

U.S.-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS UNDER THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION

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Introduction

While other regions of the world dominated the attention of the American public and the time of the Carter Administration, historic changes occurred in Latin America. In October 1979 the new Panama Canal Treaties went into effect and in July 1979 the 42-year Somoza dynasty in Nicaragua fell to the Sandinistas. Just as important, though less dramatic and volatile, was Mexico's rise to the stature of a world "oil power."

Bringing to an end the long and controversial process of ratifying the Panama treaties was a significant accomplishment for the Carter Administration. The treaties also came to represent a milestone in U.S.-Latin American relations. However, this euphoria of accomplishment was overcome by a series of policy challenges: Mexican intransigence in negotiating bilateral issues, human rights confrontations with Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Guatemala, constitutional crises in the Dominican Republic and Bolivia, the Soviet military presence in Cuba and Cuban expansionism in the Caribbean Basin, the fall of Somoza, and the civil war in El Salvador.

While the ultimate character of the Sandinista regime and consequences for the Caribbean Basin remain unknown, the U.S. government response and accommodation to the change produced mixed reactions. Bureaucratic differences within the U.S. government, Congressional

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indifference and fragmentation, and events in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala placed the future of U.S.-Nicaraguan relations at the mercy of domestic political confusion. Furthermore, critics pointed to Nicaragua to illustrate that the Carter Administration lacked a clearly defined geopolitical framework (especially for the Caribbean Basin) upon which to base policy responses.

With respect to Mexico there is almost universal agreement, among experts and laymen alike, that Mexican oil and gas reserves are significant for U.S. interests and that the Carter Administration performance in this area left much to be desired.

The development of these events was not totally related to the policies of the Carter Administration. The conditions which produced these events had been fermenting since the early 1970s. Nevertheless, one can hold the Carter Administration accountable for the policy responses of the United States toward Latin America. In order to evaluate the efficacy of these policy responses, it is necessary to examine the Carter Administration's guiding principles in the management of Latin American relations. These principles constrained and eventually determined the policy responses. Concurrently, one must also examine the consequences of what can be characterized as a rigid adherence to these guiding principles.

#### Guiding Principles and Consequences

Fundamental to the Carter Administration's policies toward Latin America was the belief that the region's independence and security was in the national interest of the United States. It was frequently argued by administration officials that "Proximity, psychology, and the intimate ties they create give us a major stake in our neighbor's well-being." What this meant was that the Administration sought policies which were supportive of:

- o strong, friendly and independent governments that practice democracy and protect human rights;
- o economic development with equity; and
- o security against hostile forces.

Such policies, in the words of former Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Viron P. Vaky, would ". . . align us with the forces of change, of democracy, and of peaceful development that alone can overcome socio-economic inequities."

While one cannot fault these official statements, no overall framework for formulating policies toward Latin America evolved during the Carter Administration. Rather, the top decisionmakers on Latin America focused their attention on specific crisis situations--not on broader regional issues. Latin American policy became in fact a reaction to one crisis after another: the Panama Canal Treaties, Mexican economic and social conditions, the fall of Somoza and the rise of the Sandinistas, the Soviet military brigade in Cuba, the political disintegration of Central America, and the "refugee" flows of Haitians and Cubans. These episodic events, which of necessity overly occupied the attention of the foreign policy bureaucracy, added to the inherent conceptual weaknesses of the guiding principles.

#### "Democratization"

The Carter Administration viewed the process of democratization as the key to the future of Latin America--democratization thus became a fundamental policy guide for the formulation of bilateral relations. The establishment of "democratic governments which reflect the free will of the people" became the new religion, replacing the old one of "anti-communism." While the policy change was welcome, it did not go far enough. Over-nourished democracy in undernourished stomachs easily led to the clashes and strife currently being experienced in the region. The economic support necessary to stabilize the kind of change envisioned, if not demanded, by the new policy was not provided by the United States. Overlooked was that the emergence of reasonably moderate and democratic regimes in Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Peru, and the Southern Cone nations was critically dependent on how rapidly the fundamental socio-economic problems in those countries were being addressed.

The United States, unfortunately, provided inadequate assistance to Latin American nations. Further, many of the possible policy

remedies required the U.S. economy and taxpayers to assume the costs of special trade preferences, commodity price stabilization, less restrictive immigration, higher levels of economic and financial assistance, and expanded efforts by U.S. business to transfer capital and production to cheaper labor markets in Latin America.

Inescapably, it became clear that there were no specific U.S. policies or resources adequate to support the necessary political and economic changes in any one of these nations--witness the virtual U.S. government paralysis concerning Haitian immigration, Nicaraguan reconstruction, Mexican border conditions, or the chaotic Peruvian economy--much less Latin America as a whole. The Administration's difficulties in providing the Sandinista regime a token, but symbolically critical, \$75 million for reconstruction of the Nicaraguan economy is symptomatic of a foreign policy run by public accountants, or as others have stated--"foreign policy on the cheap."

#### Human Rights

Carter's human rights policy was another guiding principle that constrained policy responses. The strong focus on human rights as a standard upon which to determine relations with Latin American countries led to an estrangement with the Southern Cone nations of Chile, Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay along with several Caribbean Basin nations such as Guatemala and El Salvador. Recrimination and alienation came to characterize Washington's relationship with at least half of the region's governments. At the root of the estrangement, in most cases, was the counter-insurgency operations of Latin American regimes seeking to eradicate terrorism and the equally rigid U.S. government reaction in defense of human rights.

This estrangement took place despite unsuccessful efforts by individuals in the State Department to pursue policies of pragmatic adjustment. The pragmatism at this level of the Administration took into consideration not only the U.S. government's incapacities and inconsistencies but also the real-world limitations of the region's governments. The essence of the pragmatic approach was, however, a

non-policy as well: Major mistakes were to be avoided, thus allowing time for both Latin American adjustment to the changing role and diminishing capabilities of the United States and the Carter Administration's development of coherent policies that adequately responded to the growing political maturity of the region.

#### Arms Restrictions

The third key principle guiding the Carter Administration's Latin American policy was to reduce the flow of arms to the region. Any conflict between two or more Latin American states is seen as a security concern for the United States. Indeed, from the very onset of the Carter Administration, one of the highest priorities was to determine the role of the United States in the settlement of existing border disputes in Latin America. Indirectly, this also reflected a concern for keeping Soviet and other "non-Western" powers out of the dispute (and thereby out of the region). Unfortunately, U.S. arms sales restrictions resulted in just the opposite outcomes. The United States cut itself out of the diplomacy of arms restraint and conflict resolution by minimizing its role as arms supplier for Latin America. As improbable as it may sound, from a U.S. security perspective, the sale of arms is just as important a part of peaceful balancing as is the placing of restrictions on the transfer of arms.

No other region--be it Africa, the Middle East or Southeast Asia--is so subject to critical U.S. treatment and legislative restrictions. Historically, the presumed homogeneity of Latin American nations and the comparatively low threats to U.S. interests in the region made it easy to generalize and ignore distinctions that stand out elsewhere in the world. As a result, Latin America, because of its distinctive regional characteristics, periodically becomes a "dumping ground" for restrictive and discriminatory arms transfer legislation. These restrictions express principles wounded more seriously elsewhere in the world--but too difficult to apply without compromise because of the Soviet threat or some other compelling U.S. national interest.

Evidence is mounting that Carter Administration arms transfer policies to Latin America have cost the United States political goodwill

without furthering democratic aspirations or curtailing the acquisition of modern military weapons. The long-term (ten to twenty years) consequences of reducing the U.S. military and security presence in Latin America are uncertain. The result of terminating grant assistance, placing increasing legislative restrictions on the transfer of military hardware and services, drastically reducing the number and role of U.S. military representatives, and curtailing military training programs cannot but adversely affect the U.S. posture in the region. It is clear that U.S. security interests are not advanced if U.S. advisors, military training, and military equipment are replaced by European and non-Western sources.

On the other hand, an unrestricted sales program is not desirable. Large sales programs do not necessarily contribute to a more effective pursuit of U.S. security interests. Relatively small programs can generate and sustain traditional military relations between the United States and Latin America, be an effective instrument in protecting U.S. security interests in the area, permit the U.S. to remain an active player in security and military related matters in the Western Hemisphere, and allow the United States to pursue its objective of arms restraint in the region.

The Carter Administration is unwilling to accept the fact that until other major suppliers cooperate in curtailing the sale of weapons to the region, the solitary U.S. effort will not reduce the flow of arms to Latin America--only shift the sales, supply and training relationships to other countries. The United States is cutting itself out as an active player in the politico-military affairs of the Western Hemisphere. Begrudgingly, several Administration officials have concluded that policies which restrict arms sales have definite political and security costs. If it is in the U.S. interest to use arms sales (and other forms of military relations) to carry on a dialogue with Latin American governments, then the Administration should be prepared to examine closely the restrictive aspects of the International Security Assistance and Arms Export Act. If necessary, the Administration should also seek to change the legislation to conform more with the U.S. security concerns of preventing Soviet arms sales, countering

Cuban politico-military diplomacy and stabilizing border conflicts in the Western Hemisphere.

Mexico: "Special" or Simply Different?

Relations with Mexico cannot be analyzed from the perspective of the three guiding principles used for the rest of Latin America. "Democratization," human rights pressures and arms transfers restrictions are not applicable to a country that buys few arms, that in the view of official Washington has few human rights violations, and that is the most stable "guided democracy" in Latin America. Mexico, if not "special," is at least different. An assessment of the Carter Administration's Mexico policies, therefore, concentrates on an analysis of bilateral policy initiatives and responses.

The Carter Administration gave Mexico unprecedented attention. Three Presidential meetings, Presidential Review Memorandum #41, an unusual consultative mechanism, a Special Ambassador, and forbearance of Mexican foreign policy posturing are clear examples of the Carter Administration's attentiveness toward Mexico. Despite this, U.S.-Mexico relations are clearly in a state of deterioration.

Most recently, it became standard to point to the conduct of American domestic and foreign policy as the root cause of strained relations with Mexico. In fact, it is often forgotten that it takes at least two parties to have a relationship, that the apportionment of blame for a strained relationship is rarely self-evident and even more rarely is only one party clearly at fault. A quick review of several problem areas indicates that both countries must accept responsibility for the current state of relations and that both countries must strive harder to achieve a workable relationship, regardless of whether it is special or not.

The first problem area is immigration. The Carter Administration inherited this issue after it had been whipped up to a peak by General Chapman, the Commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service during the Nixon Administration. President Carter, to his credit, did not avoid the issue, and unlike prior Administrations, rather than concentrate solely on enforcement, proposed a plan that exhibited

compassion for undocumented persons through an amnesty program. Viewed objectively, it was a positive and somewhat sympathetic proposal. President Carter was also responsive to the human (and political) aspects of the issue, appointing Lionel Castillo as INS Commissioner. That Commissioner Castillo did not prevail against the bureaucracy does not diminish the Administration's intent. On the negative side, however, was the celebrated "tortilla" curtain. The rebuilding of a fence along parts of the border, a fence that would maim those who tried to jump it, was an incredible blunder.

On the Mexican side one would be hard-pressed to find initiatives, necessarily different but equivalent in scale and intent, to resolve this rather prickly issue straining U.S.-Mexico relations. There is a birth control program that some say is beginning to reduce the birthrate. Yet, this is not specifically directed at the immigration issue. There is a National Industrial Plan but its claims of job creation are overblown. It is a capital intensive plan that will not create even enough jobs for new entrants to the job market, much less reduce present unemployment and underemployment. In fact, Mexican officials have said that the job-shortage cannot be alleviated until after the year 2000.

The second area of strained relations has been in energy. The Carter Administration performance gets low marks and can be considered more of a contributing factor to troubled relations. Rejection by the Department of Energy of a gas contract between Pemex and the U.S. gas companies was a severe jolt to Mexican expectations. Most of Mexico's oil, approximately 80 percent, is sold to the United States. Therefore it was not an unrealistic expectation that the U.S. would be a principal gas purchaser. The domestic reasons, including the gas companies' desire to set a high price prior to deregulation, are well known. However, the cavalier subjugation of long-term foreign policy and trade considerations to short-term domestic needs was inappropriate.

A less publicized but equally significant contributor to strained U.S.-Mexico energy relations was the invocation of the Non-Proliferation Act which resulted in a U.S. government refusal to forward enriched uranium (already owned and paid for by Mexico) to the Laguna Verde

nuclear plant. These two actions, occurring about the same time, raised Mexico's fears of becoming too dependent or interdependent with the United States. Furthermore, these incidents reinforced the nationalist view that only a diminution of ties with the U.S. and a program of self-sufficiency would assure Mexico's independence. (Ironically, the U.S. action taken to prevent proliferation may have steered Mexico toward a proliferation-prone path--a natural uranium fuel cycle that bypasses enrichment, that utilizes a simpler technology less subject to safeguard controls, and that uses the domestic uranium resources of Mexico.)

Also contributing to Mexican nervousness is the U.S. response to the Iranian situation. Mexico does not view itself as another Iran except in one way--they both have oil the United States needs. In viewing the pressures brought to bear on Iran, Mexico sees itself as a possible future victim if the U.S. seriously needed Mexican oil. The Justice Department crackdown on Iranian students is reminiscent of past U.S. actions against Mexicans in the United States. The economic pressures on Iran bring to mind the past U.S. embargo on petroleum technical assistance and equipment following petroleum nationalization as well as the Jewish tourist boycott following Mexico's anti-Zionist U.N. vote during the Echeverria Administration. Mexico is economically dependent on the U.S. and views such economic sanctions as threatening. In addition, American discussions of purchasing Mexican oil in advance as a strategic reserve and the creation of a Rapid Deployment Force to extend American military capabilities in areas where U.S. vital interests are threatened also bring back memories of the occupation of Veracruz.

Mexico's contribution to strained relations include the runaway oil well, Ixtoc, and the subsequent refusal to discuss remedies for damages. The refusal to discuss the issue could lead to a backlash by an American public reminded of the financial ability of Mexico to provide a remedy by the daily discussion of Mexico's oil wealth.

Tomatoes and other winter vegetables have led to strained trade relations. The importation of Mexican tomatoes was challenged by American growers. Though the Treasury and Commerce Departments

eventually found that there was no dumping, Mexico felt that winter vegetable production and export trade was being held hostage to force Mexico into GATT, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. At the same time, American trade specialists were frustrated by Mexico's insistence on protectionist policies while decrying the U.S.'s investigation of the dumping allegations. Ironically, while the Carter Administration ruled in favor of Mexico, President Lopez Portillo decided not to join GATT--thus continuing a bilateral trade relationship seen as threatening, but necessary for the protection of inefficient and heavily subsidized industries. Thus in this area, the Carter Administration gets positive marks for actions taken to reduce strain while Mexico gets negative marks for actions taken that increased strain.

In summary, regardless of who contributed to the difficulties, the net result was a less than desirable state of U.S.-Mexico bilateral relations. Despite the preferential treatment accorded by the Carter Administration, relations worsened with Mexico as with the rest of Latin America. An explanation of this paradoxical phenomenon, however, is readily apparent when the changing global context of U.S.-Latin American relations is considered.

#### The Global Context of U.S.-Latin American Relations

Since the mid-1960s, U.S.-Latin American relations have been increasingly affected by fundamental changes in the international order--including the decline of global bipolarity, the lessening of U.S. economic hegemony in the Western Hemisphere, and the diversification of Latin America's international political and economic relations. Seeking political, economic and security relations with extra-regional powers offers more and entails less risks for Latin American nations than at any time since World War II. The changing perceptions of "friends" and "enemies" account for this diversification. For the most part, Latin American governments between 1941-1970 shared perceptions of a common external enemy with the United States--Germany, Russia and later, Cuba. These perceptions, though they differed from country to country, helped to unify Latin American foreign policies

with each other and toward the United States. However, by the late 1970s, the threats faced by Latin American regimes failed to produce such unifying effects.

Today, the United States is the preponderant hemispheric power, but its influence and prestige in Latin America are diminished and its policies often countered or ignored. The decline in U.S. economic and military assistance, the increased presence of non-hemispheric nations, the growing capabilities of the Latin American governments, the emergence of regional powers (such as Mexico, Cuba, Venezuela, and Brazil) and the perceptions of new political elites contribute to this diminished influence and tarnished image.

For several decades after World War II Latin America was commonly regarded as a valuable wartime reserve of foodstuffs and raw materials for the United States. However, military technology appeared to make Latin America irrelevant as a geopolitical consideration. In a nuclear war, these countries were considered strategically remote and unimportant as military objectives. Thus, Latin America was generally seen as a region that had a low value compared to other regions in the world. For the 1980s, however, the strategic value of Latin America is being determined somewhat less by "Cold War" considerations and more by such factors as energy. Petroleum reserves in Mexico and Venezuela, not to mention other mineral resources in the Andes and Amazon areas, raise the strategic stakes which the United States and other industrialized nations have in the Latin American region--especially if problems persist in the Middle East and Persian Gulf.

Together, these interrelated trends contribute to the strategically significant change in the global context of Latin American countries. The implications of this are three-fold. First, the new external context intensifies the concerns among the Latin American nations for their relations with each other. Indeed, the weakening of the U.S. presence in particular appears to be indirectly enhancing the significance attached to intra-regional relations on a number of issues, ranging from Andean Pact cooperation to the resurgence of old border disputes and historic rivalries. Second, the changes in the world context

permit flexibility among the Latin American nations in their dealings not only with the outside world, but also with each other. Global trends toward political and economic multipolarity make shifting alliances on specific issues a likely outcome in intra-regional affairs. Third, while improving the incentives for intra-regional cooperation and integration, the U.S. contributes to the destabilization of the region by its diminished presence. In the past, U.S. power and influence served to dampen rivalries and potential conflicts. Given the world environment of the 1980s, however, such regional actors as Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Mexico, and Cuba are more likely to compete for regional leadership and local spheres of influence.

Compared to the 1950s and 1960s, nations in the Western Hemisphere are operating within a distinctive and new international and regional setting which affects U.S.-Latin American relations. In many respects the opportunities for higher levels of cooperation are presenting themselves. Yet at the same time the potential for political, economic and military conflict continues to increase. What remains unclear is whether such countries as Mexico, Venezuela and Colombia can or will cooperate politically and militarily with the United States to provide security for the most vulnerable region of Latin America--the Caribbean Basin.

#### Prognosis for U.S.-Latin American Relations--Will the Malaise Continue?

During the 1977-1980 period the more traditional forms of cooperation--economic and security assistance, trade preferences, immigration flexibility, and to a lesser extent, foreign investment--were limited when their need by Latin American countries was the greatest. Most of the governments in the region face the problems of population growth and migration, unemployment and underemployment, and income maldistribution. However, in the absence of geopolitical vision, bureaucratic flexibility and financial resources, the Carter Administration did not produce specific bilateral policies to help Latin America address these most pressing socio-economic problems. Instead the United States dealt with the consequences of these problems at the point of crisis--at the moment of revolutionary change, when borders were crossed

illegally, or when the destitute arrived in overloaded boats off the Florida coast.

Moreover, the Carter Administration's heavy emphasis on the political freedom aspects of human rights obscured and did not address the economic issues. Instead the human rights issue stimulated an ideological U.S. reaction against "military dictatorships"--often casting the whole of Latin America in a negative image. What emerged was a surge of stereotypic anti-Latin Americanism in the minds of the American public, Congressmen, the media, and among government officials. Often, frustration and anger were directed at Latin American regimes for failure (or lack of desire) to follow a course more compatible with U.S. ideals. Yet, the appropriate channeling towards stable and responsive government was absent. The result is that several Latin American countries are now close to anarchy--the exact reverse of U.S. intentions and clearly detrimental to U.S. interests.

The Carter Administration principles guiding Latin American policy were more idealistic than pragmatic and relied more on moral responsiveness than practical cooperation. To be fair, however, it is necessary to keep in mind that Latin American policies of the United States have for more than a century alternated between extremes of inattention and closely scrutinized paternalism. Nevertheless, even changing global geopolitics have not changed the longest-lived foreign policy concern of the United States: namely, securing the Western Hemisphere from external influence. After this concern comes the desire to see Latin America, of its own choice, emulate the U.S. political and economic system. If the former is the principal basis upon which to evaluate Washington's policies toward the region, then the Administration of Jimmy Carter has been the least successful in the post-World II period.

In addition, while concrete geographic, economic, political, and military interests can be explicitly identified and debated, the Carter Administration has largely ignored the fact that the psychological interests at stake in Latin America are also fundamental to the national security concerns of the United States. The United States and Latin America have a unique psychological relationship that rests

on the belief and experience that the United States is the dominant power in the Western Hemisphere. Successful opposition to the United States in the region implies a weakening, not only of its position in Latin America, but in the global posture of the United States as well. Despite the "imperial" connotations of this geopolitical reality, it is an historical fate from which the United States cannot escape.

Epilogue: Hispanic Interests in U.S.-Latin American Relations

Hispanic-American interests in the Latin American policies of the United States have been historically narrow. The resulting consequence is that these interests have either been easily satisfied at a low level of policy involvement or the interests have not had a substantial effect on the Latin American policy of the United States. Despite recent expressions of pan-Hispanic solidarity, the major Hispanic groups have not overcome their basically single-issue orientation in matters pertaining to foreign policy. Hispanics still have largely mutually exclusive interests. For example, the interests of Chicanos center on Mexico and immigration, the interests of Puerto Ricans, for the most part, focus on the status of Puerto Rico, and the Cubans concentrate on preventing a normalization of relations with the Castro regime.

While increasing political sophistication, participation, and Hispanic unity have resulted in the ability of each community to marginally effect policies in their respective parochial areas, the Hispanic community's effectiveness in the foreign policy arena will continue to be limited unless collective interests broaden. A beginning point is to recognize that foreign policy does not only emanate from the State Department but from many other departments as well--including Labor, Interior, Commerce, Agriculture, Energy, Defense, and Treasury. Second, and most important, Hispanics need to concentrate on identifying foreign policies that are linked to domestic policies that most directly affect the quality of life of Hispanic-Americans.

To do so, Hispanic groups must become less ideological and more pragmatic. Some difficult questions must be posed and equally difficult decisions reached. For example, would the economic circumstances

of Mexican-Americans improve if Mexico relaxed its protectionist trade and investment policies? Are Chicano interests adversely affected by the present income distribution in Mexico? Would Chicanos be better served by U.S. foreign policies that encouraged structural reform in Mexico? While unrestricted immigration may be a cultural boost to the Mexican-American community, what is the impact on the housing and educational opportunities of the Chicano community? Disregarding the debate on whether undocumented workers result in job displacement, does such migration frustrate the efforts to organize Chicano workers for collective bargaining purposes? Clearly, Mexican-Americans must reassess whether the political efforts expended in the promotion and defense of Mexico and Mexican citizens is the best use of the limited resources of the Chicano community while its own social and economic needs remain unmet.

With respect to the Cuban community, perhaps a reassessment of its position towards the Castro regime is timely. The unrelenting anti-Castro attitude stands in the way of political integration with the rest of the Hispanic community. While Puerto Ricans and Chicanos have great sympathy for the trauma of the revolution and the subsequent displacement of a million Cubans, they do not share the conservative views of the Cuban community. Moreover, Chicanos and Puerto Ricans find it difficult to sympathize with the apparent goal of reestablishing a pre-Castro socio-economic structure. The Cuban community's vigor and political resources will be best utilized only after it makes a commitment to be a permanent part of the Hispanic-American community --that is, demonstrate a willingness to use its political resources to pursue broader domestic Hispanic needs.

Likewise, Puerto Ricans should decide soon whether Puerto Rico will be part of the permanent Hispanic-American community. From an ideological perspective, the notion of an independent Puerto Rican nation is one in which the more nationalist Chicanos find vicarious satisfaction. Even the present Commonwealth status is seen as maintaining a defense against the manifest destiny of assimilation into mainstream Anglo-America. Statehood, however, would be a significant addition and political asset to the Hispanic-American community. But

it is also a double-edged sword for Chicanos and Cubans. While Hispanics stand to gain as a result of increased political representation in Congress, concern does arise for the possibility of an Hispanic presence in Congress dominated and oriented by a Puerto Rican perspective. The nascent Chicano and Cuban political representation in Washington would be overtaken by the stroke of a pen.

These observations are not intended to emphasize differences among the major Hispanic groups, nor to slight those Hispanic communities from Central America, the Caribbean or South America. There are, of course, other Hispanic interests at stake in U.S.-Latin American relations. Rather, the discussion is meant to strongly emphasize three points: first, the need to recognize the limits of single-issue politics and the predictable factiousness and political dissipation that result from such an approach; second, that it is critical to identify the Hispanic-American community's domestic interests before adopting specific foreign policy stances; and third, that the foreign policy lobbying efforts of Hispanic-Americans should serve the domestic needs of the Hispanic-American community and the interests of the American setting in which Hispanic-American interests are embedded. Unless the Hispanic-American community approaches foreign policy more analytically and less emotionally, its claim as a constructive bridge between an Anglo-oriented United States and Latin America has little merit. Further, as the Hispanic-American community seeks to influence the management of U.S.-Latin American relations, unless it adopts a less ideological and more pragmatic stance, the Hispanic-American community will not be able to claim any better a record than the low performance ratings it traditionally ascribes to each succeeding administration in Washington, including that of Jimmy Carter.



