

lated to the Khoikhoi—and much better equipped to resist.

Contemporary Affairs

**THE LATIN AMERICANS:
Their Love-Hate Relation-
ship with the United States**

by Carlos Rangel
Harcourt, 1977
302 pp. \$11.95
L of C 77-73121
ISBN 0-15-148795-2

Venezuelan journalist and TV commentator Carlos Rangel sets out to demolish a series of myths that Latin Americans have long cherished about themselves and the United States. He slashes away at the “noble savage” image of pre-Hispanic society, the “black legend” of the enormous destruction wrought by colonial Spain, the alleged spiritual superiority of the Latin Americans over their materialistic Yankee neighbors. In his view, Latin American society’s shortcomings have bred a profound love-hate relationship vis à vis the obvious success of the United States. Without much detailed analysis of the facts of Latin American society, Rangel goes on to make his own claims—about the prevalence of personal selfishness, the absence of a work ethic, the tacit Church-Marxist alliance—while shooting down those of his leftist critics. The result: his provocative, stimulating, and unabashedly pro-American book (originally titled in Spanish “From the Good Savage to the Good Revolutionary”) is often stronger on assertion than evidence.

**COMING INTO THE
COUNTRY**

by John McPhee
Farrar, 1977
438 pp. \$10.95
L of C 77-12249
ISBN 0-374-12645-3

John McPhee can take the most unpromising subject—atoms, oranges, lawns—and weave a work of reportage that is rich, complex, and, to the reader, effortless. *Coming into the Country* is his most ambitious—and successful—attempt to date. Its subject: Alaska today. McPhee moves from Arctic wilderness to urban sprawl to the regions between, always with an eye for history, an ear for conversation, and a sure sense of the telling vignette. Essentially, he says, Alaska is a foreign country “significantly populated with Americans.” Twice the size of Texas but with half the population of Dallas, it has yet to recover from statehood. Meanwhile, Eskimos, Indians, governments, and corporations are dividing and subdividing some 300 million