

Vaughn Riding Alliance Trail

Goodwill Envoy at Halfway Point in U.S. Effort to Reassure Latins

By John M. Goshko
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SANTIAGO, Chile, Aug. 28
Jack Hood Vaughn, President Johnson's soft-spoken goodwill ambassador, today reached the halfway point of a seven-nation tour designed to reassure Latin America that the United States has not lost interest in the ideals of the Alliance for Progress.

Two key conclusions on his trip already can be drawn.

One is that the Latin Americans are suffering from a vague sense of estrangement and lack of rapport with the Johnson Administration. The other is that Washington apparently has become aware of this malaise and has decided on a round of fence mending in an effort to overcome it.

In this, Vaughn, who is both Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs and U.S. coordinator of the Alliance, has emerged as the key figure. This is his maiden voyage into the area of high-level diplomacy in Latin America, and his words and deeds so far have come as a distinct surprise to observers here.

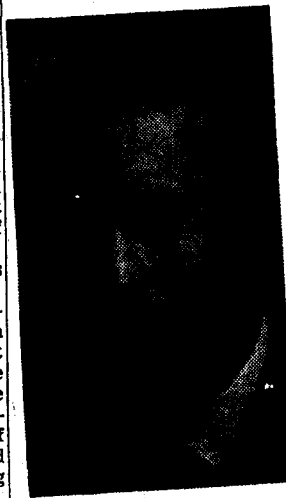
Tone Set by Mann

Until now, Vaughn has been overshadowed by his predecessor, Thomas C. Mann, President Johnson's original choice as "the one clear voice" of U.S. Latin American policy. Mann, who has now moved up to Under Secretary of State, largely set the tone of the Administration's image in this part of the world.

And whether it represents a fair evaluation of his policies or not, the fact remains that Mann's image is not an endearing one. To the Latins, U.S. policy over the past two years has shown a distinct tinge of the quid pro quo and of "America firstism."

In short, most Latin officials encountered on this tour privately subscribe to the often expressed criticism that the Alliance has lost the aura of zeal associated with President Kennedy and has become just another foreign aid program.

And it is precisely on this point that Vaughn has proved



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JACK HOOD VAUGHN
... surprise to Latins

to be such a surprise. His every word—seems calculated to remind the Latins that Washington has not forgotten the first principles set by President Kennedy and still regards the Alliance as an instrument for transforming the entire and economical fabric of Latin America.

Essentially, his theme has been this: The Alliance is far from dead, President Johnson is determined to see it become a Latin equivalent of the Great Society and its future emphasis accordingly must be on the needs of the "human sector"—on providing the impoverished *campesino* and the marginal Indian with the education, training and health care that will integrate him into the mainstream of modern life.

It is a message that Vaughn has hammered at repeatedly as his grueling 14-hour-a-day schedule has taken him through an endless chain of rural cornfields and urban housing projects in Mexico, El Salvador, Panama, Ecuador and now Chile. Letter perfect

and witty in Spanish, he has approached the tour with the zeal of a barnstorming political candidate, addressing the *campesinos* and slum dwellers with a keen sensitivity to their mores and problems.

In Panama, he told an assemblage of the country's leading businessmen that no amount of U.S. aid can help the Alliance unless Latin America's moneyed classes worry less about dodging taxes and more about investing in the jobs, goods and services that are the staples of the better life.

And on an airstrip in the Ecuadorean Andes town of Cuenca, he reminded an impromptu gathering of Peace Corps volunteers that "the Alliance is not just stabilizing currencies. It is people, and it will stand or fall in terms of how it is able to aid people in achieving dignity and a sense of joy and pride in life."

Pleasant Surprise

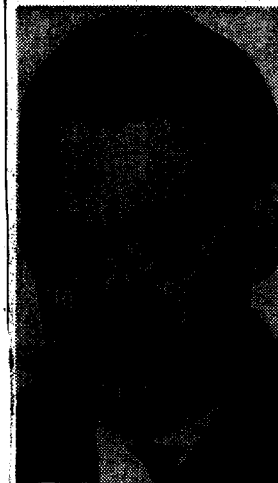
All this has come as a pleasant surprise to the Latins who for the most part have responded to Vaughn's overtures with unusual warmth. No one is pretending, however, that his unexpected *abrazo* will by itself overcome the Latin feeling that they have a secondary place in Washington's affections these past two years.

The general impression is that the Latins, while pleased, are also cautious and reserving final judgment until they see what comes after the speeches and handshakes. And while obviously convinced of Vaughn's personal sincerity, there is uncertainty about how close he stands to the President and is able to

make his ideas heard back in Washington.

This wait-and-see attitude was perhaps best summed up this morning by Santiago's leading newspaper, *El Mercurio*. It gave the Vaughn visit detailed coverage to be sure.

But the story was on an inside page. On the front page, there was an even more extensive story announcing that Sen. Robert Kennedy (D-N.Y.), the brother of the Alliance's "founder," is planning to visit South America in November.



Associated Press

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... Castro envoy quits