

Country	Year	Target	U.S. Action	Outcome
Iran	1953	Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh	CIA-backed coup (Operation Ajax), funded by US and UK to prevent nationalisation of oil industry	Overthrow of democratic leader; restoration of Shah's authoritarian rule; CIA officially acknowledged coup as 'undemocratic' in 2023. ³
Guatemala	1954	President Jacobo Árbenz	CIA-sponsored coup (Operation PBSUCCESS) to protect United Fruit Company interests and counter perceived communist influence	End of Guatemalan Revolution; military dictatorship; sparked a brutal 36-year civil war that killed over 200,000 people , 83% of them Mayan civilians. ⁴
Congo	1961	Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba	CIA authorised assassination to prevent Soviet alignment during Cold War; first US order to kill a foreign leader	Assassination of democratic leader; decades of instability . ⁵
South Vietnam	1963	President Ngo Dinh Diem	Kennedy administration backed coup by South Vietnamese generals due to Diem's unpopularity and ineffective governance during Vietnam War	Assassination of president and his brother; escalation of Vietnam War . ⁶
Brazil	1964	President João Goulart	US-backed military coup to prevent leftist reforms; Operation Brother Sam prepared military support	Brutal military dictatorship lasting until the 1980s. ⁷
Dominican Republic	1965	Supporters of Juan Bosch (democratically elected president overthrown in 1963)	Direct US military invasion—22,000 troops deployed to prevent 'second Cuba' and block Bosch's return to power	US occupation until September 1966; President Johnson later regretted intervention. ⁸

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Indonesia	1965-66	President Sukarno; Indonesian Communist Party (PKI)	Support for Suharto's coup to eliminate communist influence; US provided lists of communists to be killed	Mass killings of 500,000 to 1 million people; 32-year Suharto dictatorship. ⁹
Chile	1973	President Salvador Allende	\$8 million in covert operations; economic warfare; CIA funding of opposition to prevent 'Marxist' government	Overthrow and death of elected leader; Pinochet dictatorship ; 3,000+ killed, 38,000 tortured. ¹⁰
Argentina	1976-83	Leftists, suspected communists, dissidents	Support for military junta during 'Dirty War' to combat leftist insurgency	30,000 people disappeared or killed; Argentine military believed it had US approval. ¹¹
El Salvador	1980s	Leftist guerrillas (FMLN)	Military aid to government forces, including the training of the Atlacatl Battalion, to prevent communist takeover	Death squads killed thousands; the El Mozote massacre, carried out by the Atlacatl Battalion, resulted in the slaughter of 800-1,000 civilians, including hundreds of women and children. ¹²
Nicaragua	1980s	Sandinista government (FSLN)	Funded and trained Contra rebels to overthrow socialist government. The Reagan administration secretly continued funding after Congress prohibited it, leading to the Iran-Contra scandal	Guerrilla war 1979-1990; Iran-Contra scandal . ¹³