

OTHER NATIONS

in the South. To help cover its foreign trade deficit, Hanoi tapped the International Monetary Fund last January for the first time.

Goodman, a former Clark University professor and now a senior CIA researcher, echoes Turley's finding that Hanoi profoundly distrusts the "bourgeois" Southerners; Northern cadres run the South's cities and provinces; Northern-style "collectivization" of Delta agriculture and Saigon commerce has yet to occur. Roughly one-third of the South's working-age population, by virtue of prior ties, however modest, to the old regime, appears slated for "re-education" and subsequent "parole" under continued surveillance.

Some 200,000 people, says Goodman, are already in re-education camps, with sentences ranging from 3 to 30 years. All in all, "the people of Southern Vietnam face a disruption as profound as that caused by the war itself."

Jacqueney, a former U.S. aid official turned antiwar protester, reports that there is now clear evidence (notably from new refugees) that the 1975-76 consolidation of the South was accompanied by "massive detentions" and grim "Gulag-like conditions" in re-education camps, even as favored Western visitors were shown "selected camps" near Saigon. Among those imprisoned since 1975 are some of the old Saigon regime's chief noncommunist foes, notably Tran Ngoc Chau, Bui Tung Huan, Tran Van Tuyen. Others have died of maltreatment. Thich Tri Quang, famed wartime leader of a pacifist Buddhist faction, is under house surveillance; his followers have protested Communist persecution with a dozen self-immolations.

France's Quiet Shift in Foreign Policy

"French Foreign Policy: The Domestic Debate" by Marie Claude Smouts, in *International Affairs* (Jan. 1977), Oxford Univ. Press, Press Road, Neasden, London NW10 0DD.

Since taking office in 1971, French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing has quietly shifted away from the foreign policy of his immediate predecessors. French business has been encouraged to establish closer ties with the United States; France has moved closer to NATO in deed if not in word; and development of a costly nuclear deterrent—supreme Gaullist symbol of French independence—has been slowed.

Oddly, this shift has elicited no great debate, says Smouts, a researcher at Paris's Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques. Why? The French press and public are inclined to regard foreign affairs as "the king's secret"; they are also currently preoccupied with domestic economic problems. But the President himself, elected by a bare 50.1 percent of the voters, has been reluctant to publicize foreign policy initiatives lest he provoke internal dispute that would fragment his fragile center-right alliance in parliament and give the Socialist-Communist left a political advantage. Though uneasy at several of Giscard's moves, the Gaullist UDR, the largest single bloc in the gov-

OTHER NATIONS

erning alliance, has muffled its criticism for the same reason. No discussion of foreign policy, write Smouts, "can be isolated from the internal political struggle."

One issue, however, may generate serious foreign policy debate: the proposed direct election of delegates to the European Parliament, which would coincide with the 1978 French presidential election. Giscard, Smouts suggests, may be tempted to use this issue to destroy the dominance of the UDR and divide the left by rallying the citizenry around the "truly Giscardian theme" of European unity. However, since the proposition is a volatile one (President Georges Pompidou failed in a similar attempt in 1972), it is likely that both Giscard and his opponents will continue to discuss foreign policy in a muted, intermittent fashion.

New Politics in Latin America

"The Closeness of Elections in Latin America" by Martin C. Needler, in *Latin American Research Review* (vol. 12, no. 1, 1977), 316 Hamilton Hall, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514.

A curious feature of recent Latin American politics has been the closeness of presidential elections. In contests taking place around 1970, the two principal contenders were separated by a median gap of less than 5 percentage points. The comparable figure for 1950 was more than 15 percent.

Needler, a University of New Mexico political scientist, argues that slim margins indicate growing Latin political awareness. His analysis of half the countries holding presidential elections between 1962 and 1972 (El Salvador, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Peru, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, and Uruguay) suggests that a common pattern may partly account for the change. As parties become established and it becomes possible to calculate relative strengths, a "minimum winning coalition" strategy can be developed by the "outs."

Thus, in Costa Rica, Francisco Orlich won in 1962 with 49 percent of the vote against a divided opposition but lost in 1966 with the same percentage when his foes put forward a single opposition candidate. Salvador Allende, the Marxist, lost in Chile in 1964 with 39 percent of the vote but won in 1970 with 36 percent. Overall, Needler contends, Latin American elections have become more competitive and "less simply a device to ratify continued possession of power by those who already hold it."

The consequences, however, have been discouraging. Narrow victories carry little conviction, impair legitimacy, and underline the strength of the opposition. Close contests were followed by political disturbances in Uruguay and Colombia, by attempts to bar inauguration of the election winner in El Salvador and Chile, and by a military takeover in Peru.