

CONTENDING PERSPECTIVES
ON THE SOVIET UNION
IN LATIN AMERICA

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- THE GIANT'S RIVAL*. Revised edition. By COLE BLASIER. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1987. Pp. 240. \$24.95 cloth, \$9.95 paper.)
- OPPORTUNITIES AND DANGERS OF SOVIET-CUBAN EXPANSION: TOWARD A PRAGMATIC U.S. POLICY*. By RICHARD J. PAYNE. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988. Pp. 261. \$34.50 cloth, \$10.95 paper.)
- SOVIET-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS IN THE 1980s*. Edited by AUGUSTO VARAS. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1987. Pp. 290. \$41.50 cloth.)
- THE COMMUNIST CHALLENGE IN THE CARIBBEAN AND CENTRAL AMERICA*. By HOWARD J. WIARDA and MARK FALCOFF, with ERNEST EVANS, JIRI VALENTA, and VIRGINIA VALENTA. (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1987. Pp. 249. \$24.75 cloth, \$11.50 paper.)
- THE SOVIET UNION IN THE THIRD WORLD: THREAT TO WORLD PEACE?* By JOSEPH G. WHELAN and MICHAEL J. DIXON. (Washington, D.C.: Pergamon Press, 1986. Pp. 486. \$29.95 cloth.)

The Soviet presence and role in Latin America continues to be a subject of controversy. The period since World War II has witnessed a definite tendency in the United States—among many officials, some journalists, some academics, some business officials, and many elements of the public—to attribute all U.S. reverses or perceived reverses in Latin America to the USSR. Since about 1960, Cuba has shared the blame with the USSR, often being described as Moscow's proxy or "pointman" in Latin America and beyond. Such a characterization of the Soviet presence, however popular, is an oversimplification on at least three counts.

One, the evidence is far from conclusive that all U.S. reverses, real or perceived, in Latin America are attributable to the USSR. More often than not, U.S. reverses are attributable to unwise U.S. actions or inactions that are subsequently exploited by the Soviets. In *The Giant's Rival*, a well-reasoned and thoroughly researched book that is must

reading for anyone interested in the subject, Cole Blasier observes: "The USSR has been following a strategy of the martial arts [in Latin America]: turning the weight of a more powerful opponent against him. With an occasional exception, Soviet leaders have avoided the initiative and kept a low profile, waiting for Washington to make errors that might ultimately seal its fate" (p. 175). Howard Wiarda makes the same important point in his preface to *The Communist Challenge in the Caribbean and Central America* (p. xi). This work is a collection of interesting and provocative previously published studies with a certain right-of-center perspective that fit together well as a book.

Two, the Soviet-Cuban relationship, a paramount-client relationship to be sure, is too complex and too multifaceted to be characterized simply as Cuba's being a Soviet proxy or pointman. Nevertheless, Joseph Whelan and Michael Dixon make just that kind of characterization in *The Soviet Union in the Third World*, while Mark Falcoff, Jiri Valenta, and Virginia Valenta all tend in that direction in their contributions to *The Communist Challenge*.

Three, the Soviet presence in Latin America has not been constant throughout the postwar era. Early on, the Soviet presence was nearly minimal. After that, the Soviets were only slightly engaged in Latin America at best, and their capacity for influencing events in the region was distinctly limited. The situation has evolved in a different direction since 1960, however.

The increased Soviet presence in Latin America prompts many questions, only some of which have clear-cut answers. What is the nature of the current Soviet presence in Latin America, and what was it prior to the 1960s? How did the Soviets manage to increase their presence? How do the observers whose works are under review assess this increased presence? How do Latin Americans assess it? What are the Soviet Union's objectives in Latin America? What limits does the USSR face in trying to achieve its Latin American objectives?¹

The Soviet Presence, Then and Now

All the works under examination here concur that until the 1960s, the Soviet Union paid scant attention to Latin America. In this respect, early Soviet behavior represented a continuation of Imperial Russian policy. As Pope Atkins has noted, Czarist Russia did not establish diplomatic relations with any Latin American country until 1885, when it set up diplomatic and commercial ties with Argentina.² The Soviet approach before the 1960s can be characterized as one of "geographical fatalism." That doctrine, which is described by Whelan and Dixon, held that Latin America was largely off-limits to the Soviets because of the United States' overwhelming influence in the Western

Hemisphere and a consequent lack of Soviet opportunity. (Whelan and Dixon's *The Soviet Union in the Third World: Threat to World Peace?*, a publication sponsored by the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs in cooperation with the Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress, provides near encyclopedic coverage of the USSR in the Third World.) Augusto Varas expresses the point similarly in the collection of essays by Latin American scholars that he edited, *Soviet–Latin American Relations in the 1980s*: “Latin America was seen [by Moscow] as an area under the unchallengeable influence of the United States” (p. 6). As Joseph Noguee and Robert Donaldson observe, “events such as U.S. intervention in 1954 in support of the removal of the leftist Arbenz government only served to confirm the Soviet perception.”³

Despite its attitude of geographical fatalism, the USSR was not totally absent from Latin America prior to the 1960s. Much more important than occasional diplomatic relations with a few Latin American governments were the Soviet Union's moves early on to form Communist parties in many Latin American countries.

The doctrine of geographical fatalism faded in the 1960s, for reasons detailed below, and the Soviet Union moved to establish itself in significant ways in its rival superpower's traditional sphere of influence. The reality the USSR achieved by the 1970s and 1980s, if not somewhat earlier, is succinctly described by Wiarda in *The Communist Challenge*: “The Soviet Union is a rising presence in Latin America, and one would be foolish to deny the fact” (p. xi). But he quickly—and correctly—warns against exaggerating the Soviet presence and the threat it poses to the United States and Latin American countries: “It would be equally foolhardy to overstate the Soviet role or threat or to blame all of Latin America's troubles on the Soviet Union. The fact is that while the Soviets are rising and have serious influence, they also face severe limits and constraints on what they can do in Latin America” (p. xi). In the last quarter of the twentieth century, the Soviet presence has become complex and multifaceted.

First, one finds a significant Soviet diplomatic presence that was almost wholly lacking in the late 1940s, the 1950s, and even most of the 1960s. Moscow now enjoys diplomatic relations with virtually all major Latin American countries and some lesser ones as well. This diplomatic presence is useful and even necessary for Moscow for several reasons. Establishing diplomatic relations with as many countries as possible helps to legitimate the Soviet regime. That point may apply especially to diplomatic ties with countries in the traditional sphere of the “Colossus of the North.” Having diplomatic ties with Latin American countries also aids Moscow in gathering information, establishing contacts (official and unofficial), and developing and expanding economic relations. Finally, the ties facilitate Soviet naval visits to the region and

make it easier for the USSR to increase its overall influence in Latin America.

Second, the Soviets now have a military presence in Latin America, albeit one that is distinctly secondary to that of the United States. Its lesser stature, however, does not imply that the Soviet military presence can or should be ignored or dismissed, especially by the U.S. government. As Wiarda comments in *The Communist Challenge*:

Over the past two decades the Soviet military has become an increasingly global military. The Soviet Union cannot match the U.S. military presence in the Western Hemisphere, its role is still limited, and one could say that, so far as Latin America is concerned, the Soviet Union is not yet a superpower there. It has, however, considerably increased its naval and air presence and capability, especially in the Caribbean and the South Atlantic. Moreover, some of its forces have acquired, or are about to acquire, an amphibious landing capability. The day may not be very far off when a crisis somewhere in the Caribbean will find both the U.S. and the Soviet fleets setting sail simultaneously and arriving at the same time, both with helicopters in the air, landing craft dispatched, and marine forces ready to take control—or to face down each other. (P. 56)

That scenario is sobering indeed. Yet Falcoff paints an even more somber picture of a Soviet threat to U.S. security, NATO security, and probably Latin American security as well. He writes in *The Communist Challenge*:

The optimal outcome for Moscow would be the creation, through a Soviet naval and air presence enhanced by upgraded Cuban forces, of an offensive interdiction capability effective enough to block the region's sea lanes, thereby disrupting the "swing strategy" developed by NATO planners in the event of war in Europe. This strategy posits the movement of three reinforcing U.S. divisions from Hawaii, Washington, and California through the Panama Canal, thence eastward along the south coast of Cuba. In such an eventuality, modernized Soviet naval and air forces operating from Cuban bases . . . could harass such reinforcements. Meanwhile, Soviet surface and submarine fleets could close the four major check points in the basin. To counter such interdiction, the United States would have to invade Cuba itself, an enterprise that by conservative estimates would require 100,000 troops, roughly the strength of our reinforcements for NATO, and more aircraft carriers than any currently available. (P. 16)

Jiri and Virginia Valenta also address the Soviet military presence and its possible future in *The Communist Challenge*. They observe, "The primary Soviet objective is gradually and cautiously to secure access to and maintain naval facilities so as to improve the projection of Soviet power while undermining that of the United States" (p. 90). This description probably tallies with the Soviet military's wish list for their role in Latin America.

But what must be kept in mind is that current Soviet capabilities fall considerably short of being able to realize that wish list. As it now stands, the Soviet Union does not have and is precluded from having an offensive military base in the hemisphere. That is the de facto mean-

ing of the 1962 U.S.–Soviet agreement ending the Cuban missile crisis.⁴ Further, if the USSR should move to establish the kind of military presence that Wiarda, Falcoff, and the Valentas envision, such action would almost certainly provoke a confrontation with the United States at least as severe as the missile crisis.

The third factor is the network of local Communist parties, which are also part of the Soviet presence in Latin America. As Blasier points out, the Soviet Union is the only country in the world that sponsors and is aided by a web of transnational political parties. These parties may well have more importance than their small size and limited electoral support would indicate. Varas reports in his introduction to *Soviet–Latin American Relations in the 1980s*:

Even when Latin American Communist parties do not have a political weight equivalent to some in Europe, their political leverage in the region is much more important than their electoral support. Communist parties in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Venezuela, Honduras, and Mexico, to mention some of them, could play a crucial role stabilizing or destabilizing local politics, according to their orientations. Even though they do not represent an electoral challenge to local establishments, their special linkage with grass-root social organizations and their opposition to ultraleftist groups make them a crucial component in a developmental strategy. (P. 6)

Blasier asserts that the Soviet Union relies on the local parties, not its state-to-state relations with Latin American governments, to advance the goal of revolution in Latin America.

Fourth, the Soviets have established an economic presence in Latin America that includes commercial relations and some developmental assistance (usually in the form of technical assistance). Yet the Soviet economic presence, while a reality, has not advanced as far as the Soviets would like, especially regarding commercial relationships with Latin American countries.

Fifth, the Soviets also have established a sociocultural presence in Latin America through various exchanges. According to Blasier, probably the most significant and lasting impact of the Soviet sociocultural presence is achieved through training Latin American students in the USSR. Wiarda reports in his introduction to *The Communist Challenge* that “the number of [Soviet] scholarships available to Latin American youths to study in the Soviet Union has been significantly increased, vastly surpassing (by ratios of up to 10 to 1) the U.S. efforts in these areas” (p. 7). Wiarda’s comments should be alarming to U.S. officials, who could so easily change the situation.

One other major aspect of the Soviet presence is Cuba. Cuban leaders know Latin America in ways that the USSR cannot. Consequently, Cuban ability to interpret Latin American developments and opportunities for Moscow makes Cuba a valuable junior partner who can guide Soviet activities in the region.⁵

How Has the USSR Enhanced Its Presence in Latin America?

The greater Soviet presence in Latin America since the 1960s has resulted from several factors, some of Moscow's making but most not. The most important factor was the Cuban Revolution and its aftermath: Castro's decision to break with the U.S. and align his country with the USSR, and U.S. failure to overturn the Castro regime once it manifested intense animosity toward Washington and moved to align itself with Moscow. The Soviets had not anticipated this development in Cuba and did not attach much significance to it initially. Soviet leaders did not believe that the United States would tolerate a hostile Cuba. But Cuba quickly proved to be a plum the Soviets could not resist.

Yet the Cuban factor, however important, has not been the only cause of enhanced Soviet presence. Several other factors have arisen: détente, or the relaxation of tensions between the United States and the USSR during the late 1960s and early 1970s; the movement from loose bipolarity to incipient multipolarity at the global level; the intense Latin American desire to break out of the regional hegemonic system, diversify its international relationships, and thus reduce dependence on the United States;⁶ and possibly what Robert Wesson has characterized as a "flagging of [U.S.] will and attention."⁷

Jiri and Virginia Valenta also analyze the Soviet presence in the Caribbean and Central America in an essay in *The Communist Challenge*. They identify other factors that account for its presence: Soviet perceptions of opportunities; the state of the Soviet-Cuban relationship; the dynamics of Soviet and Eastern European politics; and the Soviet reading of the "correlation of forces" (balance of power) existing between the USSR and the United States.

Assessment of the New Soviet Presence

Numerous assessments have been made of the significance and danger of the new Soviet presence. Indeed, in reading the literature, it seems as if almost every commentator posits his or her own version.

In *The Communist Challenge*, Wiarda points out the contrasting assessments of U.S. Latin Americanists, on the one hand, and U.S. Sovietologists and students of U.S. foreign policy in general, on the other. As Wiarda so correctly observes, U.S. Latin Americanists tend to be critical of U.S. policy toward Latin America, an area they tend to know firsthand and like; they "sympathize with the area's aims and aspirations" and "are inclined to look with favor on the region's efforts to break out of its vicious circles of dependency and underdevelopment" (p. 52). But according to Wiarda, those same individuals tend to overemphasize the region's importance. In contrast, U.S. Sovietologists

and foreign policy specialists tend to be unfamiliar with Latin America and certainly do not empathize with it. They are likely to believe "that Latin Americanists are blind to the realities of Soviet, Cuban, and now Nicaraguan machinations in the area, tending to ignore or belittle the rising Soviet presence and both its capacity and its willingness to meddle in this formerly 'American lake'" (p. 53). Wiarda characterizes U.S. Sovietologists and foreign policy specialists as "hard-nosed about the limits of U.S. policy and . . . convinced no issue is so important as the U.S.–Soviet relationship" (p. 54). In sum, U.S. Latin Americanists approach their subject with a North-South focus that clashes with the other camp's East-West perspective. Wiarda then aptly summarizes the differences between the two perspectives. U.S. Latin Americanists believe that "their" region should be of major interest to the United States for humanitarian and political reasons, which are only obscured by the introduction of "extraneous" East-West issues. In contrast, U.S. Soviet specialists and foreign policy generalists view Latin America as a minor and relatively insignificant arena in which the U.S.–Soviet rivalry is now being played out (p. 54). The latter view is correct on one count: the U.S.–Soviet relationship is the prime focus of U.S. foreign policy, and it should be. But those same individuals ignore a major point: almost from the moment that the United States began to develop a foreign policy, Latin America has received special treatment as a region vital to U.S. interests.

Of the works under review, Richard Payne's *Opportunities and Dangers of Soviet-Cuban Expansion: Toward a Pragmatic U.S. Policy* comes closest to the Latin Americanist perspective. He advises against U.S. preoccupation with military force and ideological confrontation and describes Soviet involvement in Latin America and elsewhere in the Third World in this excessively benign way: "The basic objectives of the new Soviet policy are to improve the country's image worldwide, to integrate the Soviet Union more into the world economy, and to exert influence in regional conflicts by developing stronger ties with non-Marxist countries . . ." (p. 8).⁸ The works closest to the perspective that emphasizes the seriousness and danger of the Soviet presence are Whelan and Dixon's *The Soviet Union in the Third World* and the contributions by Falcoff, Virginia Valenta, and Jiri Valenta in *The Communist Challenge*.⁹

Blasier's assessment combines elements of both views. In line with the Latin Americanist perspective, he observes, "Domestic circumstances have created social revolutions in Latin America. Arms shipments, propaganda, and agitators from the Soviet Union have not" (p. 178). So many policymakers in Washington have failed to recognize or accept that fact, and this misperception has repeatedly bedeviled U.S. relations with Latin America. Blasier goes on to provide a policy prescription for U.S. decision makers in confronting the new Soviet pres-

ence, a prescription that generally accords with the Latin Americanist perspective: "The Latin American policies of the United States should not be a by-product of U.S.–Soviet relations. In the past these policies have been too often shaped by U.S.–Soviet global rivalry and by misperceptions of Soviet actions in the region. Washington should deal with Latin American governments on their own merits. If U.S. ties with particular Latin American nations are healthy, strong, and mutually beneficial, the USSR will not be able to threaten Washington's interests there" (p. 182). Blasier nevertheless agrees with the Sovietologist perspective in his belief that certain Soviet actions in Latin America are not to be allowed, namely, the establishment of a military base in the Western Hemisphere.

Latin American Assessments of Soviet Influence in the Region

Some Latin Americans, particularly political leftists, are attracted to the Soviet Union. Others on the right have diametrically opposite feelings. Between the two extremes one finds many gradations of opinion among Latin Americans. That said, there exists throughout most of Latin America a generalized, if constrained, acceptance of the Soviet presence.

For most Latin American countries, the Soviet Union represents a counterpoint to the United States, one that may not be admired altogether as a model but is valued as a counterpoint nonetheless. According to Varas in *Soviet–Latin American Relations in the 1980s*, the Soviet presence is important for countries that are seeking to expand and diversify their international relations, a category that includes virtually all Latin American countries. He observes, "The political role played by the Soviet Union in the foreign relations of some Latin American countries serves to strengthen their search for positions of relative independence with respect to the United States" (pp. 17–18). Blasier expresses a similar view in noting that while U.S. officials tend to look on the new Soviet presence as a potential danger, most Latin American officials view it as a way to enhance their international bargaining position, especially vis-à-vis the United States. Blasier explains, "Many Latin American leaders are not necessarily admirers of the Soviet system, its foreign policies, nor of the local Communist parties whose programs many believe are contrary to their country's interests. Even so, they welcome ties with the Soviet Union, first and foremost as the right of an independent state. Second, such ties give them room for maneuver and bargaining leverage in disputes with the United States. Finally, relations with the USSR can bring material benefits" (p. 158). Varas's and Blasier's assessment is also shared by others. For example, Voytek Zubek writes of the Soviet presence, "All states of the region who seek

a more independent foreign policy position, regardless of their political profile, consider the potential use of this bargaining chip."¹⁰

There are, nonetheless, limits to Latin American approval of Soviet presence in the region, a factor largely overlooked by some commentators. It is true that Marxist-Leninist ideas have a certain appeal in Latin America, especially among the young and intellectuals who often use Marxist-Leninist jargon. Wiarda identifies the radicalization of the younger generation (evidenced by their Marxist orientation) as one element of the Central American crisis of the late 1970s and 1980s.¹¹ But those who use the jargon are often not very disciplined Marxist-Leninists. Further, few Latin Americans, even among those who find Marxist ideas appealing, are attracted to the Soviet model. Wiarda acknowledges this point in *The Communist Challenge*: "Liberalism and a form of organic corporatism are probably more popular as ideologies and national organizing principles than is a rigid Marxism-Leninism. The traditional wielders of power are still strong. . . . All of this is now changing in the course of contemporary events in Latin America, but so far in most countries of the area these institutions and practices remain dominant while Marxism-Leninism still represents a minority strain" (p. 69). Only one Latin American country to date has found the Soviet model attractive enough to adopt. Nicaragua may be tending in that direction, but more out of necessity than choice.

Soviet Objectives

Not all analysts who address the Soviet presence in Latin America trouble with the issue of Soviet objectives. Although many take the matter as a given, it merits increased attention. When authors do analyze Soviet objectives, the goals identified vary from author to author.

In *The Communist Challenge*, Jiri and Virginia Valenta discuss Soviet objectives in the Third World generally and in the Caribbean Basin specifically. They identify ideology first but add a qualification: "It is misleading to assume that the Soviets support revolutionary movements in the Caribbean Basin solely as part of a grand design to create Leninist regimes. Still, ideology cannot be discounted among their motives" (p. 86). As the Valentas see it, much more important to the Soviets is the political objective of supporting and advancing regimes that the Soviets consider to be "anti-imperialist." The third objective discussed by the Valentas is strategic. They correctly conclude that Soviet economic objectives in the Caribbean Basin are limited.

Whelan and Dixon's *The Soviet Union in the Third World* conceptualizes Soviet objectives in Latin America somewhat differently. At the outset, they observe, "Soviet objectives in Latin America appear to have spanned a broad spectrum generally reflecting in recent years the three-

part categories of maintaining Socialist Cuba, seizing revolutionary opportunities in Central America and the Caribbean Basin, and carrying on traditional diplomacy in Mexico and South America" (p. 291). Whelan and Dixon then go on to divide Soviet objectives into long-term and short-term goals. The long-term objectives are ideological advancement and geopolitical gains, the latter including a weakening of U.S. influence in the Western Hemisphere. Short-term objectives are less ambitious but no less significant: maintaining the present Cuban regime not just as an end in itself but in order to retain a base for projecting Soviet power and influence throughout the Western Hemisphere; exploiting opportunities that present themselves in Central America and the Caribbean; and maintaining in Mexico and South America what Whelan and Dixon call "diplomatic traditionalism," defined as "long-term stable government relations with traditional trade, economic, and political objectives," coupled with renouncing the armed struggle in favor of the peaceful road to socialism (p. 296).

Blasier differentiates between the objectives of the Soviet party and those of the Soviet government. The party objective vis-à-vis Latin America is the ideological goal of national liberation and transformation into socialism Marxist-Leninist style. Blasier identifies a clear party line for attaining those ends: "The local Communist parties may take either the armed or nonarmed road, or some combination thereof. Local conditions determine which road is followed. . . . Communists should take the nonarmed road where feasible. If armed opposition appears, the Communists will probably have to resort to arms to defend the Revolution" (p. 76). Meanwhile, Soviet state objectives are to develop and maintain an official presence in Latin America and to enhance trade. An official presence is necessary for projecting influence as well as for conducting various kinds of relationships with Latin American countries. That objective has been largely met. Now, according to Blasier, trade is the most significant immediate interest of the Soviet state in its relations with Latin America. The Soviet Union has a great need for agricultural products, especially the kind grown in southern South America. In the trade relationship thus far, the Soviets have compiled a large and persistent deficit. Blasier identifies another Soviet interest, which seems to be both a party and a state interest, as the desire to exploit the turbulence in Central America, an urge thus far tempered by restrained involvement. Yet another Soviet interest, again presumably of both state and party, is the survival of Castro's Cuba, which Blasier characterizes as a political asset for Moscow that is also an economic liability.

Clearly, the Soviets do not have a single interest in Latin America but an entire range of interests. Some of them concern Latin America as a whole, others concern particular countries or subregions. In general,

it is unwise for observers of Soviet foreign policy or U.S. foreign policy to attempt to rank Soviet objectives. Often, the officials who pursue them have no clear ranking in mind. Even when they do, circumstances can change the ranking. Further complicating any ranking is the fact that some objectives are short-term, others long-term, some pertain to the Soviet state, others to the Communist party, with no way of distinguishing degrees of importance among them. It is sufficient to say only that the USSR is pursuing multiple objectives in Latin America.

Soviet Limitations

As a superpower, the Soviet Union commands a formidable array of capabilities. A pronounced tendency exists in the United States to view the USSR (in Latin America or elsewhere) as having a virtually unlimited stock of resources for advancing its objectives. Indeed, the tendency is to portray the USSR as better endowed and more able to work its will globally than the United States. U.S. leaders are right to be concerned about the Soviet presence in Latin America and to feel obligated to protect U.S. interests in the region. What is often overlooked is that the USSR faces real limitations in Latin America, a point that needs to be recognized.

First, the USSR does not have unlimited resources. It has interests in several geographical areas with varying degrees of importance to Moscow. The regions of greatest importance are inevitably those closest to Soviet borders. Despite the increased Soviet presence in Latin America, the region is still a distant one that does not and cannot rank at the top of Soviet priorities or concerns. Consequently, the Soviets seem to be willing to devote only a distinctly limited portion of their resources to Latin America, except in the case of Cuba. The Soviets are eager to score gains in Latin America, but only so long as they do not entail any significant resources or risk. A similar assessment is put forward by Wiarda in his contribution on Grenadian influence in *The Communist Challenge*.

A related limitation derives from U.S. involvement in Latin America. Even when Washington is taking a "low profile" toward Latin America, it views the region as important, even vital, unlike the USSR's assessment of Latin America. Blasier accurately characterizes this Soviet limitation: "In any confrontation with the United States in Latin America, the Soviet Union is handicapped by the fact that the region has a relatively high priority for the United States, and it is prepared to go to great lengths to have its way there, but the USSR is not ready to go very far" (p. 175). Wesson, writing from a very different perspective, reaches a similar conclusion. After noting a waning of U.S. influence in Latin America, he observes: "If the United States perceived a real stra-

tegic threat in Latin America, it would doubtlessly assert its vital interests forcefully. . . ."¹² That attitude may explain why Moscow has never made an ironclad security guarantee to any "progressive" regime in the Western Hemisphere, not even to the Castro regime in Cuba.

One final limitation exists on the Soviet presence and any further expansion of it. Leon Goure has expressed the point succinctly in *The Soviet Impact on World Politics*: "Latin American suspicions of Soviet intentions and activities are easily aroused. . . ."¹³ Most Latin Americans are not inclined to give the Soviets an "open door," nor do they want to exchange dependence on the United States for dependence on the USSR.

NOTES

1. In this context, I am not including Cuba when I speak of Latin America as a whole. The reason is that the Soviet-Cuban relationship differs fundamentally from Soviet relationships with all other countries in Latin America.
2. G. Pope Atkins, *Latin America in the International System* (New York: Free Press, 1977), 79.
3. Joseph L. Noguee and Robert H. Donaldson, *Soviet Foreign Policy since World War II* (New York: Pergamon, 1981), 174.
4. See Raymond L. Garthoff, *Reflections on the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1987); and Lars Schoultz, *National Security and United States Policy toward Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), especially chap. 7.
5. Robert A. Pastor, "Cuba and the Soviet Union: Does Cuba Act Alone?" in *The New Cuban Presence in the Caribbean*, edited by Barry B. Levine (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1983), 203.
6. On the hegemonic system, see James R. Kurth, "The United States, Latin America, and the World: The Changing International Context of U.S.–Latin American Relations," in *The United States and Latin America in the 1980s: Contending Perspectives on a Decade of Crisis*, edited by Kevin J. Middlebrook and Carlos Rico (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1986), 61–86.
7. Robert Wesson, "Conclusion," in *U.S. Influence in Latin America in the 1980s*, edited by Robert Wesson (New York: Praeger, 1982), 223.
8. Other examples of this perspective, although not precisely in line with Payne's, are James Chase, *Endless Wars: How We Got Involved in Central America—and What Can Be Done* (New York: Vintage, 1984); Cynthia Brown, *With Friends Like These: The Americas Watch Report on Human Rights and U.S. Policy in Latin America* (New York: Pantheon, 1985); Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America* (New York: Norton, 1983); and H. Michael Erisman, "Colossus Challenged: U.S. Caribbean Policy in the 1980s," in *Colossus Challenged: The Struggle for Caribbean Influence*, edited by H. Michael Erisman and John D. Martz (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1982), 1–46.
9. For other examples of this perspective, see *The Report of the President's National Bipartisan Commission on Central America* (New York: Macmillan, 1984); Jiri Valenta, "Soviet Policy and the Crisis in the Caribbean," in Erisman and Martz, *Colossus Challenged*, 47–82; and Edward N. Luttwak, "The Nature of the Crisis," in *Central America and the Western Hemisphere*, edited by Joseph Cirincione (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1985), 71–79.
10. Voytek Zubek, "Soviet 'New Thinking' and the Central American Crisis," *Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs* 29, no. 3 (Fall 1987):88.

11. Howard J. Wiarda, "The Central American Crisis: A Framework for Understanding," *AEI Foreign Policy and Defense Review* 4, no. 2 (1982):6.
12. Wesson, "Conclusion," *U.S. Influence in Latin America in the 1980s*, 225.
13. Leon Gouré, "Latin America," in *The Soviet Impact on World Politics*, edited by Kurt L. London (New York: Hawthorn, 1974), 195.