

the area, United States military responses to Soviet provocations are more likely than they are in less sensitive areas.

To summarize, the region is highly tempting to the Soviets for strategic and ideological reasons and the gradual decay of political structures in Central America has presented the Soviet Union with a number of highly attractive opportunities to seek strategic gains. However, the Soviet Union is greatly disadvantaged by geography in any attempt to deepen its military involvement, while any such actions risk intensive US military responses against Soviet clients in the region. Strong incentives to meddle are balanced by significant constraints and risks.