

Book Reviews

addition, the revised edition contains four appendices that provide excellent references for comparative policy analysis. Each country is reviewed separately across a wide variety of economic and social issues, with special consideration of the problem of political violence.

Most of the reasons for the crisis in Central America cited by the authors of the report are unobjectionable. They point to the dysfunctional role of dictatorship, the presence of stubborn and durable cliques of political and economic power, and the external manipulation of explosive domestic conditions by foreign powers. But while the report is strong on identifying the Soviet Union and Cuba as the culprits responsible for fueling the flames of political instability for ideological advantage in the region, it is weak on identifying the United States as the external power most culpable of both fostering and sustaining the status quo conditions of underdevelopment.

Few Americans appreciate how intimidating their culture is to the people of Central and South America. Most Latin Americans know that the assimilation of US economic and political values almost certainly means the end of their cultural identity. The authors of *Central America in Crisis* merely trace the changing erroneous perceptions held by US policymakers and opinion leaders towards Central America, without recognizing that the economic and political culture of the United States transfers as an anticulture when it imposes its will on Latin America. In short the report accomplishes an objectivity towards Central America that it falls short on vis-à-vis the United States.

Foreign Policy on Latin America, 1970-1980 by the staff of *Foreign Policy*. Boulder (Colorado): Westview Press, 1983, 184 pages, US \$20.00 (cloth) and US \$9.95 (paper).

Foreign policy anthologies assume a formidable task. As their titles often suggest, anthologies aspire to be greater than the sum of their parts. Usually they fail because anthologies are simply a collection of parts, without structure, coherence, and often organized without logic. The student of foreign policy is subjected to a barrage of seemingly interrelated facts and positions that may arouse the same spasmodic interest as during a "Trivial Pursuit" game. But the day after it is unlikely that one can recall any of the questions or answers that so engulfed one's attention span. That being said, anthologies are neither good nor bad: they are either meaningful or meaningless.

The Latinist who wants an overview of US foreign policy on Latin America will find this copublished report meaningful in only six of the sixteen contributions. Ten of the submissions could stand well on their own in specialized journals but are not conducive to generating a comprehensive view of US external policies south of the Rio Grande.

Lawrence Harrison's "Waking From the Pan-American Dream" takes a penetrating glance at the obvious but ignored disintegration of America's version of hemispheric solidarity. As his article suggests, Pan-Americanism has been a conscious or unconscious rush to empire for most of the Presidents from James Munroe to Ronald Reagan. Harrison points out that the US has had "policies" for most of the regions of the world but "dreams" for Latin America.

Cuba is the litmus test of American foreign policy because any US moves to normalize relations with that country would almost certainly represent a new approach to hemispheric affairs. Abraham Lowenthal's "Cuba: Time For a Change" reminds us how significant a rapprochement with Cuba would be as a signal of fundamental changes occurring in US perceptions of inter-American relations. In relation to such a rapprochement Mariano Grondona takes a look at general East/West détente as viewed by US policymakers and anti-Communist regimes throughout Latin America. The "contradictions" he finds tell us much about the difficulties of achieving hemispheric solidarity on even the basic question of the threats of communism in the Americas.

Always perceptive and subtly ingenious, Richard Falk moves from the trees to the forest in his "Panama Treaty Trap." Noting that the new Panama Canal Treaty was "regressive and unwise," Falk asserts that "the United States has not yet outgrown imperialism." In the final analysis Falk holds that generally the foreign policy consensus towards Latin America "is set by the Pentagon and the political right." Abraham Lowenthal's second article, "Latin America: a not-so-special relationship" follows suit with Falk's, but blames many of the policy gaffes towards Latin America on ignorance. Lowenthal laments that "it took former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger years to discover Latin America." Regrettably, nothing had changed under Reagan at the time of the appointment of the Bipartisan Commission. Critics pointed to Kissinger's admitted ignorance of Latin America: "The president has chosen the only man in the United States who knows nothing about Central America."

Finally, Richard Millett gives the anthology some coherence when he observes in his "Central American Paralysis" that "US efforts to respond to revolutionary change in Central America resemble those of a fire brigade during the London blitz." The United States has consistently confused the support of governments with the friendship of Latin American populations.

Those of you who can eat a salad from sixteen bowls with your favorite vegetables in six of them may enjoy this anthology.

Conquest and Survival in Colonial Guatemala, 1500-1821 by W. George Lovell. Toronto: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985, 254 pages, \$30.00.

For all we have come to know about Mesoamerica (a geographically and culturally distinguished area of the Americas that includes Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, what is now Belize, and the westernmost parts of Honduras) there is probably still no country more intriguing to us, more exotic in the true sense than is Guatemala. This magnificently imaginative and penetrating book offers the reader a personal introduction to the peoples of the Cuchumatán highlands of Guatemala, their age-old culture and their history. The author creatively deals with the experiences of several years in research and travel in a civilization profoundly different from our own, studying a period of revolutionary change and transformation.

This is the work of an expressive, richly informed and observant Canadian scholar who spent over ten years ab-