

STUDYING LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS: SOME IMPLICATIONS OF A *DEPENDENCIA* APPROACH*

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This essay deals with the study of Latin American politics in the United States. The basic question asked is: "Where do we go from here if we take seriously that body of thought loosely and somewhat misleadingly known as dependency theory?" It argues that even though the literature is at times incomplete, confusing, and contradictory, the issues to which it directs us warrant our most serious attention.

Before beginning, it is useful to say in a bit more detail what this essay does and does not attempt. First, this is not a bibliographical review in the usual sense of that genre. The footnotes included are, however, sufficient to direct the interested reader to the English language material most relevant to the construction of such a bibliographical overview. Second, as a corollary to point one, no attempt has been made to do justice to all the currents, subcurrents, tendencies, subtendencies, revisionisms, deviations, micro-factions and old-fashioned variety represented in the dependency literature. I seek only the common denominators undergirding the dependency approach, for it is from this core of theoretical-descriptive propositions that the implications for the study of politics emerge most unambiguously. Third, I write quite self-consciously from the point of view of Latin American studies *in* the United States. The "we" in the "where do we go from here" basically refers to U.S. scholars, living and working in the center rather than the periphery (to borrow the appropriate language), embedded in a certain intellectual tradition, and facing different intellectual and political challenges than their Latin American colleagues. Dependency theory is necessarily evaluated and used in a somewhat different way by Latin American scholars studying politics.¹ Finally, I gloss over the institu-

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tional and methodological implications of the holistic view of politics and political processes implicit in the dependency literature. Neither by training nor in the daily round of research and teaching are most U.S. Latin Americanists equipped to wrestle professionally with the sort of macro-historical-structural (and, I would add, normative) analyses implied by the traditions of scholarship from which the dependency literature derives. Although I touch on some of these questions in the following pages, detailed examination of the kinds of research and the organization of intellectual life most appropriate to “taking dependency seriously” in the United States would require a separate essay—one even more presumptuous than that which follows.

NORTHERN PARADIGMS, SOUTHERN CHALLENGES

The institutionalization of Latin American studies in U.S. universities owes much to Fidel Castro and the men and women who made the Cuban Revolution.² Such statements go down hard with those who argue the “autonomy” of the academic enterprise from world and national politics, but the evidence is impressive, if sometimes circumstantial. Of course no claim is being made that Latin American studies is a “direct” response to the guerilla seizure of power in Cuba. There were historians of Latin America working in hundreds of U.S. universities and colleges in the 1950s, and Latin American specialists in the disciplines of anthropology and political science were also amply represented. Language departments taught the classics (although surely *Don Quixote* triumphed over *Martín Fierro* by a large ratio) and assiduously drilled students in the proper uses of the subjunctive and *usted*. But the *institutionalization* of Latin American studies on a national scale began only in the early 1960s. Whatever embers of interest glowed before, it took a hot wind from the South to fan the flames, and large infusions of cash from the U.S. government and private foundations to fuel the conflagration.³

The institutionalization of Latin American studies took place at a moment when the study of Third World politics in the United States was very much dominated by the paradigm of *political development and modernization*. This is not the place to rehearse the fascinating and complex relationship between the study of Latin American politics and the more general work then being done (particularly in the discipline of political science) in comparative politics. It is not inaccurate to say, however, that Latin Americanists were themselves judged modern and rewarded in appropriate ways during the 1960s largely to the extent that they shared these conceptual foci and concerns.⁴

The fit of these conceptual concerns to the perceived problems (if

not the real problems) of Latin America was almost perfect. In the early years of the decade, the strengthening of democratic and participatory political institutions was almost universally seen as a concomitant of economic development. In some versions the causality was seen as running from economics to politics: Economic development, usually defined as aggregate growth in GNP, was viewed as a necessary precondition for the emergence of stable, democratic political institutions. In other versions the causal links were seen as running in the other direction, as more circular, or were simply left unexplored. There were thus debates as to the precise nature of the interconnections between economic and political development (as defined), but no basic contradictions were perceived. While economists studied development and sociologists and anthropologists worked on modernization (primarily defined as certain kinds of value change and incorporation into the "modern" sector), political scientists, obeying a long-standing division of disciplinary labor, plunged with vigor into the study of political parties, mass movements, political culture, pressure groups, elections, students (because students in Latin America were *political*), leaders (elected and self-appointed), and all the other institutions and groups marked for investigation by the models of political development then dominating the discipline.

Quite naturally, the models themselves were not static. As new phenomena appeared, models were stretched and accommodated and even partially turned around. By the middle 1960s, the hypothesis that authoritarian rule might be more compatible than liberal democracy with the managing of certain "dilemmas" of development was current. Gone or at least muted were the insistent claims that democratic political practices (as understood in the United States) were either definitionally or empirically necessary to political development. Instead, models emphasizing penetration of the civil society, efficient administration, and control and stability moved to center stage.

Some went even further, adding a more fundamental methodological critique to the claim that authoritarian stabilizations might be a necessary feature of developmental scenarios in which popular mobilization and demands were outrunning institutionalized capacity to respond. The newer posture argued that the organic, unidirectional, and at times teleological overtones of the standard development metaphor were not appropriate to the study of such situations: One ought not to assume that the "less developed" polities were necessarily headed toward some condition that warranted being called "more developed." Thus, words such as decay, fragmentation, disintegration, and even disdevelopment passed into the lexicon.⁵

Throughout these adjustments in theory and posture, however, the basic assumptions about the study of politics and the most valued style of research remained relatively constant. The so-called behavioral movement in North American social science—with its emphasis on quantification, the study of individuals abstracted from their socio-economic milieu, the nonscientific nature of normative questions, and its tendency to devalue or ignore the economic and historical dimensions of political issues—continued to dominate. Research in comparative politics was predominantly in these modalities, and research on Latin American politics was thus necessarily affected.⁶

Meanwhile, south of the Rio Grande, there was only a very partial acceptance of the development paradigm. José Nun, among others, had already argued in an insightful essay written in 1964 (although not published in English until 1967) that the concept of modernization—and its blood brother the development metaphor—were restrictive and misleading when applied to the study of politics.⁷ In Latin America, of course, Nun was hardly alone or even a leader in raising questions about the positivistic tradition of social science research and its then fashionable emphasis on “development” and “modernization” as key concepts. Throughout the 1960s and even earlier, Latin American intellectuals (in general the offspring of European and particularly French traditions) had been bringing structuralist and Marxist (of all shades and colors) perspectives to bear on their critique of social science, North American style. U.S. sociology, in particular, and increasingly the “new” political science, had, by the end of the decade, been the target of immense amounts of criticism.

The Latin American attack on the dominant northern paradigm was part and parcel of a much more inclusive (and evolving) body of understandings of the “question of underdevelopment.” Although this fascinating history (still unfolding) of the critique of classical developmentalism (*desarrollismo*) is far too complex to recount here, the basic events that triggered and sustained it are well known: the exhaustion (economically and intellectually) of industrialization through import substitution, widening income gaps both nationally and internationally, the expansion and power of the multinational corporations, the new militarisms, the tribulations and triumphs of the Cuban revolution, and the multiple failures of reformism—whether the failures of reforms to be implemented at all or the failures of partially implemented reforms to touch the problems reputed to be within their reach. These and dozens of other increasingly obvious realities turned Latin American social scientists (many with administrative and political experience) relentlessly back to asking: What is underdevelopment? Why does it persist? How

and in what manner does the existence of the rich condition the existence of the poor? All of these questions, and many combinations and permutations thereof, had been asked hundreds of times before, but historical failure, new phenomena, and the poverty of the old answers led directly to their being asked again.

A critical, revisionist posture toward the question of underdevelopment came more slowly and cut much less deeply in the United States. Only after events, both national and international, began dramatically to overrun scholarship that supposedly dealt with those events, did disenchantment begin to set in. Racial violence, the Vietnamese war, the clear failure of the Alliance for Progress to achieve its goals, this and much else that was happening in the late 1960s began to take its toll both outside the academy and within. Disenchantment with American society, American foreign policy, and the developmental (or nondevelopmental) record of the Third World was necessarily felt in disciplines committed to the study of "modernization" and largely believing in the beneficent role of the United States as international example and helper. Meanwhile, angry but challenging social science messages were being received from the South. The tables were partially turned, influence was flowing North.⁸

The "way of framing" the question of underdevelopment that was coalescing, first in the South and then to a much lesser extent in the North, was called dependency theory. As is common in the social sciences, the word *theory* is used loosely here. Epistemologically—as suggested by the phrase "way of framing"—dependency theory is in reality a conceptual framework, a set of concepts, hypothesized linkages, and above all an optic that attempts to locate and clarify a wide range of problems. With overtones of anger—and even desperation at times—the literature sought to move to the center of attention aspects of reality currently unattended to in developmental thinking. It sought to recover for both thought and action the dark, exploitative, asymmetrical, and difficult-to-change elements in the developmental equation. As such, the literature was in part counterparadigmatic in its origins—an alternative way to model or represent the causes, consequences, and persistence of underdevelopment.

For those familiar with this literature, it hardly needs to be emphasized that many of the persons so cavalierly grouped together on the common turf of dependency bibliographies could scarcely bear to sit together in the same conference room, so profound are the differences in their several ways of viewing the current realities and possible futures of Latin America. Nevertheless, for our purposes—and speaking quite abstractly—a common core to the dependency way of framing the question of underdevelopment can be detected. Risking oversimplification, I

would select the following assertions (presented as descriptive hypotheses) as central to and widely shared by those working within the dependency framework. In each case, I have suggested the body or tradition of social science thinking (*sources*) most central to the basic assertions.

The International Context

Underdevelopment is not a *national* problem. It cannot be understood merely by examining the characteristics of national systems or subsystems. Only by grasping the manner in which a given peripheral country fits into the international system and interacts with other (more powerful) national systems is it possible to see the whole and the basic processes involved. Stated most nakedly, the center exists (or profits) at the expense of the periphery, and the conditions that prevail in the latter can only be understood when its relations with the center are grasped. *Sources:* A long tradition of theorizing (in the Economic Commission for Latin America and elsewhere) about the actual and potential negative impact of external actors (broadly defined) on the late-developing periphery. Recently rediscovered and reworked Leninist perspectives on imperialism also enter. Of much less importance are ideas from conventional “linkage politics” approaches to international relations.

Class and Nation

Social forces (classes) and their relationships to production, consumption, politics, and processes of change must be understood in the light of the national-international interactions posited above. The interests (economic, political, social, cultural) of nominally “national” actors are sometimes ineluctably tied to institutions outside the nation (the antination within the nation, in the words of one theorist). Thus, the unending interplay of the categories class and nation. *Sources:* The Marxist theory of class, admixed (somewhat ironically) with ideas from the “group theory of politics” as understood in U.S. political science.

Unequal Relationships

The long-run, macro consequences of relationships between unequals (nations, classes, sectors, groups)—at least in circumstances where the capitalist mode of production prevails—are the pyramiding and intensifying of the existing inequalities, leading to widening gaps, the fragmentation of communities, and decreased relative autonomy for the weak. More specifically, the development of the periphery is conditioned

by its relationship to the center in ways that accrue disproportionately to the benefit of the center and to the disbenefit of the periphery. Similarly, the development of the more advantaged sectors of the peripheral society occurs at the expense of the development and well being of those sectors that are less advantaged. *Sources*: Marxist models of the dynamics of production, accumulation, and distribution under capitalism; radical (not necessarily Marxist) critiques of and alternatives to neoclassical trade theory; and long-standing images of the consequences of the concentration of power.⁹

These three assertions are joined in dependency thinking by a number of other shared perspectives on processes of change. First, although nothing approaching a consensus theory of change is to be found in the literature, the dependency framework shares with Marxism the assumption that economic arrangements are, in the long run, the primary determinants of political, social, and cultural forms. Stated so generally, this assumption obscures rather than clarifies specific relationships, but it serves to set the stage for more detailed modeling of processes of change.

Second, the structural and historical arguments so central to the framework suggest that change cannot take place in “ordered” and nonconflictual fashion. Dependency theory is also, at least implicitly, a theory of conflict as well. Nationally or internationally, changing the unequal relationships that have grown up through the ages will necessarily involve struggle and perhaps violence. Control and privilege are not easily reduced. In the rich imagery of the Cubans, “the past has its claws into the present.”¹⁰

Third, the framework poses—although much less frequently answers—questions about what kind of change in the periphery (and in center-periphery relations) should be sought. Almost all discussions of valued change (explicit or implied) suggest (1) increased autonomy and decisional participation for the weak, and (2) concomitant movement toward the amelioration of inequalities. Valued change defined in this way has an irreducible normative component, and it clearly depends upon but is not limited to the creation and more equitable distribution of both material and nonmaterial goods (opportunities to participate in decisions, security, respect, etc.). But, as will be elaborated subsequently, detailed discussions and theoretical elaboration of these points are almost entirely lacking in the extant dependency literature.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STUDY OF POLITICS

The impact of the dependency framework has already been felt in the northern academy, albeit attenuated and partially transformed by the filtering and protective mechanisms that always encase dominant paradigms. What follows, however, is not an attempt to assess the impact to date of dependency ideas—although this will be mentioned in passing at several points—but rather to suggest what questions about politics are forced to the center of attention if one takes the literature seriously. The selection is necessarily limited and somewhat personal, reflecting priorities and choices from among the larger number of topics that could be related to dependency writings.

Economics, Social Forces, and Regimes

No one who has followed the recent U.S. literature on Latin American politics has to be reminded that the quest for explanations of forms of rule and regimes has intensified and diversified as the Latin American political reality has itself changed. The still continuing break-up of the monopolistic position once held by political development paradigms in the United States has in turn resulted in a diverse set of contending explanations of what is happening in Latin America. For example, there has been a renaissance of interest in what has variously been called the “Catholic-Iberic-Authoritarian-Corporatist” tradition in Latin American political thought and practice.¹¹ There is clearly a related burgeoning of interest in the Latin American military.¹² (But it should also be noted that much of what seems at first glance to be “new” in writing of this sort is at root quite compatible with the revisionist, stability-authority strain of the political development literature.) The central question that unites much of the newer work with the older is: “Why have increasing numbers of Latin American countries embraced authoritarian-military-bureaucratic solutions to developmental dilemmas?” Some seek answers in culture and tradition, others in the military-as-modernizers.

What dependency perspectives assert when confronted with this variegated and often contradictory mix of explanations is that *political arrangements necessarily reflect or express the changing economic forces and thus social forces at work in and on the dependent society*. This is not, of course, a “theory” of politics or political change, but rather an organizing perspective on “where to look” for the basic dynamics that shape regimes. It does not deny the importance of culture, tradition, or institutions, but it clearly relegates them to secondary status in the hierarchy of explanation. Let us examine the implications of this assertion in a bit more detail.

A dependency approach to politics is necessarily historical. It begins with an attempt to understand and delineate the kinds of economic development that have taken place in the periphery, the social classes advantaged and disadvantaged by that development, the national and international alliances formed and dissolved, and what might be called “the exigencies of rule” that result from all of the above. The rather extensive newer literature on Brazil is a case in point: Both the coup of 1964 and the post-1968 intensification of repression (Fifth Institutional Act, etc.) are interpreted by persons working from this perspective as responses to the particular kind of dependent development undertaken (multinational investment, antiinflationary measures, wage policies, etc.). Although the word is overly deterministic, the Brazilian military “had” to respond as they did in 1968 to the new contradictions that were appearing in the developmental project if they were not willing to risk and recast the project itself. Similarly, the Peruvian military regime is understood within this optic as a response (but not historically the only possible response) to antecedent failures of reformism—a reformism that was incapable of cracking external and internal structural impediments to increased economic autonomy and growth. Additionally, the corporatist tendencies of the Peruvian regime can be seen as responses both to its legitimacy requirements and its need to manage production and distribution in ways consonant with centrally directed economic growth in a context of controlled participation.¹³

Additionally, the perspective implies that the interplay of external and internal factors sets *limits* to regime autonomy both nationally and internationally. Asserting that regimes can never be wholly independent of domestic social forces, the dependency framework also insists that those nominally domestic forces are themselves profoundly conditioned by the insertion of the nation into the international system. Thus the regime, and regime behavior, are doubly conditioned—by national and international factors that are themselves interrelated.

For example, a regime like the Chilean, which at the same time represents certain narrow class interests at home while achieving a high degree of autonomy from other social forces through the massive use of repression, is limited in the international arena by its close ties to the United States and certain sectors of international capital. These ties in turn also condition the forms of rule exercised domestically, pointing functionaries toward certain kinds of policies such as the “shock treatment” for the economy and the alternate relaxation and intensification of repression. The Venezuelan regime, on the other hand, more tightly constrained domestically by the rules of the game and by the class coalition that (sometimes grudgingly) supports it, enjoys a relatively

wide field of international action by virtue of its oil revenues and skillful diplomatic maneuvering. The politics of “sowing” (or not sowing) the oil at home, however, are influenced to a much greater degree than most Venezuelan nationalists care to admit not only by domestic class forces, but also by Venezuela’s particular kind of insertion in the international capitalist system.¹⁴

The Politics of Distribution and Socialist Solutions

The dependency emphasis on unequal relationships and the pyramiding of inequalities both nationally and internationally elevates the politics of distribution to primary importance, both empirically and normatively. More specifically, the dependency way of framing the question of underdevelopment asks (often indirectly) why even the most reform-minded regimes (revolutionary Cuba excluded) have such difficulties in moving income, employment, services, benefits, and improved life chances to the majority of the population living at the “margins” of the modern sector of the economy. For shorthand, this will be called the equity issue. In briefest outline, a dependency framing of the equity issue would look something like the following:¹⁵

A first perspective would argue that in any society, those who control income (or wealth) also to a great extent control or exercise political, social, and cultural power as well. Particularly in the highly stratified societies of Latin America, the power resources at the disposal of those at the top of the income-wealth hierarchies are immensely superior to the ones at the disposal of those at middle and lower levels. No matter how these resources are conceptualized (political access, control of the mass media, know-how, allies abroad), the intimate relationship between wealth and power is everywhere manifest. This is not to argue that the top income earners (or the wealthy) necessarily sit in the seats of government or mechanically dictate public policy. Rather it is to stress that the multiple resources that they can assemble, if necessary, in defense of existing patterns of distribution are impressive indeed. When the “ordinary” operations of the economy and the polity are not assuring distributional outcomes most favorable to them, they have the capacity to lever the situation back to “normal.” In short, it is being argued that class (whether understood in Marxist or more conventional stratification terms) is intimately related to power, and that power, in turn, is used in the service of maintaining status-quo patterns of distribution—or worse. The proposition is hardly new, but it is essential.

A second perspective suggests that the market is not an instrumentality for achieving more equitable distribution. Whatever other vir-

tues neoclassical analysis assigns to the market, a tendency toward more equitable distribution is not one of them. As persuasively argued by neoclassicists, the function of the market is efficiency in the allocation of resources (and rewards), not distributive justice.¹⁶ In fact, it is quite vigorously argued at certain points in neoclassical theory that increments of new income and benefits *should* accrue disproportionately to certain sectors of the population (entrepreneurs and/or big consumers) so that savings, investment, and ultimately growth will be maximized. At best, market mechanisms will not shift income and benefit shares down the social structure except as the structure of production itself changes. Within the existing structure, individuals can of course improve their situations by moving to a higher niche. But this individual mobility, however widespread, does not contain within itself a dynamic seriously challenging the proportional shares going to various sectors of the society. Thus, in speaking of less developed societies, hardly anyone any more suggests that “the free play of market forces” will bring in its wake movement toward more equitable distribution *however* defined.

But if class power and the market both militate against equity in distribution, what—in the words of a famous theorist—is to be done? Everywhere the answer, *grosso modo*, is similar: The *state* must ensure that benefits, opportunities, and wealth are pushed against the grain of social structure and market. Even regimes that are not in any sense progressive take some cognizance of this fact, and almost everywhere elites are busy strengthening and empowering the state apparatus to intercede and direct the process of economic development and manage the dilemmas of distribution. The bureaucracy expands; expertise is developed; critical planning, fiscal, and administrative responsibilities are assumed; and domestic programs proliferate. But does the sum of this activity (expanding state power), even in the most reform-minded regimes, necessarily signal long-run increased state autonomy from those class forces that are in some sense antiegalitarian?

The answer to this key question depends on the kind of economic development that is taking place. To the extent that the model is primarily growth oriented, energized by private capital (with or without associated state financing), and dependent to any significant degree on foreign investment, the prospects are very dim.¹⁷ To weave multinational corporations into the development scenario, for example, is to significantly strengthen certain sectors of the domestic class structure while disempowering others. New class alliances with key sectors of the state bureaucracy are formed at home, reflecting the exigencies of attracting and facilitating investment capital. New sociopolitical forces are linked to those sectors of production and distribution that are most fully interna-

tionalized (or “modern,” in the less pejorative term) and on which aggregate growth depends. The high technology segments of the domestic economy become ever more susceptible to pressures generated externally but articulated internally by privileged classes and class fractions. The state itself through the techno-bureaucracy increasingly assumes responsibilities for ensuring the continuation of the political, economic, and social conditions undergirding this web of external-internal relationships. The old, conservative, openly antiequity class sectors recede in political importance as this kind of development takes place. But there is no reason to believe that the class forces that are strengthened, in alliance with the state, are any more favorable to equity measures than were the groups they replace. Can it be said under this kind of development that the state is any “freer” from the influence of the privileged than before?

For example, is the Mexican state—a state constitutionally and rhetorically committed to social justice; massively involved in the developmental process; overseeing an economy that is profoundly penetrated and multinationalized; with a modernizing industrial sector, export oriented agriculture, currency tied to the dollar, inflationary pressures, and balance of payments problems—any more “autonomous” from domestic, antiegalitarian class forces today than forty years ago? Could even the most progressive Mexican regime imaginable consistently decide in favor of impoverished *ejiditarios* when the interests of Mexican and international agribusiness are at stake? The answers are obvious for the Mexican case (and well supported by the experiences of the recent, not overly radical, Mexican regime), but they would not be much less controversial for any regime, no matter how “progressive” its expressed commitments, as long as these kinds of developmental rules and class alliances guide the processes of accumulation and distribution. In sum, the basic dependency proposition relevant to these concerns would be the following: Even the *reformist* regime’s performance with respect to equity at home is sharply limited by the dynamics of class and market in the periphery, and in particular by the manner in which the new class forces engendered by the process of economic development are interlaced with the international capitalist system. In all other (nonrevolutionary) cases, the situation is worse.

Quite logically, to the extent that dependent capitalism is seen as the cause of inequity in the periphery, it is thus automatically ruled out as a potential solution. In other words, the dependency way of framing implies (even though some of its supporters are unwilling fully to accept the implications) that in Latin America capitalism cannot be “improved” to a degree sufficient to resolve the question of equity. Changes of the

sort and magnitude sought are impossible while market mechanisms predominate in production, exchange, and distribution. Historically, the struggle against these market mechanisms has meant and continues to mean the struggle to create socialist economic institutions.

Treated so abstractly, the case for socialist solutions in Latin America seems overwhelming if one accepts the dependency perspective on underdevelopment. But what does this mean in practice? And in particular what does it suggest about the politics of both the transition to socialist forms and the creation of new instrumentalities of rule? Although the dependency literature points the study of Latin American politics down these paths, it offers little or no guidance. One searches in vain for persons working in this tradition who have made an important contribution to the literature on the politics of socialist transformation or theories of administration, participation, accountability, or any number of other topics relevant to socialist rule.

There is, of course, an extensive body of descriptive and theoretical writing about these topics, but it does not derive from persons concretely concerned or familiar with Latin American realities.¹⁸ Furthermore, the large but uneven body of writing generated by the historical experiences of Cuba under the revolutionary government and Chile under the Popular Unity is essentially a literature of polemic-by-example when it touches on these questions. Often its analytic content reduces to little more than statements of the sort: "You can't make the transition to socialism without smashing the bourgeoisie." Or, conversely, it is so concretely tied to the specific historical experience of the country concerned as to be of little use even as illustrative of more general problems.

Obviously it is too much to ask that scholarship "solve" problems that have proved difficult to the point of intractability in a variety of historical settings. But there are parts of problems and important issues that can be addressed even though the overall theme is unmanageable. For example, questions concerning freedom of expression are central to the tactics and ethics of both the transition to socialist forms and their management once in operation. As soon as one accepts the necessity of departing from liberal theory in this regard (no matter how inoperative that theory is or was in practice) a new standard—which is to say, a different theory—is needed.

Or to take another set of critical, related issues, it would seem that neither classical Leninist, corporatist, nor pluralist theories of participation can answer in a coherent way the participatory demands of the equity-enhancing political system. As the history of the Cuban revolution demonstrates—and as many aspects of the Peruvian experiment suggest as well—the search for appropriate participatory forms is

continuous, fraught with tensions and contradictions, and central to the politics of distribution.

Work of the sort implied by topics such as these necessarily has both strong normative and speculative components. These are not strictly or even primarily questions to be illuminated (or settled) empirically, by the pitting of one set of "facts" against a contending set. They imply not only the stating of alternatives, but also the clarification of the values that different alternatives are both supposed to and are likely to maximize. But this only reinforces the appropriateness of such questions for scholars who associate themselves with any one of the several classical traditions in the study of politics.

The Problemática of U.S.-Latin American Relations

It is only a slight exaggeration to say that the dependency way of framing the question of underdevelopment forces persons studying Latin American politics to become specialists in international relations as well. To a significant degree this has always been true of scholars concerned with economic development. The relevance of trade, aid, investment, balance of payments, and similar topics to issues of national development has always been recognized, although most persons working in the dependency tradition would claim that conventional economic theory mystifies as much as it clarifies the center-periphery relations involved. But for a long time the linkages between center and periphery passed largely unrecognized by northern academics more specifically concerned with politics and political change in Latin America. There were, of course, a significant number of specialists (both historians and political scientists) who studied the international relations of the hemisphere; but they in turn usually paid little attention to the domestic consequences of the "high politics" played out on the hemispheric stage.

It was only in the context of strongly felt and increasingly widely held reactions to imperial America—fed by the antiwar movement in the 1960s and a resurgence of radical and Marxist thought—that the *problemática* of inter-American relations began to be taken up again, this time with a quite different set of emphases and explanatory models. Although dependency ideas were not the original moving force behind this renewed interest in inter-American relations, they certainly influenced those seeking new explanations of U.S. foreign policy, overseas expansion, and the long-term causes of Latin American underdevelopment. At a minimum, with its focus on unequal power and the national-international nexus of underdevelopment, the dependency perspective

relentlessly posed questions about the relationship between the practice of hegemonic politics (U.S. aggression in Cuba, subversion in Chile, manipulation in Brazil, clientelism in Guatemala) and the web of transnational economic relations. The perspective said, in effect, that explanations in terms of geopolitics, cold-warriorism, and bureaucratic infighting—while possibly very useful—are not sufficient. It insisted that the politics of U.S.-Latin American relations cannot be understood in circular fashion as “simply” the politics of power and influence.¹⁹ In short, the dependency framework applied to inter-American relations contributed significantly to reraising the question of imperialism in all its historical richness and diversity of meanings.

The old answers to this question, however, are hardly sufficient to the new realities—as many authors have pointed out. Furthermore, it is almost painfully obvious that simply analogizing over into the study of international politics some of the main elements of the dependency perspective (developed primarily to represent economic relations and their consequences) was and is doomed to failure. The models of unequal international exchange and theories of transnational capitalist accumulation so central to dependency thinking do not have direct analogs (as opposed to consequences or expressions) in the political realm. Polities are not “dependent” on each other in the same sense as economies. And furthermore, today’s Latin America is not the easily manipulable and obedient Latin America of the 1960s which, for example, fell quickly into line behind the U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic. Nor, in many ways, is the United States the same.

It is thus incumbent on those convinced of the general usefulness of dependency-derived perspectives on international politics to frame questions in ways that do not violate contemporary realities and at the same time maintain the critical-theoretic core of the main body of dependency thought. One example of such a question would be: *What factors condition the attempt by diverse Latin American regimes to win for themselves increased decisional latitude (lessened dependence, enhanced autonomy) in their international dealings and activities in a hemisphere in which United States power (variously defined) still predominates?* As was done in the previous section with the topic of equity, we will sketch an approach to the “increased decisional latitude” issue.²⁰

At the outset, it is important to emphasize that the quest for increased decisional latitude (international autonomy) takes concrete form in the struggle against North American hegemony. Thus stated bluntly, the assertion reminds us that directly or indirectly the vast majority of the international or foreign actors seen as limiting decisional options in Latin America are associated in some fashion with the United

States. This is true of the multinational corporations and the multinational lending agencies as it is of the Departments of State, Treasury, Commerce, and Defense. There is a conflict-of-interest model implied in this formulation: What is "good" for the United States (or U.S. based corporations, or U.S. dominated international agencies) is not necessarily seen as "good" for Latin American states, either individually or collectively. This formulation does not rule out possibilities of cooperation, negotiation, dialogue, or peaceful solutions. But it does rule out a priori claims of North-South "community"—in the sense that such rhetoric was rejected by the Latin Americans at Tlatelolco in 1974.²¹

More specifically, it is clear that the growing nationalism and accelerating cooperative ventures of Latin America in the 1970s have taken shape in the context of this (sometimes muted) struggle against U.S. hegemony. Regimes of the most diverse types increasingly attempt to enforce international claims in the name of the nation, sovereignty, and "the people." And a high percentage of these claims are "against" the United States. Thus, in 1973, the Argentine government informed the State and Commerce Departments that unless U.S. automotive subsidiaries in Argentina were permitted to sell vehicles to Cuba, the subsidiaries would be nationalized. Long before the OPEC price rises, the Venezuelan government bargained hard with the multinational petroleum companies for increasing shares of oil revenue. Ecuador regularly seizes fishing boats that violate its self-proclaimed (but increasingly recognized) two-hundred mile limit. The Panamanian demand for a renegotiated Canal treaty can no longer be ignored or threatened away. Brazil increasingly expresses its discontent with certain aspects of the denationalization of the economy, and at times takes foreign policy positions—for instance in Angola—directly opposed to those of the United States.

Additionally, regional solidarity and cooperation have been increasing in contexts and on specific issues where the United States had previously been able to manipulate, bully, or divide-and-conquer almost at will. Thus, when the 1974 U.S. Trade Act automatically denied certain import-export preferences to Ecuador and Venezuela because of their OPEC membership, a groundswell of Latin American protest caused the cancellation of a pending hemisphere foreign ministers' meeting in Buenos Aires. Creeping acceptance by Latin American governments of the reality of the Cuban revolution has eroded support for the long-term U.S.-backed sanctions against the revolutionary government. All Latin American nations (and all Third World countries that have taken a public stance) support Panamanian demands for a renegotiated Canal treaty.

The contemporary international politics of the hemisphere is perhaps the most complex and contradictory when it involves what is usually called “the new economic agenda”—the attempt by southern elites to win for themselves (and their nations) larger shares of global product, decisional participation, and economic opportunity.²² That this attempt and the national and international conflicts associated with it are increasingly politicized is recognized even by those who deplore the trend and seek resolutions based on the allegedly less political criteria (efficiency, etc.) of conventional economic theory. A more specific look at what the politicization of the new economic agenda implies will enable us to draw together a number of suggestions about directions in which research on the problemática of U.S.-Latin American relations might move.

The new economic agenda and the tactics associated with it must be seen against the background of attempts at economic integration in Latin America and elsewhere. The hope of the ECLA integrationists was—and continues to be in some circles—that the creation of supranational markets, the rationalization of production (through an international division of labor), a freer flow of goods and services across frontiers, and other such changes would give the necessary scale, coherence, and thus advantage to Latin American economies seeking to accelerate their development and escape from big power manipulation. Much underplayed in the original scenarios were understandings of the political impediments to desired changes. Not only have narrow nationalisms and a fierce clash of local and regional interests haunted the integration movement, but profound ideological clashes—with clear class content—have also impeded the establishment and implementation of common policies.

Shadowing the rise of the integrationist response—and not wholly separate from it—was a movement that might be called the “united front” negotiating response. Achieving a certain coherence only in the late 1960s and early 1970s, this response has been characterized by the search for common positions, understandings, and demands to which most or all parties on the southern side of the bargaining table can subscribe. If the core of the integrationist response is to be found in the attempt to weave together economic units large and coherent enough to have weight *in the marketplace*, the core of the united front negotiating response is to be found in the attempt to group together sufficient voices with sufficiently common positions to have weight *outside the marketplace*. The former strategy is essentially economic, the latter essentially political.

It would seem that this dynamic is well underway in Latin America, with the SELA (Latin American Economic System) as its most

direct expression. The SELA advances ideas and proposes organizational arrangements that would put muscle into the process of negotiation. Integrationist thinking is still evident in some of the proposals, but this thinking is now recast and thus modified in the context of a different and more conflictual vision of Latin American relationships with the United States. SELA implies the *unionization* of Latin America—in part a producers' union, in part a consumers' union. The union necessarily excludes management (the United States), and seeks strength in numbers as well as sufficient organization to guarantee the taking of common positions.²³ The obstacles to successful "unionization" of this sort are obviously immense, for neither the "proletariat" nor the "customers" in this case share a fully common condition or set of interests. Nor is there a clear capacity to strike or boycott. But historically it can be argued that the attempt at unionization had to be made. The exhaustion of integrationist responses to Latin American economic weaknesses, the emergence of the new economic agenda, and the frank recognition of North-South conflicts all support the logic of a politicized collective bargaining process.

Less easy to predict than the continuation of this trend are the prospects for southern successes (defined as sought-after responses to agenda items). The long term obstacles to unionization have already been alluded to, and there are some current indications of weakening solidarity in the South. Of equal or even greater importance in the long run will be the postures adopted by the United States and other nations of the center. Here the image of the United States as sitting on the "management" side of the bargaining table is sensitizing even though not wholly accurate. The bosses are tough, and to date they have not taken kindly to southern initiatives. Despite some recent, more conciliatory reactions to the new economic agenda in the United Nations, the Nixon-Ford-Kissinger policies of "solidarity-busting" and divide-and-conquer are well known and still predominant.²⁴ The February 1976 accords signed with Brazil are only the most recent examples of a long history of attempts by the Nixon-Ford-Kissinger administration to split the emerging Latin American consensus and establish bilateral deals with most-favored nations.²⁵

Politicians and administrations change, however, and doubtlessly some U.S. policies can change also. But the crucial questions are, what policies, what changes, and in what direction? We cannot hope to answer such projective questions here; but it is nevertheless worthwhile briefly to set out a framework for analyzing the possibilities and limits to change in U.S. economic policies toward Latin America—and by implication toward the Third World in general. In skeletal propositional form I would suggest the following:

Groups in the U.S. with regularized access to the policy-making process (special interests) overwhelmingly use their resources to secure a "better deal" for their constituencies. This "better deal" is usually directly perceived or reconceptualizable in material terms (tariff protection for domestic goods, low commodity prices, etc.). These "better deals" are frequently in conflict with Latin American interests.

In foreign policy toward Latin America, there is substantial coherence across class and interest lines in the U.S. when "better deals" of this sort are at stake. Thus segments of U.S. capital and labor get together to try to save domestic industries threatened with low-price imports. Even when domestic interests are in open conflict with each other—for instance, domestic protectionists against multinational free traders using Third World countries as export platforms—there is no reason to expect the domestic clash to be conducive to policy outcomes favorable to Latin America.

U.S. proponents of policies more favorable to Latin America are scattered and usually lack a base in the domestic organizations representing economic interests. To their dismay, they may even find themselves in conflict with poor and marginal groups in the United States whose (understandably) self-regarding perspectives steer them in other directions. Advocates of these policies must often make use of "moral" and humanitarian arguments to a greater degree than their opponents—a distinct disadvantage in a pragmatic society, particularly one in which top leadership denigrates in day-to-day action the legitimacy of such concerns.

A self-reinforcing context for the continuation of current policies exists (political and bureaucratic inertia, sunk costs, etc.). Modifications that in effect do not change the substance of current policies but only "tune" them to new realities are the easiest to make. The self-regarding interest structure can be mobilized behind such modifications, and bureaucrats and politicians understand and feel comfortable with them.

More basic changes are most possible when they have a "cease and desist" component and can attach themselves to America's post-Vietnam disillusion with certain imperial practices. Issues of this sort seem to be largely political instead of economic, and this favors their implementation, for special interests (outside the bureaucracy) have difficulty in finding rationales for counterintervention.

Changes that directly threaten the flow of material benefits to any organized sector of American society are the most difficult to implement. A blocking or "shelving" coalition of threatened interests is relatively easy to construct in a pluralist political system. Since the majority of the changes in economic relations that are most relevant to Latin American

development directly threaten the flow of material benefits to *some* sector of American society, the large scale implementation of such changes is difficult in the extreme. (Corollary to the first proposition.)

Even when the flow of material benefits is not threatened directly by proposed changes, the possibility of blocking coalitions assembled out of the several components of the national security apparatus (including the Congress) remains. The Cuban and Panama Canal cases remind us how difficult it is to disassemble the American empire by peaceful means *even when* strong arguments can be made that the costs of current policies are far outrunning the benefits.

Much work remains to be done in testing and refining propositions of this sort. But hopefully enough has been said to reinforce two points: First, the question of the autonomy of the Latin American state vis-à-vis external actors leads inevitably to a consideration of the structural constraints on the responsive capacity of the United States as an economy, society, and polity. Second, what evidence and understandings we have to date on this capacity suggest that in the short run it is quite limited *except* as external crises are brought home (e.g., OPEC and oil prices) and force responses not fully predictable nor necessarily compatible with the outcomes desired in Latin America.

Questions and dilemmas of the sort suggested here are at the core of the study of politics, and failure to accept the challenges that they pose for understanding the hemisphere can only result in an accelerated mystification of northern views of the dynamics of both national and international change. And, as we should know from the history of the 1960s, such mystification by no means ensures benevolence in North-South relations. To the contrary, flawed northern understanding of Latin American politics are consequential in the lives of millions of persons. North American power inevitably makes North American scholarship relevant. Accepting this statement implies concomitant responsibilities not only to seek clarifications of the question of underdevelopment in Latin America, but also to examine the manner in which the United States fits into the puzzle. If the dependency perspective leaves no other long term legacy in U.S. Latin American studies beyond recasting the manner in which we think about this latter issue, it will not have lived—or died—in vain.

NOTES

1. This theme of the differential “need to know” among Latin Americanists, North and South, and the sociology-of-knowledge-and-politics assumptions underlying it, are developed in more detail in the “Introduction” to Julio Cotler and Richard R. Fagen

- (eds.), *Latin America and the United States: The Changing Political Realities* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1974).
2. Studies of Latin American studies, overviews of the field, etc., are not lacking. In chronological order, among the more important are: "Latin American Studies in the United States, Proceedings of a Meeting Held in Chicago, 6–9 November 1959," mimeographed (New York: American Council of Learned Societies, 1960); Charles Wagley (ed.), *Social Science Research on Latin America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964); Manuel Diégues Júnior and Bryce Wood (eds.), *Social Science in Latin America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967); Stanley R. Ross (ed.), *Latin America in Transition: Problems in Training and Research* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1970); Bryce Wood, "Introduction," in Joint Committee on Latin American Studies and Joint Committee on the Foreign Area Fellowship Program, "Report on Activities, 1959–1970"; Martin C. Needler, "The Current Status of Latin American Studies Programs," *LARR* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1971): 119–39; Michael Potashnik and Bryce Wood, "Government Funding for Research in Latin America, 1970–1971," *LARR* 8, no. 1 (Spring 1973): 135–46. The most massive compendium of data covering all areas, not just Latin America, is Richard D. Lambert, *Language and Area Studies Review*, Monograph 17 (Philadelphia, Penna.: American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1973). Additionally, see the provocative critique by Gláucio Ary Dillon Soares, "Latin American Studies in the United States," *LARR* 11, no. 2 (1976): 51–69.
 3. The FAPP "Report on Activities," p. 26, estimates that more than \$40 million of foundation and government funding flowed to Latin American studies in the United States in the 1960–70 period. This estimate *excludes* contract funding through AID or other governmental agencies (amounting to perhaps 90 percent of all government funding), funds from international agencies, and support generated internally through university budgets. From other sources cited in the previous note, I have estimated (conservatively) that U.S. colleges and universities were spending no less than an average of \$40 million *annually* during the 1960s on the direct costs associated with Latin American studies programs.
 4. This relationship between the subfield of comparative politics and trends in the study of Latin American politics is clearly drawn in the descriptions and prescriptions of Merle Kling. See his "The State of Research on Latin America: Political Science," in Wagley, *Social Science Research*. Kling argues vigorously that the traditionalism of much North American work on Latin American politics must give way to the mainstream, modernizing trends in comparative politics already fully visible in 1963 when Kling wrote. As a sidelight on the conference for which Kling and the others represented in the Wagley volume prepared their papers, it is interesting to note that the special 11-member political science group assembled to discuss the Kling paper contained two academics working full time in the Department of State, one member of the Foreign Service, and one Lieutenant Colonel from the U.S. Army Special Warfare School, Fort Bragg (Wagley, *Social Science Research*, p. 334). In no other disciplinary group was the U.S. government so generously represented.
 5. The most influential theorist working this newer vein was Samuel Huntington, whose *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1968), more than any other book, signaled the shift.
 6. For relevant bibliography from the early years (through 1963) see Kling, "The State of Research." For an updating of Kling through the end of the decade, see John D. Martz, "Political Science and Latin American Studies," *LARR* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1971): 73–99.
 7. José Nun, "Notes on Political Science and Latin America," in Diégues and Wood, *Social Science in Latin America*. Although largely an evaluation of different theoretical-methodological approaches to the study of politics in Latin America, the essay also can and should be read as a sophisticated critique of the kind of political science advocated by Kling (and in large measure practiced in the United States during the 1960s). It should be borne in mind, of course, that political science-as-discipline hardly existed in Latin America. Thus, there was little fertile institutional

soil in which the political development perspective could take root. Such was not the case in the field of Latin American sociology, however, where a very substantial northern intellectual transplant flourished during the 1960s. For an interesting account of the intellectual biographies of three leading Latin American sociologists, see Joseph A. Kahl, *Modernization, Exploitation, and Dependency in Latin America: Germani, González-Casanova, and Cardoso* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1976). Kahl neatly captures the sociological spirit of the age, with all its multiple influences and tensions, in the biographies of these three scholars.

8. An early and influential example of the South-North influence (written in 1969) was Susanne Jonas Bodenheimer, *The Ideology of Developmentalism: The American Paradigm-Surrogate for Latin American Studies* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Professional Papers in Comparative Politics 2, no. 15 [1971]). For a more recent example see "Introduction," in Ronald Chilcote and Joel C. Edelstein (eds.), *Latin America: The Struggle with Dependency and Beyond* (New York: Schenkman, 1974). See also José Ocampo and Dale L. Johnson, "The Concept of Political Development," in James Cockcroft et al., *Dependence and Underdevelopment* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday-Anchor, 1972); and James Petras, "Latin American Studies in the U.S.: A Critical Assessment," in James Petras, *Politics and Social Structure in Latin America* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970). Again, it should be emphasized that paradigmatic critiques of this sort do not occur in Latin American studies independently of what is going on in the parent discipline or subfield. As an example of the kind of criticism being leveled at the developmentalists in comparative politics (interestingly enough, written several years after the Bodenheimer article), see Mark Kesselman, "Order or Movement? The Literature of Political Development as Ideology," *World Politics* 26, no. 1 (October 1973):138–54.
9. No debate related to the dependency literature is as heated as that which derives from varying interpretations of the causes and consequences of these unequal relationships. For the majority of Latin Americans working in the tradition it is clear that peripheral capitalism is the historical experience in which they are interested. Thus, the frameworks they use relate *definitionally* to the historical specificity, development, and dynamics of capitalism in the Americas (and by implication, elsewhere). Even many who would not classify themselves as Marxists share this definitional posture.

On the other hand, critics of this perspective (almost always North American academics rooted in the development literature mentioned earlier) ask "But what about Communist dependence"—by which they almost always mean forms of Soviet hegemony over Eastern Europe and possibly Cuba. (Often, of course, they are saying little more than "If you are criticizing the United States for dominating Latin America, then you should also be criticizing the Soviet Union for its sins".) For one of the few essays taking up this challenge directly, see Guy J. Gilbert, "Socialism and Dependency," *Latin American Perspectives* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1974):107–23.

At the most abstract level, it is possible to reach agreement on the partial truth contained in the old adage that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer (or its biblical version "For unto everyman that hath, shall be given, and he shall have abundance. But from him that hath not, shall be taken away—even that which he hath" (Matt., 25:29). But the level of abstraction and ahistoricism implicit in such overarching representations robs them of much of their heuristic utility. Such is the case, for example, with Johan Galtung's structural theory of imperialism (based on ideas of unequal exchange and intended to apply equally to the United States and the Soviet Union) that, for all its formal elegance, does not really advance understandings of the question of underdevelopment in Latin America. See Johan Galtung, "A Structural Theory of Imperialism," *Journal of Peace Research*, no. 2 (1971), pp. 81–117.

10. As quoted and elaborated in Richard Fagen, *The Transformation of Political Culture in Cuba* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1969), pp. 147ff.
11. See for example the essays and references in Howard J. Wiarda (ed.), *Politics and Social Change in Latin America: The Distinct Tradition* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1974); and James M. Malloy (ed.), *Authoritarianism and Corporatism*

- in *Latin America* (Pittsburgh, Penna.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977).
12. See, for example, Philippe C. Schmitter (ed.), *Military Rule in Latin America: Functions, Consequences, and Perspectives* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1973); Richard C. Rankin, "The Expanding Institutional Concerns of the Latin American Military Establishments: A Review Article," *LARR* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1974):81–108; and Abraham F. Lowenthal, "Armies and Politics in Latin America," *World Politics* 28, no. 1 (October 1974): 107–30.
 13. On Brazil see Fernando Henrique Cardoso, "Associated Dependent Development: Theoretical and Practical Implications," in Alfred Stepan (ed.), *Authoritarian Brazil* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1973). On Peru, see Julio Cotler, "The New Mode of Political Domination in Peru," in Abraham Lowenthal (ed.), *The Peruvian Experiment* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975). A key English language contribution to the theoretical debate on the new authoritarianisms in Latin America was made by Guillermo A. O'Donnell in his *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism* (Berkeley, Calif.: Institute of International Studies, 1973).
 14. As is suggested by the examples just cited, the research implications of this approach are quite formidable. One cannot just study "politics" as variously understood in North American political science and political sociology circa the 1960s (which is where much U.S. training in Latin American studies is still located intellectually). Rather, the scholar assumes the double responsibility of extending his or her work in time and space while developing methodologies appropriate to capturing the dialectical (and highly complex) nature of the relationships posited.
 15. The first two points made in this section are not unique to dependency thinking. They are, not surprisingly, the common property of most if not all radical and/or socialist perspectives on the question of equity-in-distribution in capitalist societies.
 16. For the noneconomist at least, one of the clearest and most humane expositions of this point of view is to be found in Arthur M. Okun, *Equality and Efficiency: The Big Tradeoff* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1975).
 17. Codes of conduct and joint ownership notwithstanding, the antiequity implications of the foreign investment scenario are profound. The scenario affects (negatively as far as improved distribution is concerned in the vast majority of cases) the types of technology that will be used, the kinds of commodities that will be produced, the patterns of consumption that will be encouraged, the way in which labor will be rewarded and allocated (and displaced), and the regions or sectors of the nation that will be advantaged. Many of the same arguments could also be made for development based on domestic private investment as well, although the critique has more bite when applied to the MNCs.
 18. The "extensive body of descriptive and theoretical writing" about socialism is not, however, as rich and well constructed as the writing about capitalism and the politics of capitalism. And in the Latin American case, as suggested above, the gap between analyses of the current situation and understandings of alternative futures is not bridged by the dependency literature. At least classical Marxism, although centered on the analysis of capitalism, developed a hypothesized "pathway" into socialism (full development of the productive forces, increasing contradictions, a dialectical resolution, etc.). The fact that the passing of time has not been kind to this hypothesized link between present and future in no way detracts from its audaciousness and *theoretical* importance. The dependency literature, in part because of its low theoretical as opposed to conceptual-descriptive content, makes no such analysis of change processes and few predictions as to how contemporary problems and contradictions might be resolved in the future.
 19. These and related themes are explored at length in Cotler and Fagen, *Latin America and the United States*. A useful, recent ordering of the literature on inter-American relations can be found in Jorge I. Domínguez, "Consensus and Divergence: The State of the Literature on Inter-American Relationships in the 1970s," manuscript (Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1976).
 20. The phrase "increased decisional latitude" may seem tepid in contrast to the bold,

antiimperialist language that runs through much of the more polemical dependency literature. But at root the question raised here is compatible with most contemporary dependency thinking about imperialism. Within the general dependency framework, there is widespread agreement that the *kind* of economic development strategy undertaken makes the peripheral state vulnerable to new forms of political pressure and influence—emanating directly from the center and/or from the local class allies of the center (the “antination within the nation”). These possibilities were most nakedly illustrated by the covert and overt U.S. campaign against the Allende government, a campaign very intelligently linked to domestic Chilean interests and using Chile’s historical indebtedness and dependence on private and public credit (a legacy of previous governments) to intensify the economic and thus the political problems of the Popular Unity government. However, although in general dependency perspectives are quite useful for suggesting the new architectonics of vulnerability, they are usually weak to the point of uselessness in suggesting when and in what fashion the assaults will come—now that gunboats are going out of style. A fairly typical hypothesis is that “imperialism will defend itself whenever its basic interests are threatened,” hardly a profound proposition.

21. For an elaboration of this and related themes, see Richard R. Fagen, “The ‘New Dialogue’ on Latin America,” *Society* 11, no. 6 (September-October 1974): 17, 24–30.
22. No claim is made here that these fairer shares, if won, will necessarily enhance the well-being of the majority of persons living in peripheral countries. To the contrary, the perspective emphasized in the previous section argues that under dependent capitalist forms of economic organization in the periphery, the aggregate enrichment of the economy will not result in significant improvements in equity. I have developed this theme at much greater length in “Equity in the South in the Context of North-South Relations,” forthcoming in a book edited by Roger Hansen and published by McGraw-Hill.
23. The SELA charter describes it as “an organization for consultation, coordination, and joint economic and social promotion.” Information available to date suggests that SELA will initially attempt to be most active in two areas: the promotion of multicountry economic projects and information systems, and the formulation of unified Latin American positions for bargaining in international economic forums. See “The Latin American Economic System,” *GIST*, Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, April 1976.
24. For the key conciliatory speech see Henry Kissinger, “Global Consensus and Economic Development,” delivered by Daniel P. Moynihan to the Seventh Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly, 1 September 1975.
25. See Henry Kissinger, “Brazil and the United States: The Global Challenge,” 19 February 1976, (Washington, D.C.: Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs).