

## Searching for A Latin Policy

"Latin America and the End of the Cold War" by Jorge Castañeda, in *World Policy Journal* (Summer 1990), 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017, and "Rediscovering Latin America" by Abraham F. Lowenthal, in *Foreign Affairs* (Fall 1990), 58 E. 68th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

Will the end of the Cold War finally free the United States of its last inhibitions against wholesale military intervention in Latin America? That, apparently, is what some Latin Americans fear.

Castañeda and Lowenthal both cite this minority view to show how low Latin-Americans' trust in the United States has sunk. In fact, they agree, the future is likely to be quite different. What the end of the superpower conflict really means, writes Castañeda, a political scientist at Mexico's National Autonomous University, is that "Washington's accustomed ideological justification for involving itself militarily in Latin American affairs is simply no longer available or credible." But there the two part company.

Last December's U.S. invasion of Panama suggests to Castañeda that Washington may temporarily replace the specter of an "evil (Soviet/communist) empire to the east [with] the evil (drug-producing/immigration-generating) slum to the south." But over the long term, he predicts, Latin America will find itself in the unaccustomed position of worrying about U.S. indifference to its fate, especially as Eastern Europe's appetite for U.S. trade, investment, and (particularly) aid grows.

Lowenthal, a political scientist at the University of Southern California, is more optimistic. At first, he says, the Bush administration seemed happy merely to get Latin America—especially the sticky situations in Nicaragua and El Salvador—off the front pages. But last June, the president delivered a speech that seemed to

promise a new U.S. attitude. He sketched a tantalizing vision of a regional free-trade zone. He also promised \$100 million to promote privatization and other reforms by Latin America's new market-oriented leaders, such as Carlos Salinas de Gotari of Mexico and Fernando Collor de Mello of Brazil. And he made what Lowenthal considers the first step toward a realistic approach to the region's \$400 billion foreign debt by promising to seek legislation in effect forgiving \$7 billion of it.

"The U.S. government now recognizes, after nearly a decade of tacit denial," writes Lowenthal, "that Latin America's economic downturn is the fundamental problem that needs to be addressed." More and more issues are "'intermestic'—based on the international spillover of domestic concerns." When the United States worried only about such matters as obtaining military bases and access to raw materials in Latin America, it could afford to ignore internal conditions. But today's Latin American problems (economic stagnation and poverty, the drug trade, political instability) rapidly become the United States's problems. The renewed U.S. emphasis on trade likewise is bound to put Latin America in the spotlight. During the late 1970s, before the debt crisis, it was the fastest growing market for U.S. exports.

But Lowenthal warns that the ball is now in Latin America's court. If the region's leaders want a true partnership with the United States during the 1990s, they cannot afford to stand around and wait for Washington alone to create it.

## Missile Envy

"Third World Ballistic Missiles" by Janne E. Nolan and Albert D. Wheelon, in *Scientific American* (August 1990), 415 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

By now the world is painfully aware of Saddam Hussein's stockpile of ballistic missiles. It is not generally recognized, however, that many other Third World

countries have also built large arsenals.

Nolan, a Fellow at the Brookings Institution, and Wheelon, a former U.S. Central Intelligence Agency analyst, point out that