interventionist policies. His significant contributions to Congregationalism and social action placed him “in the roster of those who are rightly called Founders in the historical development of the Christian Faith through the Church.”

Herring was the son of a Congregationalist minister and grew up in Winterset, Iowa. He graduated from Oberlin College in 1911 and the Union Theological Seminary

9 His name is absent from the books FDR’s Good Neighbor Policy and The Making of the Good Neighbor Policy and is only briefly mentioned in the Congregational Church’s archives.
in 1913 during a period of great change for the Congregationalist Church. In 1920, Rev. Franklin Sprague proposed a “New Congregationalism” through 15 Articles with the hope of restoring the Church to the prominent position it once held in American society. Sprague’s Article 11 stated, “In the Church of Christ whose mission is to exalt the worship of God, sanctify the Sabbath, make disciples of all mankind, and promote spirituality, righteousness, and love in the earth.” These concepts likely influenced a young Herring when he became the Director for Social Action Activities for the Congregationalist Church of the United States in 1924 after having served as a minister in Kansas and Wisconsin for eleven years.

Herring used his position at the Church to promote nonviolence, a concept he found integral to his practice of Christianity. A colleague of Herring’s once called him an “authentic pioneer” whose “almost romantic belief in the goodness of men” allowed him to challenge his counterparts at the Church in order to pursue new polices that favored non-interventionism. He placed his work “solidly and firmly upon the basis of an historic policy which for nearly two thousand years has kept the Church, in the last analysis, from being only one of the passing temporal agencies of social change.” Herring held a fundamentally different view of Christianity’s role in Latin America than that of his predecessors. He believed that Latin Americans needed attorneys to advocate on their behalf, not missionaries, and that the goal of American ministers visiting Latin America should be to improve the lives of Latin Americans through the promotion of

---

12 Bradley, 4.
13 Ibid., 5.
peace, not to convert the greatest amount of natives. As Herring told his colleagues, “The zeal for the doing of good is highly rated in Christian and Jewish circles, but I suggest that the further we get away from the desire to do good, and the more we cherish the desire to win good, the greater will be our experience.” He “won good” by bringing public-opinion makers such as prominent journalists, professors and university presidents to Latin America to foster mutual understanding between these leading Americans and their Latin American counterparts. When the Americans returned home, Herring hoped they would extoll the virtues of Latin America and persuade those they influence to support non-interventionist policies.

U.S. relations with Latin America were traditionally unfavorable towards Latin America and characterized by a strong U.S. military presence in the hemisphere. The Monroe Doctrine, an 1823 statement by President James Monroe, explicitly placed Latin America in the U.S.’s sphere of influence and justified a strong U.S. military presence in many Latin American nations. In the early twentieth century, President Theodore Roosevelt advocated for “Big Stick” diplomacy and his successor William Taft supported “Dollar Diplomacy”, both of which were approaches to foreign policy that explicitly promoted intervention in Latin America for the sake of U.S. political and corporate interests. After World War I, the U.S. did not become a member of the League of Nations, and as such its international actions were not beholden to any international laws. Thus the U.S. engaged in military interventions in Latin America in order to protect the lives and property, namely oil interests, of American citizens. Between 1898 and 1920,

---

United States Marines or soldiers invaded the Caribbean area on 20 separate occasions.\textsuperscript{17} This activity created sentiments of fear and distrust on behalf of Latin Americans towards the U.S. government and its citizens.

Like many other Latin American nations, Mexico’s complex history is riddled with American intervention. In 1910 Mexico experienced a revolution against the government of Porifio Díaz’s corrupt policies that favored the wealthy and foreign capitalist interests and disadvantaged the poor and indigenous. This atmosphere prompted the reformer Francisco Madero to declare his candidacy for president, but the dictator Díaz sent him to jail upon his announcement. After his release from jail, Madero captured Ciudad Juárez in 1911 and Díaz eventually fled the country. But in 1913 Madero was shot and the reactionary Victoriano Huerta replaced him. Many Mexicans held the U.S. in disdain because they believed that the U.S. Ambassador, Henry Lane Wilson, “helped to create the atmosphere which led to the assassination of Madero,” according to Herring.\textsuperscript{18} U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, a progressive democrat and racist who believed in the moral superiority of white people, found Huerta’s government to be “a government of butchers” for slaughtering scores of its own people and as such refused to recognize it.\textsuperscript{19} He sent American troops to occupy Veracruz in 1914 and successfully weakened Huerta’s control, making his rival Venustiano Carranza the de facto president. Wilson only ceased sending U.S. troops to Mexico once the U.S. entered World War I.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{18} Hubert Herring, \textit{Towards an Understanding of Mexico} (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 1935), 26.
\textsuperscript{19} Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia, “Woodrow Wilson: Foreign Affairs,” No date.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
President Calvin Coolidge, a conservative Republican, became president in 1923 and continued Wilson’s chauvinistic practice of intervening in internal affairs of Latin American nations. U.S. Ambassador to Mexico James Sheffield, who saw his primary duty as protecting “American lives and property”\(^2\) no matter the cost, strongly influenced these policies. President Coolidge shared Sheffield’s stance towards intervention in Mexico and once stated, “It has always been and remains the policy of the United States… to take the steps that may be necessary for the preservation and protection of the lives, the property, and the interests of its citizens and of this Government itself.”\(^2\) These positions became critical when the U.S. government feared that Calles might nationalize all Mexican oil production, including oil refineries owned by American corporations, by invoking Article 27 to the Mexican Constitution. In 1925 Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg sent a letter to Calles warning him of the potential repercussions he would face if his actions jeopardized U.S. oil interests. Kellogg threatened to deny U.S. recognition of the Calles government if it followed through with its plan of nationalizing American oil companies. The looming threat of U.S. intervention in Mexico strained relations between the two nations.

As Director of Social Action Activities, Herring organized annual seminars to Mexico, and later to the Caribbean as well, to promote mutual respect between the peoples of North America and South America. He hoped that these informative cultural exchanges would shift public opinion in favor of non-interventionism in an era of “Big Stick” diplomacy. In 1926 Herring led his first tour of prominent Americans to Mexico. According to *The New York Times*, the forty Americans were “writers, ministers of

---

\(^2\)Wood, 5.
various religions, professional and business men, and social workers.” He later said that the group went with “one purpose: to know more of Mexico, her people, and her problems.” This trip proved to be a turning point in Herring’s career, as he secured a meeting with Mexico’s president, President Plutarco Elías Calles, which briefly thrust him into the national spotlight back in the U.S.

Through his first Seminar in Mexico in 1926-27, Herring sought to recast the hardening relationship between Mexico and the U.S. and “rally public sentiment behind a more conciliatory course in Mexico.” In January 1927, he secured a meeting with President Calles and allowed his seminar participants to interview the president. When asked whether he would be willing to renegotiate with the U.S. in regards to Article 27, President Calles replied, “Yes, with great pleasure, if necessary, although it would imperil sovereignty and establish a fatal precedent as to the liberty and sovereignty of all nations.” He lamented the ruthless American capitalists who were “attempting to influence the State Department to use force against Mexico in their favor.” Despite his misgivings towards the U.S., Calles responded favorably to the spiritual tone set by Herring. He told the group, “I rarely hear any words of any spirituality…So when I hear words based upon justice and brotherly love it makes me hope that true relations may at some time be established among peoples, makes me think that there are still people in the world working for international harmony upon the basis of justice.” Herring hoped this

---

24 Hubert Herring, Proceedings of the Seminar on Relations with Mexico (Boston: The Seminar on Relations with Mexico, 1927), 1.
26 “Calles offers to submit land law to The Hague,” Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File), Jan 9, 1927.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
meaningful conversation would spark mutual appreciation between the two nations and a “new spirit of willingness to share life and culture.”

He believed that when Americans learned to respect their Mexican neighbors through cultural exchanges, they would no longer support U.S. intervention in Mexico.

Herring succeeded in his efforts to improve U.S./Mexican relations by pressuring the Coolidge administration to change its policies towards Mexico. In Herring’s own words, Calles’s “declaration made the first page of many newspapers in the United States. Immediately the demand was voiced from public-spirited citizens of the United States for the ending of belligerent tactics of Mr. Sheffield, and for resort to the calmer arbitrament of conference.”

Herring hoped that by pressuring the U.S. government to cease its aggressive behavior towards Mexico, Mexico would finally be offered the chance to flourish as a nation. He told *The Los Angeles Times* in January 1927, “For the first time in 400 years, there is hope in Mexico. We cannot understand Mexico without going back to our own revolutionary days when men fought with a courage which would not be denied and with a hope which saw beyond disorder and tyranny to democracy and peace.”

By framing the Mexican revolution in the historical context of the American Revolution, Herring made an undeniable claim that Americans must stop intervening in Mexico if they are to sincerely uphold the democratic values that led to the founding of their own nation. His heightened media presence allowed him to exercise a significant amount of influence in Washington. He encouraged average citizens to write their members of Congress in support of non-interventionist policies, which amplified his

29 Ibid.
message.\textsuperscript{32} President Coolidge quickly responded to the public’s demands by replacing Mr. Sheffield with Mr. Dwight D. Morrow, a friend of Coolidge’s from Amherst College whom Herring saw as an ambassador who genuinely cared about the Mexican people and not just American property interests. Morrow saw his primary duty as ambassador as safeguarding “the respect that is due to sovereign states,”\textsuperscript{33} and sought to rebuild trust between Mexico and the U.S.

In the late 1920s, support for non-interventionist policies in Latin America promoted by Herring were generally viewed as progressive for the time and thus often met with scorn. In a broader context, the peace movement became a central component of progressive movements in the 1920s, which exercised significant influence over the politics of the decade.\textsuperscript{34} Herring organized the first Seminar in Mexico in conjunction with noteworthy progressives including Herbert Croly, John Dewey, and Ernest Gruening “in the search for ways to discourage the American habit of interfering in the internal affairs of Mexico.”\textsuperscript{35} Croly was one of the most influential intellectuals of the Progressive Movement in the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century and is credited as one of the primary architects of Roosevelt’s New Deal.\textsuperscript{36} Similarly, John Dewey was one the leading educational thinkers of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century and proved instrumental in crafting the pragmatic approach to education embraced by the Progressive Movement.\textsuperscript{37} From 1921 until 1924, Ernest Gruening worked as an editor for \textit{The Nation}, a well-known progressive and anti-

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{34} Johnson, 200.
\textsuperscript{35} Hubert Herring, “Introduction to Hubert Herring” for \textit{The Unconquerable Mexican}, Harper’s Magazine, Harper & Brothers, 1937, 1.
\textsuperscript{37} “John Dewey: (1859-1952)” from \textit{Only a Teacher: Schoolhouse Pioneers}, PBS, No Date.
\end{footnotesize}
imperialist paper. Through his position on the paper, he advocated for anti-imperialist policies in Latin America, particularly for the end of the U.S. occupation of Haiti. In 1924 he left the paper and worked on the presidential campaign for Henry La Follete, a progressive senator, and regularly provided progressive senators with information to use during foreign policy debates. Herring’s many partnerships with renown progressive activists reinforced his dedication to the progressive and anti-imperialist movements. It is important to note that the progressivism espoused by Herring and his colleagues, while similar to that of Wilson in the sense that both promoted non-interventionism, it was also vastly different than Wilson’s in its approach. A desire to fulfill the “White Man’s Burden” motivated Wilson’s progressivism whereas Herring wanted to improve the lives of Latin Americans and did not believe that white people were superior to indigenous Latin Americans.

The notoriety Herring and his colleagues gained from the first seminar in Mexico and the subsequent empowerment of the progressive policies they espoused did not bode well with establishment figures in Washington. Some prominent politicians in Washington, including Representative James A. Gallivan, a Democrat from Massachusetts, falsely believed that Herring’s seminar was part of a grand scheme by the Mexican government to defame President Coolidge. In March 1927, Rep. Gallivan stated in the Congressional Record, “Upon my responsibility as a member of this House, I charge that the Mexican government, through its Ambassador at Washington and its Consul General in New York City, has expended almost $2,000,000 for the purpose of discrediting the President of the United States and the Secretary of State of the United

---

38 Johnson, 227-234
Gallivan believed the Mexican government “subsidized preachers and professors to attack the President of the United States... to the end that President Coolidge might be deterred from carrying out the identical policy initiated by Woodrow Wilson in protection of the rights of American citizens.” While these allegations were false and completely unfounded, they pointed to the fear that some members of the government held to in an attempt to delegitimize pro-Latin American progressives like Herring by linking them to corrupt schemes created by foreign governments. Gallivan’s accusations justified the continuation of interventionist policies by associating any opposition of such policies with treason against the U.S. government.

Fully aware of the religious motivations behind Herring’s seminar, Gallivan attempted to portray Herring as a shill of the Mexican government willing to exploit the Congregationalist Church in exchange for cash.

President Coolidge is a Congregationalist. Congregationalists had not been entertained by Calles. A bright idea. The Rev. Hubert Herring of Boston was chosen to lead Congregationalists on a junketing trip to Mexico. Of course, he spoke no Spanish; he knew nothing of Mexico; but was willing, in fact delighted to take a free ride. He gathered together a group of similar intelligence and inspiration. And they went to Mexico to settle on a two weeks’ junket a problem of four centuries’ duration. The organ of that great church, the Congregationalists, in its account of this strange pilgrimage for the purpose of fooling Calvin Coolidge, did itself the honor to state frankly that while the members of the crusade paid ‘their own expenses, the overhead was paid by interested parties.’

Gallivan portrayed Herring and his progressive colleagues as ignorant in order to equate liberalism with stupidity. Although Gallivan sought to delegitimize Herring and his

---

40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
conciliatory work, his comments reaffirmed both Herring’s influence on the public and government and his religious motivations behind the seminar. Herring’s prominence elicited a response from the government, and while initially this response was negative, Herring was able to use this recognition to eventually work with government officials a decade later to implement policies he helped craft. Gallivan repeatedly stressed Herring’s relationship with the Church in his critique, but in doing so highlighted the highly prominent role the Church played in Herring’s advocacy work. Not only did the Church influence Herring’s beliefs, it also granted him a sense of authority and moral high ground that was difficult for detractors like Gallivan to undermine.

In addition to Gallivan, the State Department, Ambassador Sheffield, and Secretary Kellogg also believed Herring and his colleagues to be propagandists paid off by the Mexican government. The State Department maintained a close eye on Gruening and listed him as a “radical and a professional propagandist” and one-third of a “Jewish radical trinity which has been active in Mexico in recent years.” Similarly, Kellogg and Sheffield complained that those who attended Herring’s seminars “are never in favor of their own country” and that they “seem to care more for the interests of other countries and other peoples than their own.” Despite these allegations, Sheffield conceded that Gruening and his allies had successfully swayed public opinion in their favor to the extent that an armed intervention in Mexico would no longer be socially acceptable. Sheffield and Kellogg’s condemnation of Herring exemplified their fears that a pro-Latin American organization could be successful in shaping public opinion. They recognized Herring’s immense potential for influencing public-opinion makers and sought to weaken

42 Johnson, 227-234
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
his power by linking him to bribery and fraud. Fortunately for Herring, their efforts failed as his organization continued to grow.

In 1928, Herring founded the CCRLA in conjunction with the Church to solidify his advocacy efforts in Latin America. That same year Republican candidate Herbert Hoover won the presidential election, replacing Calvin Coolidge as president in 1929. Although the founding and implementation of the Good Neighbor policy is often associated with President Franklin Roosevelt, many scholars argue that Hoover created the policy and Roosevelt later expanded upon it. Under Hoover, U.S. and Latin American relations quickly improved, as evidenced by the U.S.’s decision in 1929 to end its policy of not recognizing Latin American governments formed after a Revolution. During the interregnum period between Election Day and his inauguration, Hoover visited ten Latin American countries “for the purpose of paying friendly calls to our neighbors to the South.” Hoover’s invocation of the word “neighbor” signifies both a desire to reconfigure spatial conceptions of the western hemisphere and an appeal to Christian doctrine that promotes the notion that neighbors are ethically responsible to treat one another with dignity and respect.

Throughout his first years in the presidency, Hoover sought to significantly reduce U.S. intervention in Latin America and refrained from intervening in situations in which he had legal authority to do so. Unlike Coolidge, he did not believe that military intervention was a proper response to damage inflicted upon American citizens and their property and corporations. Hoover explicitly stated that, “it ought not to be the policy of

---

46 Wood, 126.
47 Ibid., 125.
the United States to intervene by force to secure or maintain contracts between citizens and foreign states or their citizens. While the Great Depression likely influenced Hoover’s decision to cease military interventions in Latin America, his stance towards Latin America was a significant departure from Coolidge’s more aggressive policies.

Herring sought to capitalize on this new administration’s more favorable policies towards Latin America by organizing an even larger Seminar in Mexico in 1929. Like the U.S., Mexico also recently experienced a change in government as President Calles refrained from seeking another term. Alvaro Obregón won the presidential election, but was murdered before his inauguration. Emilio Portes Gil became the provisional president of Mexico on December 1, 1928, but he exercised limited power because Calles continued to control the government. With this new political landscape in both the U.S. and Mexico, Herring and his ninety participants traveled throughout Mexico from July 13 to August 3, 1929 to be “students, seeking to understand the spiritual genius, the educational, the economic, cultural movements which are at work in Mexico.” These ninety seminar participants were a noteworthy group comprised of many members of the progressive movement, including prominent journalists and academics. Herring’s selection of primarily liberal participants illustrates his desire to elevate the position of non-interventionism in Latin America on the progressive agenda. All of these influential opinion-makers aided Herring’s goal for the CCRLA- to create “a body of citizens scattered throughout the United States, intelligent and concerned for the cultivation of relations of mutual respect and appreciation between the people of the United States and

---

49 Guerrant, 126.
51 Hubert Herring, “Interview with President Portes Gil” in Report: The Seminar in Mexico (New York: The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, 1929), 144.
those of the Latin American Republics.”52 The CCRLA allowed Herring to nationalize his efforts and thus make his pursuit for peace in Latin America more promising.

Herring’s dedication to progressivism is perhaps most evident in the members of the board for the CCRLA. John Dewey, a leading progressive educational activist, and Henry Goddard Leach, editor of the popular newsmagazine *The Forum*, served as the Committee’s Chairmen. Catharine Waugh McCulloch, a prominent lawyer and suffragette, and John A. Lapp, a progressive activist and head of the Department of Social Action of the National Catholic Welfare Council, served as Vice-Chairmen. In addition to placing progressive activists on his board, Herring sought to bring prominent journalists to Mexico who held great influence over public opinion in the U.S. Many of the seminar attendees were editors of popular progressive papers and magazines, including William J. Abbot, Bruce Bliven of *The New Republic*, Charles B. Driscoll, Waldo Frank of *The New Yorker* and *The New Republic*, Lewis Gannett, Arthur Holt, Paul U. Kellogg of *Survey*, Parker T. Moon (author of the 1927 book *Imperialism and World Politics*), and publisher George A. Plimpton. Herring likely hoped that these writes would document their experiences at the Seminar for their respective magazines and papers to better publicize and popularize a non-interventionist approach to U.S. policy in Latin America.

Herring also invited some powerful members of the academic community including professors and college presidents whose prestige and authority could help legitimize non-interventionism in the intellectual sphere. Such attendees included: James A. Blaisdell, President of Pomona College (a Congregationalist institution), Donald J.

Cowling, President of Carleton College, Robert M. Hutchins, President of the University of Chicago and Francis J. McConnell, President of DePauw University. Ray Lyman Wilbur, the former President of Stanford University, also came on the tour to Mexico as Hoover’s Secretary of the Interior. A handful of respected professors, specifically those who studied Latin American studies, history, international law, or theology, and who also embraced progressive ideologies attended the Seminar. These professors included Chester Lloyd Jones (who also served as an advisor to the 1928 Pan-American Conference in Havana), Yale theology professor Halford E. Luccock, Oberlin sociology professor Herbert A. Miller, Latin American history professor J. Fred Rippy, sociology professor Edward A. Ross, and Latin American studies professor William R. Shepherd.

Many former professors who left academia to use their expertise to influence U.S. policy also attended the Seminar. Felix Frankfurter was a Harvard law professor who founded the American Civil Liberties Union and later became a Supreme Court Justice appointed by President Roosevelt.53 Paul H. Douglas, a liberal economics professor at the University of Chicago and political activist, later became a U.S. Senator in 1948 from Illinois who championed progressive causes like civil rights.54 Charles W. Hackett was a prominent professor of history and Latin American studies at the University of Texas and in 1926 President Coolidge appointed him to represent the U.S. at the Pan America conference in Panama.55 Stephen Duggan founded the Institute of International Education and Raymond Buell was the research director of the Foreign Policy Association, “a non profit American organization founded to carry on research and educational activities to

55 Texas Archival Resources Online, “Charles W. Hackett Papers: Biographical Information,” no date.
aid in the understanding and constructive development of American foreign policy.”

These education experts had the power to shape the minds of the future, and Herring hoped to persuade them to invest in the future of improved U.S./Latin American relations.

While journalists and professors are looked to for knowledge about history and current events, religious leaders have a moral authority over the public unparalleled by any other public figure. As such, Herring invited numerous religious leaders to Mexico to appeal to the righteousness, in addition to the rationality, of adopting a non-interventionist policy in Latin America. Samuel Guy Inman, like Herring, was a minister and dedicated non-interventionist who founded the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America. He is credited with helping form Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor policy. Rhoda E. McCulloch, one of the few female participants, worked with the Young Women’s Christian Association and the Conference on the Christian Way of Life. Karl Reiland was a famous Episcopalian Reverend from New York known for being one of the Church’s most outspoken liberals. Herring sought to form an interfaith coalition of peace activists and also invited some prominent members of the Jewish community including Julian W. Mack, a judge on the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, and Stephen S. Wise, who founded the American Jewish Congress in 1920. This interfaith coalition offered a strong moral argument in favor of non-intervention.

56 Delia Goetz, “The Foreign Policy Association” in Teamwork in the Americas (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1943), 64.
58 “Dr. Reiland Dead; was rector here; held pulpit at St. George’s on Stuyvesant Square,” The New York Times, September 13, 1964, 86.
Lastly, Herring invited some lesser-known political figures from progressive third parties including James S. Edwards of the Prohibition Party and Elisabeth Gilman and Harry W. Laidler of the Socialist Party. Although these political actors did not have much influence on policies themselves, their prominence in a third party advocating for non-interventionist causes could potentially push the two major parties to adopt some of their more popular policy proposals. In addition to Secretary Wilbur, one other highly regarded government official attended the Seminar. Christian A. Herter worked for the Department of State as Secretary of the U.S. Commission to negotiate peace at the Paris Peace Conference in 1918 and 1919. From 1919 to 1924 he was the Personal Assistant to Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover and in 1944 became a member of the House of Representatives representing Massachusetts. In 1959, President Eisenhower appointed Herter to be his Secretary of State after Secretary John Dulles fell ill.59 Secretary Herter is a prime example of what Herring looked for in a seminar attendee, someone who was on the ascent of his or her career who would be able to implement what he or she learned at the Seminar when he or she reached a level of prominence. While this strategy did not see immediate payoffs, it proved useful to Herring and allowed him to lay the foundations for his multi-faceted advocacy work that could be improved upon in the future.

During the Seminar, participants traveled throughout Mexico to visit historical sites, like Cuernavaca, meet with Mexican political figures, and attend lectures delivered in English about Mexico given by both Mexicans and Americans. Ultimately Herring sought to educate his attendees on all aspects of Mexican life to humanize Mexicans and

encourage Americans to care for Mexico and its people. The lectures covered a wide variety of topics pertaining to Mexico including literature, banking, U.S./Mexican commercial relations, history, folklore, education, public health, and petroleum and mining operations. Even famed muralist Diego Rivera gave a lecture about Mexican mural art. Some of these lectures strategized ways in which the U.S. could improve relations with Latin America and the importance of doing so.

In his lecture “The Commercial Relations between the U.S. and Central America,” Vincente Sáenz outlined concrete measures the U.S. could take to earn back the trust of Central Americans and improve relations. “Friendly relations between the U.S. and small countries of Central America cannot come so long as certain concessions and arrangements have been made with Central American countries which continue to aggravate the people of these countries.” Sáenz urged the State Department to stop actively supporting the exploitative business efforts of U.S. corporations at the expense of average Latin Americans. For example, many U.S. fruit companies operating in Central America did not pay taxes for contracting land to plant their bananas and only paid one cent in taxes per bushel of bananas. Sáenz believed the U.S. needed a more aggressive State Department that refused to allow U.S. companies to treat Latin American countries so poorly. He thought U.S. companies should form a partnership with Latin American nations rather than a one-sided relationship predicated on the stronger of the two preying on the much weaker one. If these policies were to be enacted, Latin American nations and the U.S. could work together in rebuilding lost trust.

---

Professor J. Fred Rippy, a progressive professor of Latin American history at the University of Chicago and Duke University, delivered numerous lectures about repairing U.S. and Latin American diplomatic relations inspired in part by the racist ideals of the White Man’s Burden. *The Los Angeles Times* wrote in its glowing review of the seminar that Dr. Rippy’s lectures were amongst the most appealing to the audience. In “The Basics of Cooperation Between the Two Americas,” Rippy, a staunch opponent of military interventionism, suggested that the U.S. provide Latin American nations with resources and expertise, of course dependent on the nations’ consent to such aid. Although Rippy identified as a progressive and espoused progressive ideologies, his lecture exhibited many racist opinions that blamed the “retarded progress” of Latin American countries on the presence of “primitive races.”

While today Rippy’s progressivism and racism may seem contradictory, during this era progressives like President Wilson believed that white men needed to save people of color from their own demise. According to Rippy, “We have experts in many fields. We have the capital and machinery if Latin America feels that she needs it. I believe that we could help to transform these countries, in cooperation with their leaders, within a lifetime, provided they are willing for us to do so, provided it can be done on a basis which they will accept.” Rippy believed the U.S. as a majority white country could help industrialize “primitive” Latin American countries and allow them to reach a higher potential. However, while Herring supported Rippy’s call for an end to U.S. intervention, he did not subscribe to the idea of the White Man’s Burden. Instead he urged his

---

63 Ibid., 85.
participants “to divest yourself of the assumption that we are upon a pilgrimage to an inferior people.” Unlike Rippy, Herring believed that U.S./Mexican relations would only improve if Americans saw Mexico as a nation worthy of respect and not one needing in aid.

Towards the end of the Seminar on July 25, Herring and his participants met with President Portes Gil at the National Palace to discuss (in English) the future of Mexican/U.S. relations. Herring prefaced the event with a short speech and said, “We come with no propaganda; we have no purpose to proclaim, any economic, religious or social doctrine; we have nothing to sell, we seek no concessions; we come to learn about Mexico, that returning to the United States, we may serve as interpreters of country to country. We believe in peace. We believe that the best basis for peace is mutual appreciation based upon mutual understanding.” Herring was readily aware of the criticism and fear targeting his group from detractors like Gallivan who believed he was a paid propagandist and attempted to address the allegations directly. By declaring peace as his primary objective, Herring sought to gain moral high ground over the U.S. government officials who hoped to undermine his work.

President Portes Gil thanked Herring for his words and sentiments and expressed hope that Mexicans would embrace the visitors to better improve the participants’ goals and foster strong cultural relations between the two nations. Portes Gil told the Americans, “It is particularly pleasing and satisfying to me that you have enjoyed your

---

65 Emilio Portes Gil and Hubert Herring, “Interview with President Portes Gil at the National Palace: July 25, 1929,” in Report: The Seminar in Mexico (New York: The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, 1929), 144-148.
66 Ibid, 144.
stay in this country and that you have come with the motive of study and observation of our peoples, of our objectives.” The president valued the experience to meet with Americans who genuinely cared about the peoples of his nation rather than Americans who hoped to exploit the natural bounty of Mexico for their own economic enrichment. Herring’s ability to secure an interview with the President demonstrated the CCRLA’s success in appealing to both Mexicans and Americans to foster productive dialogue that actively facilitated change.

Similar to the 1927 meeting with President Calles, oil remained an important topic to the American attendees. One unnamed participant asked about the status of U.S. petroleum companies operating in Mexico. Portes Gil lamented the shortage of oil in Mexico after the First World War, but expressed his hope for the future. “We have already a number of offers from capitalists, especially those of the United States, who are desirous of investing heavily in the exploitation of the oil in Mexico.” Whereas President Calles expressed an interest in renegotiating with the U.S. when asked a similar question, Portes Gil directly appealed to Americans by encouraging them to invest and work in Mexican oil fields. His response highlighted the extent to which U.S./Mexican relations had improved over the course of two years thanks to Hoover’s new policies that did not seek to intervene militarily whenever American property, in this case land and machinery, was damaged. Portes Gil summarized these drastic improvements best when he said, “The relations between the United States and Mexico are becoming every day more cordial.”

67 Ibid., 144.
68 Ibid., 145.
69 Ibid, 147.
The Hoover administration’s policies towards Latin America proved successful as the U.S. stopped wielding its power belligerently and began working with Latin American nations, likely due to a lack of military resources during the Great Depression. These improvements aided Herring’s efforts to facilitate meaningful cultural exchanges that shifted American public opinion in favor of non-intervention in Latin America. In a 1931 letter to a prospective attendee of the Seminar in Mexico, CCRLA Chairman Edward A. Ross wrote, “We are confident that, next to the work of Ambassador Morrow, the annual seminar in Mexico has been the chief influence in developing an appreciative public opinion in the United States in regard to Mexico.” At this point in time the CCRLA did not yet have contacts in the government to concretely shape U.S. foreign policy, making the power to influence public opinion the CCRLA’s best course of action in affecting policy. The CCRLA actively recruited a wide variety of influential candidates from all over the country to attend its conferences with the hope that they would promote Herring’s peaceful ideologies and encourage their respective cities and states to pressure their members of Congress to support non-interventionist legislation.

The 1930 Seminar in Mexico was much larger than any of the previous seminars and succeeded in spreading the CCRLA’s mission and increasing its membership. Herring advertised this seminar to the public for the first time with a short article that appeared in *The Los Angeles Times*. He wrote that the seminar would make a fine vacation for a businessman and prove to be an interesting time for Americans to visit.

---

Mexico because of its new administration.\textsuperscript{71} Attendance at the seminar doubled to nearly 200 people from 32 states and Washington D.C. For the first time, the Seminar welcomed students from American institutions to attend. Pomona College professor and director of the Inter American Foundation James H. Batten led a group of 28 students and teachers from the Claremont Colleges on the seminar.\textsuperscript{72} This drastic increase in membership presented Herring with the opportunity to multiply his message a million times over. Herring wrote, “Each member of this group has an audience in the United States, the editor may reach a hundred thousand, the writer may reach a million, the clergyman may reach thousands, the college president other thousands.”\textsuperscript{73} Herring hoped the Seminar attendees would leave Mexico with a more nuanced understanding of Mexican culture and eager to share their experiences with their peers. Moreover, the broadening appeal of the seminar demonstrated Herring’s ability to bring Latin American issues to the forefront of progressive politics.

Before Herring’s guests arrived in Mexico, Herring asked them to, “Yield yourself to Mexico and Mexico will yield herself to you. To the degree in which you succeed in doing this, you will equip yourself to return to the U.S. as an interpreter of people to people, as an agent for the hastening of that interchange and culture in which none are impoverished, but in which all are enriched.”\textsuperscript{74} Herring hoped his Seminar attendees would come to Mexico without expectations and willing to absorb new knowledge on a variety of topics pertaining to Mexico. \textit{The Los Angeles Times} cited a

\textsuperscript{71} John F. Sinclair, “Mexico is much talked about, but rarely visited,” \textit{Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File)}, Mar 16, 1930, 14.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{73} Hubert C. Herring, “The fine art of understanding” in \textit{The Genius of Mexico} (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1930), 330.
\textsuperscript{74}Ibid., 331.
symposium on the Monroe Doctrine as one of the seminar’s highlights. Dr. Inman and Dr. Ruiz, an international lawyer, both argued that the Monroe Doctrine needed to be redefined because it stood for the continuation of U.S. hegemony in Latin America.\textsuperscript{75} Dr. Inman said, “Who is going to kill (the Monroe Doctrine)? Why, the international climate is going to change and we are part of those who are going to change (it).”\textsuperscript{76} By actively condemning intervention, Herring and his colleagues worked toward the creation of a political landscape in which imperialism would no longer be societally permissible.

The success of the multiple Seminars in Mexico generated momentum for the CCRLA and permitted the organization to expand, as evidenced by the creation of the Seminar in the Caribbean in 1931. Chairman Ross wrote, “It will be a cooperative study of the chief Caribbean peoples with special reference to their relations with the United States. No more important international question confronts us.”\textsuperscript{77} Here Ross is likely referring to the controversial decision by Hoover’s Secretary of State Stimson’s decision to refrain from intervening in Cuba. In 1927, Cuban President Gustavo Machado changed the Constitution to extend his presidential term limit from four years to six. Many Cubans saw Machado as a dictator and thus began to protest his presidency, with revolts escalating in 1929. Although U.S. public sentiment was opposed to intervention, in the case of Cuba many Americans hoped the U.S. would intervene to liberate the Cubans from Machado’s rule. These Americans pointed to the 1901 Platt Amendment, which gave the U.S. legal authority to intervene in Cuban affairs “for the preservation of Cuban

\textsuperscript{75} “Seminar helps fix friendship,” \textit{Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File)}, July 24, 1930, 4.
\textsuperscript{77} “The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America,” Edward Alsworth Ross to Miss Alice Stone Blackwell, November 26, 1930, 112 East 19th Street, New York, New York, Swarthmore College Peace Library.
independence, the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property and individual liberty,” as a justification to intervene in Cuba. Despite these protests, Secretary Stimson did not endorse a U.S. intervention of Cuba. Shifting public sentiments made this Seminar in the Caribbean crucial to prove to influential Americans that non-interventionism was still morally and practically the best option for the State Department to pursue.

Herring’s goal of “furthering the mutual understanding and appreciation between the peoples of the United States and of the Latin American republics,” seemed to have a growing effect on U.S. public opinion and subsequently on U.S. foreign policy. Drastic changes in foreign policy occurred from the Coolidge administration to the Hoover administration as non-interventionism became more popular among Americans and government officials. Herring’s approach was already beginning to gain traction and would continue to flourish in 1933 under a new administration even more welcoming of his policies. Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s presidency cemented the gains made during the Hoover administration through the complete implementation of the Good Neighbor policy.

---

78 Wood, 48-56.
79 Hubert Herring, “The Seminar in the Caribbean,” The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, New York, 1931.
Chapter II: The Era of the Good Neighbor

The 1933 election of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt ushered in a new era of friendship between North America and Latin America as a shift in public opinion in favor of non-intervention aligned with U.S. political interests to maintain strong ties with Latin America in an effort to ward off the Axis powers from the Western Hemisphere. Even before serious trouble began brewing in Europe, Roosevelt capitalized on growing efforts to improve U.S. Latin American relations in order to lay a strong foundation for future Pan-American solidarity. In his celebrated inaugural address delivered on March 4, 1933, Roosevelt stated, “In the field of world policy I would dedicate this nation to the policy of the good neighbor- the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others- the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors.”

Roosevelt’s address did not mark the first time a president used the term “good neighbor” in reference to a less bellicose approach to foreign policy. However, Roosevelt’s use of the term in his first inaugural address, the speech responsible for setting the tone of his administration’s first year, demonstrated his commitment to working towards a friendlier world order. Herring recognized that Roosevelt’s approach to foreign policy marked a clear departure from those of his predecessors due to his adherence to the principle of the “Good Neighbor”, which, in Herring’s words, “reached its flowering under Franklin Delano Roosevelt.” Unlike previous presidents, Roosevelt sought to incorporate Good Neighborism as a cornerstone of his administration’s foreign

---

81 Hubert Herring, *Good Neighbors: Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Seventeen Other Countries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), 345.
policy, and thus succeeded in creating tangible improvements to the U.S./Latin American relationship.

During his first year in office, Roosevelt took concerted measures to reduce tensions with other nations, particularly those in Latin America. At the Pan-American Montevideo Conference in December 1933, Roosevelt sent his Secretary of State Cordell Hull to represent the U.S., making Hull the first Secretary of State to attend the conference since 1889.82 This symbolic gesture signaled that the U.S. would begin placing greater importance on diplomatic ties with Latin America and would no longer unilaterally invade Latin American republics without first attempting to negotiate with the nations’ representatives. To the surprise of many Latin American delegates, Hull signed onto the Conference’s proposal for the Convention of Rights, which stipulated in Article 8 that “No state has the right to intervene in the internal or external affairs of another.”83 Article 10 also addressed that, “The primary interest of states is the conservation of peace. Differences of any nature that arise between them should be settled by pacific methods.”84 Thus the Convention of Rights clearly established that the U.S. would no longer be able to trample on the rights of other nations or invade their borders without consent. Diplomacy would be pursued to the furthest extent to resolve conflicts before any other options, including military, would be considered. Hull’s willingness to respect the governments of Latin American republics gave hope to the other delegates that the Roosevelt administration truly marked a new beginning for U.S./Latin American relations. According to the Mexican delegate present at the

---

82 Guerrant, 7.
83 Ibid.
Conference, Puig Casauranc, “there is in the White House an admirable, noble, and good
man- a courageous man who knows the errors really belong to the past.”85 The positive
reception from the other delegates illustrates the significant turning point marked by
Roosevelt’s inauguration: the era of the Good Neighbor.

Herring and the CCRLA are partially responsible for this first foreign policy
success of the Roosevelt administration at the Montevideo Conference. According to The
New York Times, Herring and many active members of the CCRLA, including Raymond
Leslie Buell, research director of the Foreign Policy Association, Stephen P. Duggan,
director of the Institute of International Education, Ernest Gruening, editor of the Nation,
and University of Texas Professor Charles W. Hackett served on a Committee on Latin
American policy that advised Secretary Hull and the other American delegates the day
before they sailed to Montevideo from New York for the conference.86 Nearly all of the
members of the Committee on Latin American policy were members of the CCRLA or
had attended a Seminar in Mexico with Herring. Thus while the CCRLA itself did not
form the delegation, it extended a great deal of influence on the delegates by likely
influencing their opinions on Latin America and non-interventionism.

At this meeting between Hull and the Committee on Latin American policy, the
delegation presented Hull with an agenda motivated by the desire for more peaceful
relations with Latin American republics. The report “embodied recommendations for
settlement of the Chaco dispute, the strengthening of peace machinery in the American
hemisphere, broadening the Monroe Doctrine into a continental agreement and revision

85 Guerrant, 8.
of the Platt Amendment to the Cuban Constitution.”87 The measure to expand the implications of the Monroe Doctrine to provide greater autonomy to Latin American nations proved to be the most salient at the Conference, as it roughly translates to the widely supported Convention of Rights later passed at the Montevideo Conference. “The Committee suggests an agreement under which no non-American State shall acquire territory in the American hemisphere and no American state shall seek in the territory of another American state any base for military or naval operations. In the event of a violation of these undertakings the American states shall consult each other.”88 This language is strikingly similar to that of the Convention of Rights, the proposal most favored by the Latin American delegates at the Montevideo Conference and responsible for fostering positive feelings between the Latin American republics and the Roosevelt administration; the first inkling of a lasting Good Neighbor policy. In this sense, Herring served as an early architect of the Good Neighbor policy as administered by President Roosevelt.

In addition to furthering support for non-interventionism in Latin America at the government level, Herring also sought to promote diplomacy within the Congregationalist Church by encouraging his fellow Congregationalists to advocate for federal policies that aligned with their Christian values. To institutionalize his vision, Herring organized a General Council Meeting of the Congregationalist Church in June 1934 at Oberlin College.89 At the meeting he proposed the creation “of a new commission or board or agency to represent the Congregational Christian Churches explicitly in the

---

87 Ibid.
88 Ibid.
The General Council created the Council for Social Action and appointed Herring as its Executive Director. According to his colleague Dwight Bradley, Herring “placed the Council for Social Action solidly and firmly upon the basis of an historic policy which for nearly two thousand years has kept the Church…from being only one of the passing temporal agencies of social change.” Herring’s Council was a successful attempt to merge his passion for non-interventionism with his dedication to the Church. He inspired the Church to further the application of its teachings of peace and tolerance beyond its own community by lobbying for federal legislation that supported these values. This practice cemented the role of the Church in the American social and political landscape by expanding its purpose to also more concretely encompass social justice and activism.

Although the Council extended its social action efforts beyond the Christian community, its foundation was firmly rooted in Christian doctrine, specifically that of the gospel, the “Good News” that Jesus’s resurrection would repair the peoples’ relationship with God. In an article about the Council for Social Action, Herring’s successor Bradley wrote that the “job” of the Council “lies the long process of Christianizing the consciences of human beings…of persuading people to let the gospel of Jesus have its way in their lives.” He continued with, “In the long run, the Council for Social Action is most interested in helping to sow the seed of this gospel.” Bradley leaves no doubt that Christianity was the primary motivation for the formation of the Council for Social Action. While proselytizing does not seem to be a goal of the Council, it clearly hoped to

---

90 Ibid.
91 Ibid.
93 Ibid.
indoctrinate the people it helped, Christian or not, with Christian values such as the
“redemptive action of eternal love” and empathy for one’s neighbor. Thus while
Herring’s ideologies stray slightly from Church tradition by not aspiring to directly
convert people, his goal of Christianizing the mindsets of needy peoples is strongly
rooted in Congregationalist traditions and practices. Due to these ties, it is impossible to
separate Herring’s devotion to the Church from his work with the CCRLA and other non-
Christian organizations.

Alongside his work through the Church, Herring continued to labor through a
variety of avenues to reach a broader and secular and/or non-Christian audience. In
March 1934, Herring hosted a Seminar in Cuba94 and the following year he published a
book, *Renascent Mexico*, in addition to hosting the Tenth Annual Seminar in Mexico.
Herring capitalized on the growing American interest in Latin America as an opportunity
to educate North Americans about the peoples of Latin America, a strategy he firmly
believed would lead to peace between the two Americas. *The Los Angeles Times*
recommended *Renascent Mexico*, a collection of essays by prominent American and
Mexican academics compiled by Herring, to those who “think of Mexico as a land of
comic opera revolts, or as a backwards nation still ruled by the remnants of Spanish and
mestizo feudalism, this book will surprise you.”95 Herring sought to paint Mexico as
complex and thus worthy of serious attention and respect, an underrepresented
perspective for its time. Also in 1935, Herring published a two-page article in *The New
York Times* entitled “Venezuela Revolt is True to Form” chronicling the death of

---

95 Lure of Mexico shown in understanding surveys, *Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File)*, April 21, 1935.
Venezuelan dictator Juan Vicente Gómez. Through *Renascent Mexico* and his *New York Times* piece Herring was able to expand his outreach to include average Americans unable to attend his Seminars and familiarize more people with the culture and peoples of Mexico while also establishing himself as an expert on Latin America.

The Seminar in Mexico in 1935 marked the tenth anniversary of the First Seminar during which Herring successfully coalesced public opinion to pressure President Coolidge to appoint a new ambassador to Mexico. In the foreword to the pamphlet for the 1935 Seminar, Herring wrote that the main purpose of the Seminar is to “bridge the gulf” between “Latin America and Anglo Saxon America” because “there is a great lack of understanding between the two.”

To rebuild this trust, Herring attempted to resituate the U.S.’s violent history towards Mexico in the present as the peaceful exchange of ideas between Mexico and the U.S. “So the new conquest of Mexico is on, but this time the plunderers take those things which can be freely shared with injury to none. This new plunder is in the area of ideas and appreciations. We record our unending gratitude to Mexico for permitting this modern conquest, and for sharing with us something of the haunting mystery, the untiring beauty of this land.”

Herring’s reframing of American conquest is a reflection of the U.S.’s new approach to foreign policy. While the U.S. was once a nation that ruled with the big stick of imperialism, it now sought to use diplomacy as its primary method of achieving international goals and serving its own economic and political interests. Herring acknowledges this ugly history but stresses the promise of a better future in an earnest attempt to earn the trust of Latin Americans. By appropriating

---

98 Ibid., 4.
the word “conquest”, Herring succeeds in redefining the U.S. approach to foreign policy as one that is more mutually beneficial rather than unilateral.

At the 1935 Seminar, Herring placed great importance upon the concepts of peace and neutrality. Dr. Edwin M. Borchard, a Professor of Law at Yale Law School and a known non-interventionist, delivered numerous lectures such as the seminar “Inter-American Cooperation” and “‘Peace Machinery’ and Neutrality”. Like the previous nine Seminars, many prestigious and well-known progressives attended the Tenth Seminar in Mexico, including Ernest Gruening and the anti-war activist and philanthropist George Foster Peabody. Other influential and politically active people also attended, including Theodore Roosevelt, the son of President Theodore Roosevelt and a cousin of President Franklin Roosevelt. Herring’s message of cooperation successfully reached a broad audience comprised of prominent individuals likely able to impact popular U.S. sentiments and potentially U.S. policy as well.

Due to the success of the first decade of Seminars in Mexico and Cuba, Herring decided to expand the Seminar to include more Latin American countries in addition to providing more opportunities for people to attend the Seminar in Mexico. In an Announcement of Activities for 1935-136 for the CCRLA, Herring notified Seminaristas (the word Herring used to describe Seminar participants) of the installment of the first Seminar in Guatemala for December 1935. Charles Thomson of the Foreign Policy Administration was a featured speaker at the Seminar in Guatemala. In 1942, less than a decade after attending the Seminar, Thomson became head of the Division of Cultural

99 Ibid.
Relations for the Office of War Information. As Director, Thomson oversaw all of the U.S.’s cinematic war propaganda intended for foreign audiences. As a progressive like Herring, Thomson sought to use propaganda as a vehicle to promote wellbeing for the many Latin Americans living in poverty. Thomson’s appointment demonstrates how members of the same liberal communities as Herring became influential members of the Roosevelt administration able to advocate for their progressive beliefs on a federal level.

In order to bring more members into the progressive and internationally aware community, Herring sought to make the Seminar in Mexico more accessible to a variety of people by offering *Viajes a Mexico* and adding a Winter holiday Seminar in Mexico. Herring advertised the *Viajes a Mexico* as individualized trips to Mexico resembling the Seminar in Mexico for those who wanted to attend the Seminar but did not wish to experience Mexico in the heat of summer. While these trips to Mexico may seem touristy, Herring stressed that they were not in any sense. “It is a non-profit, educational institution, dedicated to the proposition that inter-American understanding can best be assured by increasing the knowledge of our neighbors which only sympathetic first hand experience can give.”[^101] By providing more influential Americans with the opportunity to visit Mexico, Herring hoped these experiences would inspire seminar participants to advocate for peaceful relations with Latin America after having developed a personal stake in the wellbeing of Latin American people. In this sense, he sought to instill his American participants with Christian values as well. The Bible commands in verse Mark 12:31 that “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Empathy for whom Herring and


Roosevelt frequently referred to as “the neighbors to the South” was necessary in order to generate support for non-interventionism and cultural exchange in a society ruled by capitalism. Thus the Christian principle of empathy for one’s neighbor heavily influenced much of the CCRLA’s operations although it was not a Christian organization itself. 

Herring’s conciliatory efforts between the peoples of North and South America became even more poignant in 1936 as tensions in Europe reached a fever pitch with Hitler’s decision to reoccupy the Rhineland. In a May 1936 letter to members of the CCRLA, Herring stressed the importance of the CCRLA’s mission to enhance the relationship between the U.S. and Latin America. “With the world quite mad, it is an appropriate time to work for whatever measure of sanity can be won in the Western Hemisphere.”102 President Roosevelt shared Herring’s perspective and sought to improve diplomatic ties with Latin America in the case that the war in Europe worsened and traveled across the Atlantic to the Western Hemisphere.103 Roosevelt penned a letter to the Presidents of every Latin American nation suggesting they all convene in Buenos Aires before year’s end to reenergize the Pan-American movement.104 All twenty nations responded affirmatively and soon after planning began for the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace in December of 1936. In preparation for the monumental Conference, Herring wrote numerous articles for The New York Times stressing the importance of the Conference for both the present and future of Inter-American Relations, especially considering that a mere few days before Herring

102 “The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America,” Hubert Herring to Seminaristas, May 8, 1936, 269 Fourth Avenue, New York, New York, Swarthmore Peace Library.
103 Guerrant, 11.
104 Ibid., 63.
published these articles, Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy signed a treaty of Cooperation, creating the Axis powers.\(^\text{105}\)

In his first article, “Great Diversity Marks Americas: Nations of Hemisphere Differ in Size, Language, Culture, and Economic Resources,” published in November 1936, Herring offered *New York Times* readers an opportunity to learn more about their Latin American neighbors. Herring strategically referred to both North and South Americans as simply “Americans”, a successful rhetoric strategy to demonstrate the unity between the “some 257 millions of Americans of various sorts.”\(^\text{107}\) The article also included a map of the Western Hemisphere that spanned the entire page with images denoting each country’s main exports. In reference to the diverse array of raw materials detailed in the map, Herring stated, “Latin America has been, and seemingly will continue to be, a producer of raw materials for her own consumption and for export to those countries where iron and coal have created the industrial centers.”\(^\text{108}\) Through his article, Herring presented the vast economic opportunities for the U.S. and Latin America if both parties form better relations. Herring used this financial incentive in an attempt to generate more interest in the upcoming Conference in Buenos Aires among U.S. citizens.

Once Herring successfully acquainted his readers with their neighbors to the South, he launched into a detailed analysis of the Conference in an article published on the same day as his first. In “Zone of Sanity in a Mad World: Nations of the Americas Hope to Set Example,” Herring offered a rosy outlook on the forthcoming outcome of the Conference. “The creation of an American zone of sanity in a mad world- that is the

\(^{107}\) Ibid.  
\(^{108}\) Ibid.
sizeable task confronting the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace, which opens next Tuesday at Buenos Aires.”109 Thus Herring stated the necessity of the Conference and strong U.S./Latin American relations in the case that the European war intensified. He stressed the likeability of both Roosevelt and Hull among Latin Americans and how these positive sentiments would help advance the Conference’s peace mission.110 Finally, thanks to Roosevelt and Hull’s policies, the Latin American nations felt as though they could work alongside the U.S. rather than live in fear of its looming shadow; partly because they trusted Roosevelt and partly because they feared what the European dictators would do next.

What little concord there has been between Latin Americans sprang from a common fear and dislike of the United States rather than from a genuine appreciation of each other’s gifts and graces….If today the fear is lessened and the dislike abated, there is a chance that the Latin Americans, divided and mutually suspicious, might find a measure of unity through working with the United States. That is the hope of the proponents of the Good Neighbor policy. It is the faith which takes Franklin D. Roosevelt and Cordell Hull on the long journey south.111

Herring had high hopes that the Conference would produce an agreement for a Pan-American neutrality and thus prevent the cruelties of war from reaching the Western Hemisphere. He emphasized the necessity of “faith” in the prospect for a successful Good Neighbor policy, a reference to the morality and Christian values necessary in creating peace. Herring used his platform as an expert on Latin America to express his grave

110 Ibid.
111 Ibid.
concerns for the future of the World if the leaders of the Americas were unable to maintain peace on their own continents and present a unified front to Europe.

Lastly, Herring touched on the Monroe Doctrine and its desperate need for revision in his article “Monroe’s Doctrine Reverberates Again”\textsuperscript{112} published in \textit{The New York Times} on December 13, 1936. Herring proposed that the framework of the Doctrine remain in place but be reinterpreted to signify that European war, rather than the original intent of the Doctrine which prevented European colonization, be banned from the Western Hemisphere. In Herrings words, the Monroe Doctrine, drafted by President James Monroe in 1823, stipulated that:

\begin{quote}
First, there is to be no extension of European colonization in the Americas. The attempt would be “dangerous to our peace and safety”. Second, there is to be no extension of Europe’s political systems in the Americas. Europe can neither own nor dominate. Third, there is to be no European coercion of the new American governments “who have declared their independence, and maintained it, and whose independence we have on great consideration and just principles acknowledged.” Fourth, we will not intervene with existing colonies of European powers, including the remaining colonies of Spain. This is the Monroe Doctrine.\textsuperscript{113}
\end{quote}

The major question facing the American delegates at the Conference was how they hoped to amend the Monroe Doctrine to reflect the recent adoption of non-interventionism as a staple of U.S. foreign policy in Latin America.\textsuperscript{114} Herring painted the Conference as a pivotal moment in history for U.S./Latin American relations and urged Roosevelt to seize this opportunity to revisit the Monroe Doctrine. “But the men who meet today in Buenos Aires, engaged in writing an American Doctrine, are adding a third imperative:

\textsuperscript{113} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{114} Guerrant, 11.
Americans must keep peace within their own house [hemisphere].” This addition to the Monroe Doctrine promised that the U.S. would break from decades-long policy and strive to cease intervening in internal American affairs. The updated Doctrine was not only morally sound in Herring’s eyes, it was also strategically advantageous for a peaceful Western Hemisphere amidst fears of a possible German invasion.

Through his multiple articles published in major newspapers shortly before the start of the Conference, Herring succeeded in educating the public on U.S./Latin American relations while also advocating for peace in the region. He attempted to sway popular opinion in his direction and encourage U.S. citizens to advocate for improved relations between the U.S. and Latin America. By penning numerous, lengthy articles, Herring established himself as a public scholar on Latin American issues, a source the average New York Times reader could trust. He shed light on an important issue many Americans may not have paid much attention to otherwise due to its apparent insignificance to the war. Ultimately, the Conference in Buenos Aires proved successful in its attempts to forge peace in the region. The Conference adopted four major conventions, all of which solidified a multilateral approach to handling external threats rather than a unilateral (namely a pro-U.S.) approach.116

As alliances between Italy, Germany, and Japan strengthened towards the end of 1936, the Buenos Aires Convention held enormous significance in the presentation of a unified Western Hemisphere, along with Roosevelt’s victorious 1936-reelection campaign, which guaranteed another four years of strong relations between the U.S. and Latin America. The CCRLA continued to host multiple seminars across Latin America as

115 Herring, SM6.
116 Guerrant, 64.
Herring wrote numerous articles and gave speeches in favor of enhanced U.S./Latin American relations. He believed the common fear of Adolf Hitler presented the Americas with a unique opportunity to create an “authentic Pan-Americanism” that must not be squandered.\(^{117}\)

As Hitler inspired American nations to pledge solidarity to one another, these newly formed alliances faced some serious challenges. In March 1937, Mexican President Lázaro Cárdenas created the General Administration of National Petroleum, effectively beginning the transition to nationalize Mexico’s oil supply. This announcement sparked tensions between the U.S. and Mexico, as in 1934 U.S. companies owned 52% of the entire Mexican oil supply.\(^{118}\) Shortly after this announcement, the Mexican oil industry descended into chaos as 17,000 Mexican workers began protesting the oil companies by demanding higher wages and better working conditions.\(^{119}\) The Mexican government relegated the strike to the Federal Commission on Conciliation and Arbitration, which found the workers’ complaints valid and ordered the U.S. companies to comply with the workers’ demands, an order which would cost the oil companies upwards of 26 million pesos. In compliance with the Good Neighbor policy, the State Department urged the hesitant U.S. companies to follow the commission’s demands, as Roosevelt did not want to escalate tensions with Mexico when the U.S. needed Mexico’s full-fledged support.\(^{120}\) Amidst this hostility in relations, Herring and the CCRLA organized the Festival of Pan-American Chamber Music, a Pan-American music competition in Mexico D.F. during the summer of 1937 to enhance cultural ties between

\(^{117}\) Hubert Herring, “Prologue” in Good Neighbors, 4.

\(^{118}\) Hubert Herring, Mexico: The making of a nation (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1942), 71.

\(^{119}\) Ibid., 74.

\(^{120}\) Ibid., 75.
the peoples of the U.S. and Mexico.\textsuperscript{121} The newspaper announcement for the festival asked for composers from any American republic to compete for a $500 prize donated by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, “one of the foremost patrons of chamber music in this country [the U.S.].”\textsuperscript{122} While economic relations between the two countries were strained, Herring hoped that the music festival would strengthen cultural ties among elite Americans in the face of a looming European threat.

During the following summer of 1938, Herring hosted the Thirteenth Annual Seminar to Mexico in the midst of continued economic turmoil, which Herring referred to as the “formidable crisis” in Mexico. He wrote a letter to members of the CCRLA to urge them to attend the Seminar in an attempt to rectify “an exceedingly dangerous situation”\textsuperscript{123} caused in large part by what he simply called the “oil question”. “You will remember that we launched the Seminar in 1926 in order to rally public sentiment behind a more conciliatory course towards Mexico…It is now of first importance that friends of Mexico rally to her aid.”\textsuperscript{124} The public made a considerable impact on the U.S. government’s policies towards Mexico after Herring drew significant attention to the situation. Therefore Herring believed that by generating similar interest in Mexico’s current political environment, he could alleviate tensions between Mexico and the U.S. While not a traditional grassroots approach, Herring sought to inspire and educate influential public figures that would in turn shape public opinion to be friendlier to Latin American nations. Herring believed that through military, economic, and social

\textsuperscript{122} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{123} Hubert Herring, The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, Letter to former members of the Mexican seminar, 21 May 1938, 269 Fourth Avenue, New York, New York, from the Swarthmore Peace Library.  
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid.
cooperation between the U.S. and Latin America, the Western Hemisphere would be safe from Mussolini and Hitler.¹²⁵

Herring elaborated on this theme of peace and non-intervention in his first full-length book, *And so to War*, which he published through Yale University at the end of 1938. Herring’s ability to publish a book through a respected publisher demonstrates his growing influence in the sphere of foreign policy. He wrote the book with a sense of urgency that the U.S. was becoming overly involved in the Allied forces’ war effort and was putting itself at risk of becoming an Axis target. He feared that despite neutrality proclamations set forth by Congress, like the Neutrality Bill of 1937, Roosevelt would continue to take steps that would drag the nation into war with Europe and Asia, a path he found against the interests of the American public. Although the Constitution explicitly grants Congress the right to make war, Herring argued that, “the President’s power to create a situation in which war is practically unavoidable is recognized almost unanimously by competent students.”¹²⁶ Herring proposed a Constitutional amendment that would allow Congress to create a special committee, similar to that of the Foreign Relations committee, that the President would be required to consult before making any significant foreign policy decisions. Although at the present time the path to war seemed easier than remaining neutral, Herring firmly believed that staying out of war was the best opportunity to build up a lasting democracy and create a sane international order. He concluded with a direct plea to the American people to lobby their members of Congress in order to keep the U.S. out of war, a strategy Herring typically employed to attempt to change federal policies. “The one hope is that an energized citizenry, awakened to the

¹²⁶ Hubert Herring, *And So To War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1938), 143.
peril, may demand of Congress a swift staying of the present trend.”

If a democratic leader derives his power from the people, according to Herring, then the people have the power to dictate the course of their nation’s destiny.

*And so to War* also presents Herring’s worldview in regard to the role that Herring believed Christianity should play in the behavior of nations. He quoted Roosevelt in a 1938 meeting with Protestant clergymen as saying, “I did not realize until the last few years how much influence America has in the world. I did not really, deep down in my heart, believe very much in church missions in other lands. Today I do.”

Although Herring did not lead religious missions around Latin America, he did seek to instill Christian values in the American and Latin American participants of his various Seminars. Through this quotation Herring implies that such trips to Latin America were crucial in creating a stable world order. He also believed that the presence of Christianity in a leader’s life imbued him with a sense of morality that would best guide him towards maintaining peaceful relations. Herring pointed to Woodrow Wilson as one such leader who “would preach moderation, righteousness, peace justice- never did Scotch preacher use the words of Holy Scripture with more grace.”

Although Herring criticized the White Man’s Burden, a theory Wilson adhered to, he nonetheless respected Wilson’s dedication to neutrality as inspired by his Christianity. Christianity offers a sense of moral gravity leaders can turn towards to guide them when making difficult decisions regarding war and peace. Similarly, Christianity instructed Herring to advocate for peaceful policies towards Latin America. Without a solid moral compass, he thought the world order could easily descend into chaos.

---

127 Ibid. 172.
128 Ibid. 49.
129 Herring, 66.
Herring’s heightened visibility gained from the publication of his book elevated his arguments advocating for peace and neutrality to the national stage in December 1938 as American leaders reconvened in Lima, Peru for the Eighth International Conference of American States.\textsuperscript{130} In order to gain greater insight on the Conference and more generally relations in the Western Hemisphere, Herring secretly organized an “informal ‘Seminar’” to meet alongside the Conference in Lima.\textsuperscript{131} The 30 selected Seminar participants had the unique experience of attending sessions at the Conference in addition to meeting with prominent spokesmen from the Conference. In regards to such meetings, Herring wrote, “we can be assured of generous cooperation, especially if no publicity is given now or until the conference is over.”\textsuperscript{132} Clearly the diplomats from many American nations held Herring and his committee in high regard as they gladly accepted him and his Seminar participants at the Conference. Besides confidentiality, Herring only asked that his Seminar participants refrain from demonstrating partisan bias and jeopardize the success of the meetings with representatives from a variety of Latin American countries. He strived to make his peace efforts bipartisan to ensure their long-term survival, and injecting partisan beliefs into conversations with foreign diplomats would likely politicize the premise of neutrality.

Herring outlined a number of concerns to address with leaders at the Conference, including the “threat of economic and cultural penetration from Italy and Germany- and Japan”, Mexico’s expropriation of its natural resources from U.S. companies without punishment, and the possibility of a new inter-American organization built on the

\textsuperscript{130} Guerrant, 65.
\textsuperscript{131} Hubert Herring, Letter to members of the Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York, New York, 1938, Swarthmore College Peace Library.
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid.
premise of preserving peace. With such disorder beginning to erupt in Europe and Asia, Herring felt that Lima presented the perfect opportunity to promote American solidarity. “The Lima conference may mark the turning point in inter-American relations. Our group, by thoughtful study and sober interpretation, may well serve to influence a large public in the United States.”133 Due to the proximity of the seminar attendees with the Conference representatives, Herring hoped his participants would gain valuable insight on the current state of affairs along with the desire to advocate for improved relations upon returning to the U.S. The casual seminar proved to be a success and led to the formation of the Institute of the Inter-American Affairs, an organization that allowed Americans to meet with leaders from South American countries.134 Herring headed the organization along with the minister Samuel Guy Inman, who is credited with helping Roosevelt create the Good Neighbor policy.135

At the Lima Conference, the American nations made great strides towards achieving Pan-American unity. The Conference upheld the Declaration of Principles of Inter-American Solidarity and Cooperation and strengthened it by mandating that Ministers of Foreign Affairs from various Latin American nations convene in the instance that a dispute arises between two or more nations. Above all, the Declaration of Lima proclaimed that the American nations would “seek and defend the peace of the continent and work together on the cause of universal discord.”136 Following the Conference in Lima, Herring published an article entitled “Pan-Americanism, can we win it?” for the

133 Ibid.
134 Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, “The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America Inc. announces two conferences on international relations,” Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, 1940, University of Wisconsin-Madison Memorial Library.
136 Declaration of Lima, December 1938.
Council of Social Action’s journal. The first page of the journal featured a large image of a cross with the phrase, “Thy will be done on earth” written above it, reaffirming Herring’s ties to Christianity that inspired his missionary work to bring peace to Latin America. Herring found the Lima Conference to be one such mechanism to create peace in the Western Hemisphere. “The United States hoped to secure at Lima a strong agreement on American solidarity as over against alien interference. For Washington, Lima was a post-Munich conference, and Washington hoped that all Americans would agree together in resisting the spread of the influence of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini.”\textsuperscript{137} Now supporting Pan-American unity was politically expedient as well as morally sound. On September 1, 1939, Hitler invaded Poland, prompting the Foreign Ministers of American nations to organize a meeting as stipulated in the Declaration of Lima.\textsuperscript{138} The delegates convened a few weeks later in Panama and agreed to issue a General Declaration of Neutrality in an attempt to keep the war off their shores and the Declaration of Panama, which created a neutrality zone circumnavigating the Western Hemisphere.

In the summer of 1939, the CCRLA hosted its Fourteenth Annual Seminar in Mexico, with Herring reaffirming the organization’s dedication to improved cultural relations as a hallmark of its success and that of the future of U.S./Latin American relations. “There is a sudden access of interest in inter-American relations in the United States. This is inspired, in part, by economic motives; in part, by desire to fend off the influence of the totalitarian governments of Europe; but the effort to win authentic Pan-Americanism is doomed to failure unless a warm-blooded community of cultural interest

\textsuperscript{137} Hubert Herring, “Pan-Americanism, can we win it?” \textit{The Council for Social Action}, New York, 1939, 26.
\textsuperscript{138} Guerrant, 141.
is developed.” While economic and political cooperation were essential to American solidarity, trust, which is established through strong social ties, was fundamental to the long-term viability of Pan-Americanism. In addition to strengthening cultural relations, Herring recommitted the Seminar program to progressive ideals. Although not a socialist himself, Herring exposed his participants to Marxist ideologies by inviting them to attend an open forum with Soviet revolutionary and personal friend Leon Trotsky at his home in Mexico City. When questioned on the actions of the American government, Trotsky decried American neutrality in the war and believed it displayed American naïveté towards the current world order. Yet he also stated, “a socialist revolution is not only possible but inevitable in every country… This is the dilemma, socialism or imperialism. Democracy does not answer that question. This is the advice I would give the American government.” Trotsky, while much more radical than the CCRLA, shared its anti-imperialist values and provided a unique perspective that Americans were unlikely to be closely familiar with. Therefore while the interview with Trotsky did not signify the CCRLA’s endorsement of his ideas, it demonstrated the organization’s commitment to the lively exchange of liberal ideas, regardless of how radical they may be.

As the 1930s came to a close, war in Europe and Asia seemed more inevitable as the future of the Western Hemisphere remained uncertain. Finally the missionary work Herring had conducted for the last decade gained significant traction among the American public and government. American solidarity was now seen as a necessity rather than simply a nicety, propelling Herring and his colleagues into a position of prominence.

139 Hubert Herring, “The Fourteenth Seminar in Mexico: July 7-27,” The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, 1939, 4, Special Collections at Honnold Mudd Library.
140 Leon Trotsky, “Interview with Leon Trotsky, Mexico City 1939,” The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, 1939, Special Collections at Honnold Mudd Library.
to educate the American public on the virtues of Latin America and non-interventionism. Ultimately the relations and policies Herring helped establish significantly aided the American cause as the U.S. entered the war in 1942 without facing significant opposition from other American nations.
Chapter III: The Rise and Fall of the Good Neighbor policy

As the Nazi threat grew more imminent in the spring of 1940, some American leaders, including Argentine foreign minister José María Cantilo, advocated that the Declaration of Panama, which called for Pan-American neutrality, be scrapped to allow American nations to aid the Allied forces against the Axis Powers. Some sources claimed that Roosevelt and Hull supported Cantilo’s endeavor, but Hull vehemently denied the rumor, likely because Roosevelt was up for reelection in 1940. Yet intelligence officials believed that some sort of Nazi presence existed in Uruguay, Brazil, and Argentina beginning in the summer of 1940. While Herring lamented what he perceived as Roosevelt’s attempts to undermine U.S. neutrality by publicly endorsing the Allied Forces, Herring believed the war presented a unique opportunity for Pan-American unity. “The Americas can make common cause against the common danger of a world gone mad,” Herring told a group of students in 1940 at Hunter College’s Pan-American day. Thus as the Nazis continued expanding West into Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands in the early 1940s and the hope for American neutrality diminished, Herring actively sought to create unity among the American nations, economically, socially, and militarily, in their quest to fight off a common enemy. Once American neutrality fell out of the realm of possibility, Herring found greater success by exclusively focusing his efforts on strengthening Pan-Americanism.

141 Guerrant, 148.
142 Ibid., 149.
145 Guerrant, 148.
The imminent threat of attack proved to be an enormously powerful catalyst for Pan-American unity. “Pan-Americanism is a venture in education…So we head South. Clumsy or skillful, despite our own lapses and current Latin-American apostasies, we cling to the notion that the Western Hemisphere is marked for democratic practice.”  

Herring addressed potential seminar attendees in the CCRLA’s announcement for its programs in the summer of 1940 including the Fifteenth Seminar in Mexico and the Second Institute on Inter-American Affairs in Brazil and Argentina. Herring’s allusion to “democratic practice” is a clear reference to the growing Nazi threat, as evidenced by the discovery of a Nazi plot to overthrow the Uruguayan government in June 1940 after the arrest of two Nazi soldiers in Montevideo. No longer could the American nations recuse themselves from the war in Europe, they had to actively ward off intruders attempting to dismantle their governments from within. This newly solidified partnership between the American nations is best illustrated in this Diego Rivera sketch (Figure 1) Herring included in the pamphlet. The handshake between North America and Latin America illustrates that the American nations are engaging in a mutually beneficial relationship rooted in a newfound sense of trust.

Figure 1

146 Hubert Herring, “Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, Inc. Announces two conferences on international relations: Summer of 1940,” The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, 1940.
147 Guerrant 150.
148 Diego Rivera, Drawing in “Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, Inc. Announces two conferences on international relations: Summer of 1940,” The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America: New York, 1940.
1940 proved to be a watershed year in Inter-American relations, testing the strength of Herring’s strategies and the success of the Good Neighbor policy. Herring’s Fifteenth Seminar in Mexico coincided with the nation’s presidential election, which was held on July 7, 1940. In 1942, Herring reflected on the 1940 presidential election as a test on the “reality” of the Good Neighbor policy. “Many private interests sought to involve the United States in the contest between the rival candidates, Manuel Avila Camacho and Andreu Almazán.” Herring wrote, “Powerful groups tried to enlist our sympathy for Almazán as promising a more conservative course with land and oil. Washington wisely stood aside, said nothing, did nothing. The election was a free one, so far as the United States pressure was concerned, and Avila Camacho won.”

According to Herring, Avila Camacho’s victory signaled to the Mexican people that the U.S. was genuine in its efforts to mitigate its interference in Latin American governments. In a December 1940 letter to members of the CCRLA, Herring wrote, “there were 67 of us, we had the usual schedule of lectures and tripping around, plus the excitement of the elections, which were lively.”

The Second Institute on Inter-American Affairs in South America strategically took place in Brazil and Argentina, two powerful countries with sizeable German populations. The Institute’s participants traveled to Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires to meet with “leaders in economic, educational, and public life.”

Unlike the First Institute, this Institute did not overlap with the Second Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers, which took place in Havana, Cuba in July 1940. Shortly before the start of the

---


150 Hubert Herring to the Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York, December 15, 1940, Swarthmore College Peace Library.

151 Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, pamphlet.
conference, the U.S. Congress passed a resolution stating that the U.S. would not recognize the transfer of American territory from one non-American state to another. Representatives from the Latin American nations appreciated the resolution, which essentially established the U.S. as the Western Hemisphere’s protector from Nazi Germany. Following the decision, the Argentine paper *La Nación* wrote, “Washington’s action in warning Germany and Italy it will not permit the transfer of European possessions on the American continents deserves the firm support of all the nations of this continent.” The conference also passed the Act of Havana, which stated in the case of a threat to a non-American territory, an emergency commission with representatives from 2/3 of the nations would be arranged. If the threat could not wait, it granted any American state to act in its own self-defense. The Conference succeeded in furthering the solidarity between the American nations, specifically in the possibility of a foreign attack.

Following the Havana Conference, Roosevelt instituted more concrete measures with the intent of halting Nazi influence in the Western Hemisphere, particularly economically and culturally. In August 1940 Roosevelt issued an executive order to create the Office for Co-Ordination of Commercial and Cultural Relations between the American Republics (later renamed the Office of Inter American Affairs, or OIAA) and placed oil magnate Nelson Rockefeller at its helm. Roosevelt stated that the purpose of the newly formed organization was “to insure proper co-ordination of, with economy and efficiency, the activities of the Government with respect to Hemisphere defense, with

---

152 Guerrant, 151.
154 Guerrant, 152.
155 Ibid. 164.
particular reference to the commercial and cultural aspects of the problem.”

Rockefeller first sought to alleviate the surpluses of raw materials in Latin America and prevent the Nazis from acquiring such products by facilitating the purchase of excess goods by U.S. corporations and the U.S. government. The U.S. also provided Latin American corporations and governments with loans to allow them to continue production despite the loss of German markets.

On the cultural front, Rockefeller sent prominent Americans like famous actors and movie producers (including the author’s great-great grandfather Sol M. Wurtzel of Fox Studios) to visit Latin American nations as ambassadors of good will and subsequently produce popular films promoting American solidarity. Perhaps most well known of these good-will films is Walt Disney’s *Saludos Amigos*, a light-hearted, humorous film featuring Disney cartoon characters exploring Latin American nations like Perú and Brazil. This tactic of using media to promote cultural exchange is strikingly similar to the mission of the CCRLA, and perhaps Herring’s pioneering vision of sending well-educated and talented Americans to visit Latin America and improve cultural relations inspired Roosevelt and Rockefeller to follow suit. Herring wildly approved of this tactic, writing, “Mr. Rockefeller can use our tax money to good effect by persuading the masters of Hollywood to rush them South on the first plane…” He firmly believed that successful U.S./Latin American relations could not be possible without strong cultural relations.

156 Ibid. 164.
157 Ibid., 165.
159 Herring, *Good Neighbors*, 338.
In the spring of 1941, Herring published his most extensive and comprehensive book on Latin America to date, *Good Neighbors: Argentina, Brazil, Chile and seventeen other countries*. Herring wrote the book for an American audience in an attempt to better educate select U.S. citizens on the culture and politics of Latin American nations and inspire them to support the Pan-American cause. “It is high time the people of the United States discover the other Americans. Our world closes in upon us. American solidarity, once regarded as a pleasant elective, has become an imperious necessity,” Herring wrote in the prologue. In the following chapters he provided an in-depth analysis of the Nazi threat in Argentina, Brazil and Chile to demonstrate the imminent danger facing all American nations if one were to topple to the Axis powers. Particularly in Brazil, Herring feared the possibility of a Nazi coup that could overthrow the Brazilian government if successful.

Finally Herring outlined the ways in which the U.S. can be a “Good Neighbor” to the Latin American nations in a nod to the ever-flourishing doctrine, which Herring believed reached its peak under Roosevelt. Since 1933, “the United States was formally committed to the doctrine of the Good Neighbor, a policy of live and let live; a two-way policy recognizing that profit must be reciprocal; a policy which guaranteed the full sovereignty of each separate nation.” Despite the necessity of the Good Neighbor policy in the face of the potential outbreak of war, Herring feared its potential collapse in the U.S. if leaders no longer found it politically sound to supply financial resources to Latin American nations. He also expressed concern that racist Americans inspired by

---

160 Ibid., v.
161 “Pro Nazism is seen in Brazil and Bolivia: Hubert Herring, however, says Latin America backs president,” *New York Times*, Feb 12, 1941, 3.
162 Herring, 329.
Rudyard Kipling’s white man’s burden would rather crusade Latin American nations than see them as equal entities fighting the same enemy. Yet Herring hoped that logic and compassion would prevail for the sake of the independence of the Western Hemisphere.

Scholars such as Duncan Aikman of The New Republic praised Herring’s book in numerous publications, writing that it is “a pretty good instruction manual for practical diplomacy.”163 Another review, for The New York Times, stated, “‘Good Neighbors’ is a splendid work, a wholesome contribution, by a capable student and craftsman, to the study of a subject about which so many millions of amateurish words are being spilled at the present.”164 Ralph Thompson, a book reviewer for The New York Times, included Herring’s book in his list for the best books of 1941.165 William Lytle Schurz praised Herring as an “author [who] knows Latin America better than any of the others.”166 Schurz was a respected authority on Latin America167 who served in the Division of Cultural Relations in the State Department,168 demonstrating that government officials with real influence on U.S. policy trusted Herring’s knowledge and proposals. By 1944, Herring’s book had sold over 7,000,000 copies.169 The wide spread acclaim for his book demonstrates its accessibility to an audience who may not yet have been familiarized with the intricacies of Latin American cultures. Its success in terms of sales further cemented Herring’s presence as an expert on Latin American studies in the public and political sphere.

Less than a year after the publication of *Good Neighbors*, the devastating attack on Pearl Harbor by Japanese planes on December 7, 1941 tested the success of American solidarity efforts. In response to the attack, President Roosevelt called a meeting of the American ministers on December 9.\(^{170}\) Accordingly the Third Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs took place in Rio de Janeiro from January 15-28, 1942. At the meeting, Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles warned his fellow American ministers that “the security of the three hundred millions of peoples who inhabit the Western Hemisphere and the independence of each of the countries here represented will be determined by whether the American nations stand together in this hour of peril, or whether they stand apart from one another.”\(^ {171}\) Welles’s words seemed to resonate with the leaders of the Latin American nations as Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and El Salvador all declared war on the Axis powers. Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela severed ties with the aggressor nations and all other American nations reaffirmed their belief in Pan-American solidarity. Due to Argentina and Chile’s reluctance to officially condemn the Axis powers, the Conference was not able to produce a declaration, only a recommendation that Latin American nations sever ties with the Axis powers. Although this statement did not have any binding authority, it did buttress American solidarity.\(^ {172}\)

As the U.S. entered the war with the Allied forces in 1942, Pan-American solidarity efforts became increasingly more important. The U.S. enhanced its lend-lease program with Latin American nations to strengthen their governments, ultimately

\(^{170}\) Guerrant, 171.
\(^{171}\) Ibid., 173.
\(^{172}\) Ibid., 174.
bolstering the war effort.\textsuperscript{173} The U.S. also significantly ramped up its imports of Latin American goods, including sugar from Cuba, oil from Venezuela and copper from Chile.\textsuperscript{174} The Export-Import Bank of the United States financed numerous loans to South American nations like Bolivia, whose tin supply was indispensable to the U.S.\textsuperscript{175} Accordingly, Herring also increased his activity from the cultural front of the war, specifically by maintaining a “close relationship” as a consultant with Nelson Rockefeller’s Office of the Coordinator of Inter American Affairs and the State Department’s Cultural Relations division, which was headed by Herring’s colleague Charles Thomson.\textsuperscript{176}

In May 1942, Rockefeller founded a new magazine, the \textit{Inter-American Monthly}, for which Herring wrote book reviews.\textsuperscript{177} Later that year, Herring traveled to Argentina and other Latin American nations on behalf of the organization.\textsuperscript{178} Herring also frequently corresponded with U.S. Vice President Henry Wallace, who served on the General Advisory Committee of the Division of Cultural Affairs of the State Department and took a strong interest in improving cultural relations between the U.S. and Latin America.\textsuperscript{179} While Herring once was an outsider advocating for the implementation of his policies, he now had gained a position of influence both culturally and politically. Herring’s heightened visibility demonstrates the incorporation of his non-interventionist ideas into the mainstream of American public opinion and political thought as well as his rising status as an expert on Latin American civilization.

\textsuperscript{173} Ibid., 190.
\textsuperscript{174} Ibid., 196.
\textsuperscript{175} Ibid., 201
\textsuperscript{176} Hubert Herring, \textit{America and the Americas} ( Claremont: Claremont Colleges Press, 1944).
\textsuperscript{177} “New magazine is published”, \textit{New York Times (1923-Current file)}, May 08, 1942.
\textsuperscript{178} Charles B. Driscoll, “New York day by day,” \textit{Battle Creek Enquirer}, September 21, 1942, 4.
\textsuperscript{179} \textit{Papers of Henry A. Wallace}, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, 1941-1945.
While Roosevelt’s Latin American policies remained fairly popular among members of both parties for the majority of his time in office, by 1943 some Republicans began to oppose the Good Neighbor policy for what they considered to be outlandish expenditures being spent in Latin America rather than in Europe where American troops were fighting for their lives. Herring feared that such detractors jeopardized the future of the policy by threatening the funding of the State Department’s programs and by sending a false message to the Latin American nations that the U.S. no longer stood by them during the war. Senator Hugh Butler of Nebraska was the most outspoken and prominent of these Republicans and actively sought to discredit Roosevelt’s efforts of good will in Latin America by presenting an extensive report entitled “Expenditures and Commitments by the United States Government in or for Latin America”\textsuperscript{180} to the Senate’s Special Committee Investigating the National Defense Program in November 1943. Senator Butler traveled to all 20 Latin American nations to gather evidence in support of his belief that the Good Neighbor policy was failing.

Throughout the nearly 100-page report, Butler lamented that the Good Neighbor policy under Roosevelt was essentially a reproduction of the New Deal fashioned for Latin America. “One cannot miss the fact, in the first place, that our policy toward Latin America, which began as good-neighbor-ism, has, in these days of the New Deal reign, ceased to be good neighborism. It has become “rich-uncle-ism…We are not winning the friendly collaboration of the peoples of Latin America. We are trying to buy it.”\textsuperscript{181} Butler argued that the current implementation of the Good Neighbor policy was a prime example of government spending gone awry, and that the interest of the Latin American

\textsuperscript{180} U.S. Congress. Senate. 1943. \textit{Expenditures and Commitments by the United States Government in or for Latin America}. 78\textsuperscript{th} Congress, 1\textsuperscript{st} Session, S. Doc. 132.

\textsuperscript{181} Ibid., ix.
people would be better served by U.S. businessmen seeking to expand their markets rather than the Government. Thus Butler’s report serves as an extension of the Conservative movement’s aversion to prolonged government spending, regardless of the potential wartime benefits such spending could incur. To justify his calls to significantly cut government spending in Latin America, Butler wrote, “What they [Latin Americans] want from us is not to be led by the hand, as we would lead a child. …What they want from us is our cooperation, not in doing things our way, but in doing things their way.” Butler regarded American expenditures in Latin America as culturally imperialist and “paternalistic”, which he believed should be avoided to create true and honest cooperation between Latin America and the U.S.

According to Butler, all of this spending, that he calculated to be around $6 billion since 1940, unfairly aided Latin Americans at the expense of U.S. taxpayers. “The United States, by means of gifts, grants, loans subsidies, and premium prices paid and other forms of aid…seems to be carrying on its tax burdened back, the economy of all 20 Latin American countries.” Butler questioned the U.S. Government’s loyalty to its own citizens by arguing that millions are spent on sanitation and health care in Latin America while “there are millions of citizens in our own country in the low-income group who need health programs as badly as the South Americans.” According to Butler, the Government deceived the American taxpayers into believing that their taxes were being spent on the war effort when in reality a substantial portion was sent as aid to Latin America. Butler disparaged the Government for believing that it could solve any problem by spending more and more money, which he found to be simply wishful thinking.

182 Ibid., x.
183 Ibid., 30.
184 Ibid., 36.
Butler concluded his report by illustrating the significant shortfalls of the current Good Neighbor policy, namely that in his opinion it effectively propped up dictatorships in Latin America. “The effect of our policy of lend-leasing military weapons, therefore, whether we like it or not, must be to keep in power the governments that are already in power, be they good or bad…It would be a sad thing if hemispheric solidarity should be turned into hemispheric chaos through our gift of arms.”\textsuperscript{185} Therefore, in Butler’s eyes, not only was Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor policy an enormous financial drain on the U.S. Treasury, it also jeopardized the stability of many Latin American nations. Butler encouraged his fellow Senators to dismantle the costly programs in Latin America and divert the funds back to the American healthcare system and the European war effort.

Herring found Butler’s report to be particularly dangerous to the future of the Good Neighbor policy. In order for the policy to succeed in the long run, Herring believed that it needed bipartisan support. Thus Herring fiercely defended the policy and sought to undermine dissenters like Butler. Herring wrote the only published article in response to Butler’s report, “Senator Butler and Latin America”,\textsuperscript{186} which appeared in the popular progressive magazine \textit{The New Republic} in December 1943. In the article, Herring questioned what a newly elected Senator from the sparsely populated state of Nebraska could possibly know about Latin American politics and culture. He pointed out that Butler blatantly presented false data as to how much money the U.S. government spent in Latin America. Herring cited Congressional records, which clearly stated that only $129 million has been appropriated to Nelson Rockefeller’s Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs in response to Butler’s claim that Rockefeller received $400 million. In

\textsuperscript{185} Ibid., 81.
total Herring reported that the U.S. government spent a little over $2.2 billion, far lower than Butler’s estimate of $6 billion. Herring used Butler’s significant calculating errors to paint him as untrustworthy and therefore plain wrong about the success of the Good Neighbor policy.

While Butler argued that many of the U.S. loans to Latin America were not repaid, Herring stated that this was not the case. He stressed that these loans were not frivolous attempts to create good will, but necessary measures to solidify Latin American military support for the U.S. “We lent money which stabilized their economy [Latin American nations] and in turn they played ball with us. They broke with the Axis, they declared war, they cooperated in censorship, they seized dangerous aliens, they applied curbs on Axis trade, they provided us with strategic materials.” He also belittled the Senator for not understanding the importance of improving cultural relations between the nations in order to better “link Americans under all flags,” efforts which Herring believed directly allowed Latin Americans’ “distrust yield to increased trust.”

Overall, Herring’s greatest fear was that Butler’s report would falsely portray American sentiments towards the viability of the Good Neighbor policy to the Latin Americans once the war came to an end. Herring justified the resources spent in Latin America as an investment for future economic, cultural, and political cooperation with the twenty nations. Yet most importantly, he argued the U.S. had finally adopted a practice of recognizing and honoring the legitimacy of each nation to act autonomously without the fear of intervention. “We have learned at last that the tranquility and

---

187 Ibid., 872.
188 Ibid., 873.
189 Ibid., 874.
190 Ibid.
solidarity of the Western world can be built only on the foundations of respect for the sovereignty of each nation. That is the essence of the policy of the Good Neighbor.”  

Herring worried that Butler would succeed in making the Good Neighbor policy a partisan issue in post-war America rather than a lasting State Department policy, thus jeopardizing all of the progress recently made towards improved U.S./Latin American relations. “Many a Latin American will conclude that he speaks officially for the Republican Party and that the Good Neighbor is dead. The Senator undoubtedly thought to serve his country and his party. He has done harm to both.”  

Herring’s concluding sentence cemented the idea that the Good Neighbor policy was inherently bipartisan and should have been firmly established as a flagship of U.S. foreign policy.

Despite these political distractions, Herring continued to work with the American people with the hope of coalescing public opinion in support of the Good Neighbor policy. While he had interacted with university students before during some of his seminars in Mexico, Herring began to further his reach in academia, likely due to the enormous success of his book *Good Neighbors*. In the early summer of 1943, Herring, recognized as “an authority on Latin American affairs”, hosted a five-day seminar on “American Hemispheric Solidarity” at the Claremont Colleges in conjunction with the Coordinator of Inter American Affair’s Division of Inter American Activities. Herring selected “Argentina” as the theme of the seminar due to the country’s reluctance to join other Latin American nations in supporting the Allied forces, as demonstrated by its

---

191 Ibid.  
192 Ibid.  
absence from numerous Pan-American conferences in 1942 and 1943. In addition to educating patrons on the state of U.S./Argentine relations, the Conference also succeeded in passing numerous resolutions to support the integration of Spanish language education into the curriculum of local elementary students. In December 1943, Pomona College hired Herring to serve as its professor of Latin American Civilization.

As a professor, Herring spoke often on Argentina and the country’s reluctance to side with the Allied Forces and its penchant to incite anti-U.S. sentiments around Latin America, factors that caused Herring to identify Argentina as the biggest threat to Pan-Americanism. When Argentine President Pedro Ramírez decided to sever ties with the Axis powers in January 1944, a truly united Western Hemisphere was quickly becoming a reality. However, a powerful, populist-inspired military clique led by Juan D. Perón lamented this decision and thus attempted to spread anti-U.S. sentiments to other nations, sparking a minor revolt in Bolivia, Herring told an audience at a lecture hosted by the Claremont Colleges. Thus in April 1944, Americans of all nations celebrated Pan-American day with a renewed vigor, particularly in Los Angeles where the mayor renamed a portion of the lawn in front of City Hall “Plaza Simon Bolívar” to a cheering crowd. The Angelenos’ adoption of Bolívar as a heroic figure demonstrated the success of cross-cultural efforts to inspire mutual understanding, as the L.A. mayor honored Bolívar as the inspiration for Pan-Americanism and recognizes him as a George

---

195 Guerrant, 208.
197 “Faculty Post goes to Hubert Herring”, Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File), Dec 02, 1943.
198 “Bolivia revolt blamed on Argentine Fascists,” Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File), January 10, 1944, 10.
199 Guerrant, 183.
200 “Bolivia revolt blamed on Argentine Fascists,” Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File), January 10, 1944, 10.
201 “Colorful ceremonies mark Los Angeles' Pan-American day observance”, Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File), April 15, 1944.
Washington-like figure. Representatives from Chile and Venezuela attended and reaffirmed their support for the U.S. and the Allied powers in their war effort. Nelson Rockefeller and Herring both spoke at the event, marking the two as leaders and colleagues in the field of cultural relations with Latin America and colleagues.

Yet in spite of the tremendous progress made in Pan-American relations, Herring remained anxious of the future viability of the Good Neighbor policy in a post-war world. Herring named and event for Institute for Inter-American affairs event at a Unitarian Church “Where do we go from here?” forcing his participants to imagine how the U.S. government could maintain the successes of the Good Neighbor policy after the smoke of war cleared. Herring invited Nobel Peace Prize winner and international relations expert Sir Norman Angell to help devise the best options to prolong good relations. Herring stressed “realism, imagination, and respect” as the foundation of the Good Neighbor policy and the antidote to apathy some North Americans may feel towards Latin Americans at the end of the war. For nearly two decades Herring dedicated his career to improving inter-American relations and witnessed incredible developments as the Americans of North and South came to appreciate one another and worked together against a common enemy. The prospect of reverting back to the policies of pre-1926 rightly frightened Herring and the many other peace progressives.

Using his newfound platform as a professor at Pomona College, Herring published a book that heavily touched on anxieties about the future of the Good Neighbor policy entitled America and the Americas: An appraisal and a forecast in 1944. Given the

202 Ibid.
203 “Inter-American Affairs to be aired”, Los Angeles Times (1923-Current file), Mar 16, 1944, pg. 6.
204 “Long-range hemispheric unity sighted”, Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File), Jan 26, 1944.
205 Herring, America and the Americas.
circumstances, Latin American leaders had come to accept that their security was dependent on the strength of the U.S., causing great distress over the uncertainty of future relations and subsequently the safety of their nations. Yet while the Latin Americans benefitted from a friendlier U.S., Herring acknowledged that North Americans stood to gain little from strong ties with Latin America after the war. “We may therefore conclude with assurance that the only hope for the Good Neighbor policy lies in persuading the American electorate that such policy pays in terms of the welfare of the United States.”\footnote{Ibid., 56.}

The renewed vigor for the Good Neighbor policy was a “miracle” to have arisen from the ashes of war that should not be lost in times of peace. Herring forcefully declared that mutual respect and understanding should continue to guide American foreign policy with Latin America, and not a desire to carry out the “White Man’s burden” by “uplifting, civilizing, and Christianizing” the Latin Americans.\footnote{Ibid., 67.} Yet to succeed in this mission, the Good Neighbor policy must remain a goal of both political parties and not be reduced to an object of partisan play.

While the viability of the Good Neighbor policy remained uncertain domestically, it also began to falter abroad. Even with the Allied Forces’ D-Day victory in the summer of 1944 and a more hopeful prospect of an Allied Forces victory, Argentina refused to join the other Latin American nations in declaring war against the Axis powers. Herring frequently vocalized his fear of the rising fascist regime of Juan D. Perón, a democratically elected military general with grand territorial ambitions. In January 1945, Herring addressed a group of students at the Claremont Colleges and called Argentina
“the most serious impediment to the solidarity of the Western Hemisphere.”

He warned his students of the mass presence of German spies on Argentine soil, but stated that despite Perón’s popularity and German sympathies, millions of Argentines still desired to live in a democratic society. In March 1945, a mere few months before Germany surrendered, Argentina declared war against the Axis powers. Yet this declaration, according to Herring, did not symbolize Argentina’s allegiance to the Allied Forces, as Perón’s fascist tendencies continued to jeopardize the stability of Argentina and surrounding nations on the cusp of the war’s end.

In September 1945, with the surrender of Japan, World War II finally ended. The Good Neighbor policy, once vibrant under Roosevelt as a necessary safeguard from war in the Western Hemisphere, fell into serious decline under the Truman administration. Herring stayed at his post at Pomona College and continued to advocate for a renewal of the Good Neighbor policy to little avail. Without an imminent threat of war, many Americans simply lost interest in the policy. Yet as a professor of Latin American history and civilization, Herring sought to keep students interested by taking a “radical” approach to the subject. In his obituary, *The Chicago Daily News* wrote, “He came to the subject from the point of view of its people, rather than its important dates and events.”

Herring firmly believed that his students, if provided with a sound education, would leave the gates of Pomona College and create a more peaceful world order in a chaotic and uncertain post-war world. In a 1955 address entitled “Pomona College and World Affairs”, Herring stated, “In short, we are to decide whether our children’s children- what

---

209 Guerrant, 183.
may be left of them— are to hide in caves, and to start all over again in the building of the world. Every subject, every course, every instructor in Pomona College is preparing students to understand and master their world.”

Herring’s long career traversed many arenas, but in all of his pursuits he held fast to the Christian values that commanded him to pursue peace at home and abroad.

---

212 Hubert Herring, “Pomona College and World Affairs,” 1955, from the Pomona College Archive.
Conclusion

When I first embarked on this project, I wanted to tell the story of a person I felt history had left behind. Early on in my research on the Good Neighbor policy, I came across America and the Americas: An appraisal and a forecast in Honnold Mudd’s Special Collection and was instantly intrigued by the character of Hubert Herring. He was so clearly invested in the stability and independence of Latin American nations and feared for their future given the transition of world order from war to peace in 1944. He dedicated his life to Latin American/U.S. relations and helped bring about major policy changes resulting in a friendlier U.S., yet he knew that all of this progress was on the cusp of erasure. Ultimately Herring was largely overlooked in the annals of history, even in the historical record of the Claremont Colleges. He deserved to be remembered and historicized, a desire that ultimately inspired me to write this thesis.

However, as I began my research, I realized that Herring initially became interested in contemporary Latin American politics because of his activity in the Congregationalist Church. Typically when we think of religion in American politics, we conjure images of fanatical, evangelical Christians fighting against rights for the LGBT community or picketing outside abortion clinics and supporting legislation to defund Planned Parenthood. We liberals typically associate religion, especially Christianity, in politics as an evil that must be stopped. So yes, initially I was surprised to see Herring parlay his religious beliefs into his political advocacy work promoting peace and non-intervention. But it also makes sense, as a minister would have a much stronger influence than an average person. Religious figures are more trusted than those in other professions and are perceived as acting in the public interest. Herring’s profession as a minister likely helped
him rally more support for his cause in the public sphere and within the State Department.

Herring’s story is not only an interesting glimpse into the life of a member of our Claremont community, but also as a model for how religion can be used for a force of good in American politics. While a quick Google search of Christian advocacy organizations produces a list mostly comprised of organizations dedicated to “traditional family values”, a few use their political leverage to advocate for economic, environmental, and racial justice. For example, the National Council of Churches’ Joint Action and Advocacy for Justice and Peace is centered on the idea that “at the core of Christian faith is a commitment to work on behalf of and with those marginalized by our society; the sick, poor, prisoners, strangers, and powerless people (Matthew 25:44)”.

Similarly to Herring’s activism, the Joint Action council shows that religion and progressivism can successfully work together in the pursuit of justice.

Personally, I am Jewish and did not know a great deal about Christianity, specifically Christian activism at the federal level, before this project. In the summer of 2015 I was an intern at the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism in Washington D.C. The RAC was created in the 1960s to voice Jewish support for the civil rights movement and to this day continues to advocate for progressive policies like reproductive justice, racial justice, and expanded healthcare access. From my experience with the RAC I was familiar with the idea of religion as a positive influence in the political sphere, and now I understand how Christianity also falls under this umbrella.

With a recent resurgence of intolerance towards Muslim Americans, Jews and Christians have an ethical responsibility and the political ability to oppose the Trump administration’s so-called “Muslim ban” and other efforts to demonize and exclude Muslims from American society. Much like how Herring sought to end American intervention in Latin America by portraying the Latin American people as worthy of respect and autonomy, Jews and Christians must advocate on behalf of their Muslim brothers and sisters fleeing war and instability in their home countries. The RAC urges its supporters to demand Trump to rescind his recent executive order banning immigration from certain predominantly Muslim countries, justifying its stance with Jewish religious texts. “Our tradition instructs that ‘the stranger who sojourns with you shall be as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself for you were strangers in the land of Egypt’ (Leviticus 19:33).”214 In line with this idea from the Old Testament of welcoming the stranger, many Christian leaders signed a letter denouncing Trump’s immigrant ban, writing, “This nation has an urgent moral responsibility to receive refugees and asylum seekers who are in dire need of safety.”215

Therefore while white, religious Christians overwhelmingly voted in favor of Trump,216 they will likely play an outsized role in resisting some of Trump’s more abhorrent and discriminatory policies. Herring’s legacy teaches us that religion can be a positive force in the American political landscape, as religious figures have an outsized role in the shaping of public opinion and influencing politicians. Religious values provide

---

moral justification for welcoming refugees and ending war, policies that ultimately have a positive net impact on global humanity.
Bibliography

Archives:

“Miscellaneous letters and announcements” folder. Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America box. Swarthmore College Peace Collection, Swarthmore College.

“Herring, Hubert” folder. Pomona College Archives, Pomona College.


Monographs:


Herring, Hubert. *Good Neighbors: Argentina, Brazil, Chile and seventeen other countries*. Yale University Press: New Haven, 1941.


Herring, Hubert. “Pan-Americanism, can we win it?” *Social Action* vol V, No. 6, 1939.


