

U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY AND
LATIN AMERICA:
In Search of the "Special Relationship"*

Robert A. Pastor
University of Maryland

The most prevalent criticism of U.S. policy toward Latin America is that it takes Latin America for granted or that Latin America would be better off if it did. According to this view, Latin America is either neglected or treated shabbily. The florid rhetoric that U.S. policymakers sometimes use to describe the "special relationship" with Latin America raises expectations that are never fulfilled. Abraham Lowenthal has repeatedly described this policy cycle as "a burst of interest followed by concrete decisions that contradict the very policies just announced." He continues, "Whether calling its approach a 'Good Neighbor Policy,' an 'Alliance for Progress,' [or] a 'Mature Partnership,' one administration after another has promised to improve U.S.-Latin American relations," but all have failed.¹

One reason for this pattern, according to Lowenthal, is that the most important issues affecting inter-American relations are global issues. Such issues are discussed in arenas where Latin American concerns are either remote or not heard in the debate by U.S. policy actors, who are either insensitive or unaware of the possible impact of their decisions on Latin America. "Many United States government actions importantly affecting Latin America are not taken for that purpose at all, but are initiated in other policy arenas, domestic or foreign, with little or no consideration of their likely impact in the hemisphere." Not surprisingly, therefore, "other interests ultimately outweigh those involved in inter-American relations."²

*This essay draws on my longer paper, "Caribbean Emigration and U.S. Immigration Policy: Cross Currents," which was prepared for a conference on "The International Relations of the Contemporary Caribbean," sponsored by the Caribbean Institute and Study Center for Latin America (CISCLA) at the Inter-American University of Puerto Rico, San Germán, 22-23 April 1983. The longer paper, together with other conference papers, will appear in a forthcoming book edited by Jorge Heine, Director of CISCLA, and Leslie Manigat. I am grateful to Jorge Heine for support and comments on that paper, to Franklin Baitman and Stephen Hill of the University of Maryland for their research assistance, and to Rosemary Blunck for her indefatigable secretarial support. I also gratefully acknowledge the perceptive and useful comments on an earlier draft made by Susan Kaufman Purcell, Robert J. Alexander, Yale Ferguson, and David North.

In order to test this thesis, one could review a particular global policy over an extended period of time and seek to identify first the extent to which Latin American considerations were taken into account in formulating the policy and then the effect of the policy on Latin America. I have selected U.S. immigration policy to test this thesis because it is classically domestic in its determinants and global in its scope. In a recent book on immigration, several scholars described the issue in just such terms: "While there is general acceptance of the principle that nation states have the right to control and regulate movement across their borders, such decisions frequently have international repercussions on relations between states."³ The authors went on to cite a number of cases in which immigration policy affected international relations, and most of the cases involved the United States or Latin American nations.

One would expect Latin America—the region geographically closest to the United States—to experience the impact of U.S. global immigration policy most directly and intensely. Moreover, given the multiplicity of actors involved in shaping U.S. immigration policy and the fact that almost all of them are oriented toward domestic interests or constituents, one would expect to confirm the Lowenthal thesis that Latin America is often given "short shrift," that the consequences are frequently adverse for the region, and that expectations raised by promissory rhetoric are inevitably dashed by insensitive immigration policies.

Unlike most national security and foreign-policy decisions that often require the analyst to piece the decision together through the distorting lens of newspaper leaks, immigration policy has been made largely in the open. While bureaucratic debates on immigration policy are often difficult to follow, one need not do so because the critical arena lies within Congress and between Congress and the executive branch, and these debates are public and published, in committee hearings and the *Congressional Record*.⁴ To take a recent example, in March of 1981, the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy issued its report and recommendations to the public and the President simultaneously. President Reagan then instructed an eleven-member interagency task force to review the report and make recommendations to him. While this decision-making process was classically bureaucratic and to a certain extent private, it also had little impact on the debate. The next year, the two key immigration bills that were introduced by Senator Alan Simpson and Representative Romano Mazzoli virtually ignored Reagan's proposal and borrowed much more heavily from the Select Commission's public report. The key arena since then, as well as historically, has been the Congress.

This brief review of the past century of U.S. immigration policy will try to identify the key decisions and ascertain their effects on Latin American migration. How was the "special relationship" defined both

abstractly and concretely? While policy during this period may be categorized in many ways, a Latin American perspective suggests four useful divisions for this essay: Defining Limits, 1875–1921; The Classical Special Relationship, 1921–1964; From Special Relationship to Global Policy, 1965–1978; and The Special Case—Illegal Migration.

DEFINING LIMITS, 1875–1921

Although immigration policy was debated in Congress from almost the beginning of the republic, the United States resisted any restrictions on immigration for a century. Then, with the passage of the immigration acts of 1875 and 1882, Congress set qualitative standards on immigration, excluding a number of categories like prostitutes, lunatics, idiots, and “persons likely to become a public charge.” These exclusions were expanded over the next two decades to keep out groups ranging from criminals to polygamists to anarchists. Racial groups legislatively excluded were the Chinese in 1882 and the Japanese in 1907.

To the extent that Latin America received differential treatment during this time, such treatment was favorable. Congress decided that the United States’ special relationship with Latin America necessitated a nuanced immigration policy that provided preferential treatment. In 1904 Congress exempted Cuban and Mexican immigrants from paying the “head tax,” which had been legislated for all immigrants the year before. In 1914 a bill was introduced in Congress to categorize West Indians in the same racial group as Asians, whose entry was sharply limited. President Wilson vetoed the bill when it passed Congress in 1915, although his main objection was its requirement of a literacy test.⁵ When other restrictions were passed in 1918, including a literacy test, Latin Americans (including those in the Caribbean) were exempted.⁶

During the period 1820–90, most immigrants came from northern Europe. But during the first two decades of the twentieth century, 14.5 million new immigrants arrived, totaling 13.7 percent of the U.S. population by 1920; and two thirds of the new immigrants came from southern and eastern Europe. Because of the large numbers and “exotic” origins of the new immigrants, Congress decided to legislate limits on immigration. But setting a ceiling on the numbers of immigrants proved easier than selecting the criteria to determine who would be welcome and who would not. In addressing this question, the United States was forced to face the most sensitive and difficult questions such as: what kind of nation is the United States today, and what kind of nation does it want to be in the coming years?

Migration from Latin America and the Caribbean remained marginal (see table). From 1820 to 1920, the number of immigrants from the Caribbean Basin (the Caribbean Islands, Central America, and Mexico)

Latin American and Caribbean Immigration by Regions, 1820–1980

Region of last residence	1820–1900	1901–1910	1911–1920	1921–1930
All countries	19,123,316	8,795,386	5,735,811	4,107,209
Mexico ²	28,003	49,642	219,004	459,287
Caribbean Islands	125,598	107,548	123,424	74,899
Central America	2,173	8,192	17,159	15,769
Total for Caribbean Basin ³	155,774	165,382	359,587	549,955
South America	12,105	17,280	41,899	42,215
Caribbean Basin and South America as % of total immigration	0.9%	2.1%	7.0%	14.4%

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, 1979 *Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service*. An immigrant is defined as an alien admitted for permanent residence. The Caribbean includes Anguilla, Antigua, the Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, the Cayman Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Montserrat, the Antilles, Saint Kitts, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent, Trinidad and Tobago, the Turks and Caicos, and the British Virgin Islands. Data for 1980 are preliminary and currently unpublished.

¹Figures for fiscal year 1980 are based on country of birth rather than on country of last residence.

²There are no records of immigration from Mexico for the period 1886–93.

³The Caribbean Basin is defined here to include Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean Islands.

totaled 690,743, or 2 percent of the total immigration. Immigration from South America totalled only 71,284, 83 percent of whom arrived between 1900 and 1920. Not surprisingly, Latin America did not figure prominently in the first debates to set limits, although it was mentioned.

The 1921 immigration law set an annual ceiling of 357,803 immigrants as well as quotas for each country based on 3 percent of those nationalities residing in the United States in 1910. Using this formula, nearly two thirds of the quotas were reserved for northern Europe, where interest in immigrating to the United States was low, while immigration from southern and eastern Europe was reduced markedly. The entire Western Hemisphere was exempted from the quotas.

The reduced immigration of Europeans caused a shortfall in labor that encouraged increased immigration from Mexico and the Caribbean. Latin American and Caribbean immigration increased from about four hundred thousand in the second decade of the twentieth century to almost six hundred thousand in the 1920s, and because of the immigration quotas, Latin American and Caribbean immigration as a percentage of global immigration doubled from 7 percent to 14.4 percent. Immigration from the West Indies averaged a thousand per year from 1899 to 1904. From 1904 to 1923, it increased, averaging between three and seven thousand per year. In 1924 it exceeded ten thousand.⁷ Even more signifi-

1931-1940	1941-1950	1951-1960	1961-1970	1971-1980 ¹	1820-1980
528,431	1,035,039	2,515,479	3,321,677	4,493,314	49,655,662
22,319	60,589	299,811	453,937	597,223	2,189,815
15,502	49,725	123,091	470,213	741,126	1,831,126
5,861	21,665	44,751	101,330	134,640	351,540
43,682	131,979	422,902	1,025,480	1,472,989	4,327,730
7,803	21,831	91,628	257,954	295,741	788,456
9.7%	14.9%	20.5%	38.6%	39.4%	19.1%

cant to the U.S. Congress were the nearly ninety thousand Mexicans who immigrated in 1924.

THE CLASSICAL SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP, 1921-1964

When Congress debated immigration policy in 1924, these Latin American increases were noted and evoked a limited policy response. The major concern, however, remained European migration. The National Origins Act of 1924, the product of this debate and concern, revised the formula for designating national quotas so as to nearly eliminate immigration to the United States from southern and eastern Europe until 1929, when another formula based on the 1920 census took effect. Racism permeated the debate, and one avowed purpose of the law was to maintain the "racial preponderance [of] the basic strain of our people."⁸ Congress denied Japanese eligibility for citizenship and excluded any further Japanese immigrants. This decision was handled so distastefully that, according to one scholar, it led to "smoldering resentment" in Japan and "a permanent source of friction" between Japan and the United States.⁹

Congress responded to the increased number of immigrants from the British West Indies by requiring them to use Great Britain's quota. Although West Indian-American citizens later testified as to their satisfaction at being considered under the very large quota of "our mother country," Great Britain,¹⁰ the principal motive in 1924 for removing the West Indies from the Western Hemisphere exemption was unconcealed racism. As Senator David Reed of Pennsylvania commented: "There has developed within the last six months a rather considerable immigration of negroes from the colonies of Great Britain in the West Indies, and it was for that reason, and because that immigration seems to us to be undesirable, that we [the Senate Immigration Committee] struck out the West Indies dependencies" from the Western Hemisphere exemption.¹¹

Except for the Caribbean colonies, the rest of the Caribbean and Western Hemisphere nations were singled out for preferential treatment in being exempted from quotas, which permitted unlimited entry. This special treatment occasioned intense debate, some of which reflected the racism permeating the entire discussion. For example, Georgia's Senator William Harris called for a quota for Mexico, describing Mexicans as being "as undesirable as any people coming into this country, and I want to get rid of them." Others worried that Mexico could be used as a transit for illegal aliens from Europe.

But most of the debate on Latin America and the Caribbean focused on the pivotal issues of inter-American relations: should the United States have a "special" policy for the region? and, what does "special" mean? The prevailing view was that in order to maintain good relations with Latin America, the United States would have to offer special treatment on immigration. Senator Reed argued that the United States should seek to counteract Latin American instincts to look to Paris and Madrid for culture and politics: "If we want to hold them [Latin America and the Caribbean] to us—and I think we do, so long as we maintain the Monroe Doctrine—we have got to treat them differently from the rest of the world, and we ought to treat them differently in the measure now pending." Senator Duncan Fletcher of Florida expanded on this theme: "I think we must accord a different treatment, a different code of treatment to South and Central American countries and Canada from what we accord to Europe. Juxtaposition, geographically speaking, makes them different. . . . Ever since . . . the Monroe Doctrine, when we took the position of the big brothers, we have had difficulty all along . . . to induce those people to realize that all of our efforts were for their benefit and a protection against intrusion from countries across the sea rather than a selfish purpose. . . . Our duty today . . . is for the "big brother" to show . . . we are not going to do anything selfish that will unnecessarily offend them."

Moreover, no compelling practical argument existed for restricting immigration from the Western Hemisphere. Although the immigration figures from Mexico and the West Indies had increased sharply since 1921, they were still small when compared to the flows from the rest of the world. However ironic it might sound today, few worried about Mexico becoming a large source of immigration. "Remember, Mexico is not a populous country," said Senator Alva Adams of Colorado. Net emigration from Central America was 725, and from South America 3290 in the previous year. Senator Reed insisted that a quota for the Western Hemisphere was "in the first place . . . absolutely unnecessary."

These practical and moral arguments were countered by those of Senator Willis, who argued that immigrants took scarce jobs and that the United States ought to treat Mexico and Latin America like other nations

in the world. Senators Willis of Ohio and Harris of Georgia introduced an amendment to include the Western Hemisphere within the quota, but it was rejected decisively 12–60. Even Senator Reed, a leading restrictionist, voted against the amendment because of the importance he attached to the “Pan-American ideal.”¹²

As the U.S. economy sank into depression, immigration again became an issue. In 1930 a concerted attempt was made to remove Mexico, the independent Caribbean, and the rest of Latin America from the quota-exempt category. The debate focused on illegal migrants from Mexico, who were alleged to be taking jobs at a time of rising unemployment. Senator Carl Hayden of Arizona argued against applying any quota to West Indians or Latin Americans because their numbers were small. Senator Henrik Shipstead of Minnesota posed the issue compellingly: “I would very much prefer to have it found possible not to put any of the nations of the Western Hemisphere on a quota basis, but in view of our unemployment situation, I do not see how we are going to avoid it.”¹³

The real issue was whether to bring Mexico into the quota system. No support existed for applying it to Canada, and as Senator Harris (the sponsor of the amendment to apply a quota to Mexico) observed, “Central and South American countries do not exhaust their minimum quotas, and there is no reason for us to exclude them. The sore spot is immigration—the one country that is sending us so many undesirables is Mexico. We have millions of unemployed in this country at this time, and in the past five years, we have a record showing we have allowed an average of 58,000 to come here from Mexico, and we know almost as many have come for which we have no record.”¹⁴

Senators William Borah of Idaho and Claude Swanson of Virginia, both on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, opposed singling out a neighbor and insisted that the adverse consequences to U.S. foreign relations would be serious. But they failed to persuade their colleagues. On 13 May 1930 Senator Harris’s amendment to apply the quota to Mexico “just as it applies to European countries” passed by a vote of 51–16.¹⁵ The same restrictionists who had pressed for a similar amendment in 1924 and had failed, succeeded in 1930 because the Depression had frightened the moderates.

The State Department chose to make its stand in the House. As early as 1927, Secretary of State Frank Kellogg advised President Coolidge to oppose a Western Hemisphere quota. In 1928 he sent Coolidge a second, strongly worded memorandum: “It seems to me inconceivable that for the sake of preventing a relatively insignificant migration from Mexico, the undesirability of which is at least questionable, we should endanger our good relations with Canada and all of Latin America.”¹⁶

In 1928 Kellogg testified against Western Hemisphere quotas.

Having learned a lesson from the Hughes fiasco with the Japanese in 1924, Kellogg cited confidential reports predicting that Latin American governments would view such an act as “unfriendly”; however, he did not produce the reports.¹⁷ At the same time, the Coolidge administration tried to defuse the issue by acting administratively to reduce the flow of legal immigration from Mexico. Immigrants were required to pass a literacy test and be adjudged unlikely to become a public charge. In January of 1929, the State Department sent special instructions to the American consuls in Mexico to apply these legal standards for admission more stringently. Within a few months, Mexican immigration dropped by half. Immigration in fiscal year 1930 was about twelve thousand as compared to over forty thousand in 1929. When the Senate bill was considered in the House, the State Department pointed to the sharp decline in immigration as an indication that the problem had diminished. In his analysis of the 1930 debate, Robert Divine concluded that “the vital factor in defeating the restrictionist cause was the opposition of the State Department. Appealing to the traditional ideal of Pan-Americanism,” they won over the House leadership.¹⁸

During the Depression, the flow of migrants to the United States slowed and was exceeded in 1932 by the flow of emigrants out of the United States. Unemployment disappeared during the Second World War, and the United States even had to recruit agricultural and industrial labor from the Caribbean area. In 1942 the United States negotiated bilateral agreements with Mexico, British Honduras, Barbados, the Bahamas, and Jamaica for temporary workers.

In 1947 Representative Walter Judd of Minnesota introduced an immigration bill proposing a quota of one hundred immigrants for each colony. Because West Indians were immigrating at a much higher rate, Americans of West Indian descent organized and testified against this provision. The bill passed the House but died in the Senate. Five years later, however, the McCarran-Walter bill emerged from the Judiciary Committees with the same provision, and it passed. The McCarran-Walter Act was a product of both a long-standing need to modernize the immigration statutes and the security fears of the Cold War. The law codified existing immigration and naturalization statutes and tightened laws to protect the United States against the possible immigration of radicals, Communists, and subversives. It also retained the national-origins quotas as well as the Western Hemisphere exemption.

The major Caribbean issue—an annual limit of one hundred immigrants per colony—was vigorously debated on the floor of both houses. Representative Adam Clayton Powell of New York, who claimed to represent one hundred and fifty thousand West Indians in his district alone, was the main opponent of the provision: “This section in its impact discriminates especially against would-be immigrants from Jamaica,

Trinidad, and other colonies of the West Indies, most of whom are Negroes." Powell attacked the proposal as racist and also tried to relate the issue to the Cold War motives behind the bill in a manner that might cause its sponsors to reconsider the matter. "We are setting up a policy that is not going to help us in our fight throughout the world. Do not think that what you do here is not going to be heard over the world. It is going to be heard in the Caribbean; it is going to be heard where there are people of the dark races. We are going to need them sometime."

Powell was supported by liberal congressmen and senators, including Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota and Herbert Lehman of New York, who introduced a liberal bill that would have eliminated all racial discrimination and would have left "untouched present immigration from Western Hemisphere colonies." An editorial in *The New York Times* endorsed this position: "An entirely new provision limiting colonial quotas is clearly aimed at a drastic cut in immigration from the British West Indies—notably Jamaica—and if the intention is not to exclude Negroes from the Caribbean islands that is unmistakably the effect. It is all the more startling when we consider that there are no quota limitations at all for the independent countries of the Western Hemisphere."¹⁹

But these arguments did not move the majorities in Congress. Representative Francis Walter of Pennsylvania claimed that the provision was not designed to discriminate against Negroes: "It is just a case of equal treatment. . . . Haiti and Dominican Republic all come in without regard to quotas, and they are all colored people. . . . if Jamaica had its independence, then the residents of that island would also be quota exempt."²⁰

President Truman vetoed the bill, but on 27 June 1952, Congress overrode his veto. On 4 September, out of pique and recognizing that his term was nearly over, Truman established a Presidential Commission on Immigration and Naturalization to reexamine the McCarran-Walter Act as well as current immigration problems and to make recommendations to him by 3 January 1953, before the new congress was installed. The commission predictably issued a strongly worded critique of the act, stressing that it harmed U.S. relations in the Caribbean by limiting immigration to one hundred immigrants per colony, for a total of eight hundred for the region as compared with twenty-five hundred immigrants from the region the year before. Various British West Indian legislatures passed resolutions denouncing the act. Leaders and newspapers in the area protested, as did the British government and the Caribbean Commission, a body formed by executive agreement among the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the Netherlands to plan for the economic and social development of the area.²¹

In hearings before the Presidential Commission on Immigration and Naturalization, Walter White, Secretary of the National Association

for the Advancement of Colored People, protested the provision's discriminatory features and said he had encountered "many examples of anger mixed with shock" on a recent trip to the region. Secretary of State Dean Acheson testified before the commission that the act "causes resentment, weakening the friendship of some of our neighbors, but also causes or emphasizes economic dislocations that weaken those neighbors, whom we need as strong partners and who can furnish us with sites for military bases and strategic raw materials."²² But the State Department's pleading as well as the critique and recommendations of the presidential commission were all to no avail. The provision remained on the books.

The McCarran-Walter Act had a considerable impact on Caribbean immigration to the United States, although not entirely as intended. Between its passage and the 1965 act that repealed the discriminatory provision, Caribbean immigration almost quadrupled in comparison to the previous decade (221,485 during 1953–65 compared with 53,013 during 1943–52). The major sources of the increase were Cuba and the Dominican Republic (after 1961). Immigration from the major islands in the British West Indies was reduced, but it still averaged above two hundred per year per large island, and considerably more for Jamaica. The total number of immigrants exceeded the national quota because several large groups of immigrants, like spouses and children of U.S. citizens or natives and their spouses and children from third countries, were nonquota immigrants and were not counted under the particular nation's quota.²³

In the postwar period, emigration from the British West Indies increased markedly, and when the flow to the United States was reduced by the McCarran-Walter Act, emigration shifted to Great Britain. One study estimated that before the McCarran-Walter Act went into effect, for every West Indian who migrated to Great Britain, nine went to the United States. After the act, the ratio was reversed.²⁴ So many West Indians migrated to the United Kingdom so rapidly that the United Kingdom passed two very restrictive laws, the Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1962 and another act three years later that restricted total work permits from West Indians to eighty-five hundred per year. As the doors of the United Kingdom swung closed, West Indians came to the United States in greater numbers: first through the side door as spouses and relatives, then illegally through the back door, and finally, with independence and the subsequent 1965 immigration act, through the front door as well.

FROM SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP TO GLOBAL POLICY, 1965–1978

The debate over whether to exempt the Western Hemisphere from the national-origins quota system, which had begun with the passage of the original Immigration Act of 1921, finally ended in 1965. As in the past, the parameters of the debate were defined both by the degree to which legislators believed that unlimited immigration from the Western Hemisphere would be a problem and by the way they defined the special relationship. Once again amendments were introduced to impose a quota on Western Hemisphere immigration, and again, the idea was opposed by the State Department and by others like House Judiciary Chairman Emmanuel Celler of New York and Representative Michael Feighan of Ohio, who argued “it would endanger Latin American relations” and that “such immigration had averaged less than 115,000 over the past decade.” In the House, the amendment was defeated 215–189.²⁵

Senators Samuel Ervin of North Carolina and Everett Dirksen of Illinois introduced a similar restrictive amendment in the Senate. Once again, the State Department opposed it, claiming that it would harm U.S. relations with Latin America. But the issue was no longer so clear cut, as *The New York Times* pointed out in an editorial: “Secretary Rusk urges that Latin American nations remain outside any ceiling [on immigration], as they are now outside the quota system. But this well-intentioned position could lead to trouble and ill will in the not so distant future if immigration from Latin America and the Caribbean should grow sharply—as there are signs that it will—and pressures were then built for us to limit a sudden flood of immigrants for which the country was unprepared. While the entire law is being overhauled, it would be better to place all the nations of the world, including those to the south of the United States, on exactly the same footing.”²⁶

The 1965 immigration law repealed the national-origins quota system, removed discrimination based on race or ancestry, created an annual Eastern Hemisphere ceiling of one hundred seventy thousand (with an annual limit of twenty thousand per country), and altered the basis of selection by using criteria such as family ties and skills on a first-come, first-served basis. The Senate insisted on bringing the Western Hemisphere into this new formula by establishing a ceiling of one hundred and twenty thousand immigrants, but no preference system or country limitations. Immigration would be regulated instead by a labor certification requirement.

The Western Hemisphere exemption was repealed in 1965 for two reasons. First, Congress was openly concerned about the increasing numbers of Latin American and Caribbean immigrants since the Second World War, and the region’s population explosion promised that the pressures would worsen in the future. Secondly, the argument of the

"Pan American idea" was no longer obvious or compelling; one could argue just as strongly, as did *The New York Times*, that U.S. relations would be improved, rather than endangered, by treating Latin America on an equal basis. This argument anticipated by a decade the debate among Latin Americanists as to whether there should be a special relationship with Latin America.²⁷

A recent study suggests that the Johnson administration accepted the Senate's amendment to end the Western Hemisphere exemption as the "price to be paid for abolishing the national origins system."²⁸ Whether or not this happened, Congress was reluctant to impose an amendment with foreign policy implications on the president, so Congress chose instead to delay the implementation of the 1965 Act for three years. In the interim, Congress established a Select Commission on Western Hemisphere Immigration to consider the advisability of a quota for the Western Hemisphere.

The Select Commission consisted of private citizens as well as representatives from the executive branch (including Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Covey Oliver) and Congress. Completed in January of 1968, the report found that contrary to the fearful predictions of the Johnson administration, the passage of the 1965 Act "caused little adverse hemispheric reaction," and that "no official representations" had been made by Latin American or Caribbean governments to the United States. On the principal issue of whether to place a numerical ceiling on Western Hemisphere immigration, the commission was "not able to make a final, definitive recommendation." Instead, it recommended delaying the imposition of the ceiling for one year, from 1 July 1968 to 1 July 1969, pending further research. If this advice was a typical commission recommendation, Congress also responded typically: it took no action.

A close reading of the report leads one to conclude that the commission, like the Congress, hesitated and ultimately failed to take the final step of treating Latin America as it treated the rest of the world. Instead of applying the same quota or ceiling to Latin America, the commission recommended a labor certification scheme, and instead of putting the new scheme into effect, the commission recommended a further delay of one year to gauge how well the act was working. In effect, the commission's decisions reflected a lingering reluctance to apply the global policy to Latin America. The United States was trying to detach itself from the Monroe Doctrine and the myth of the Pan American idea but could not quite do it. In the commission's own words:

While the Commission does not believe that the special conditions which have existed for so many years in the New World ought necessarily to be continued simply because of geography, it does feel that these conditions should cause Americans to consider most carefully the limitations and inhibitions they place

upon freedom of movement within the Western Hemisphere. If it should develop that the process of labor certification does in fact provide that measure of immigration control the Congress may deem needful, it seems clear this sort of device would be preferable to the ceilings, quotas, and the like.²⁹

The 1965 Act fundamentally changed the pattern of immigration to the United States. The United States opened itself to large numbers of immigrants from the Third World, particularly from the Caribbean Basin. Between 1900 and 1965, 75 percent of all immigrants were of European extraction; but since the act took effect in 1968, 62 percent of the immigrants have come from Asia and Latin America, and in 1978, the percentage increased to 82 percent. In the past two decades, the Caribbean Basin has become the largest source of immigrants to the United States, constituting nearly one third of all legal immigrants.³⁰

Some differences still existed between U.S. immigration policy toward the two hemispheres. Both had numerical ceilings—one hundred and seventy thousand for the Eastern Hemisphere and one hundred and twenty thousand for the Western—but the Eastern Hemisphere had a preference system and per country limits of twenty thousand while the Western Hemisphere relied mostly on labor certification requirements as a way to ration available visas. Not surprisingly, the waiting period to receive immigrant visas in the Western Hemisphere grew longer and longer.

Congress ironed out these remaining differences in two stages. On 20 October 1976, Congress passed an immigration law creating two essentially equal immigration systems based on a preference system and ceilings of twenty thousand per country. The ceiling, however, remained at the original differing levels of one hundred and seventy thousand for the East and one hundred and twenty thousand for the West. Two years later, Congress finally moved to eliminate the remaining difference by establishing a single worldwide ceiling of two hundred and ninety thousand. These ceilings are less restrictive than they appear because they exclude immediate relatives of U.S. citizens, refugees, and undocumented workers. Most Mexican immigrants are relatives of U.S. citizens, which explains why the number of Mexican admissions each year considerably exceeds Mexico's quota of twenty thousand.

THE SPECIAL CASE: ILLEGAL MIGRATION

Illegal migration has concerned Congress since the United States first restricted migration in the 1920s, but only recently has it been viewed as a significant problem. In 1971 the House Judiciary Committee held hearings on illegal migration, and the subject has continued to preoccupy Congress and presidents ever since.

While illegal migration is a global issue like other immigration

policies in the sense that the policies have universal applications, a policy that effectively precludes illegal migration will have a disproportionate impact—indeed, almost an exclusive impact—on one region: the Caribbean Basin and particularly Mexico. Estimates of the number of illegal migrants in the United States range from two to twelve million, but the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy in its March 1981 report judged that the number in 1978 was “almost certainly below 6 million, and may be substantially less, possibly only 3–3.5 million.” Of that number, 50 to 60 percent are estimated to be Mexicans, and no fewer than 80 percent of all undocumented workers have arrived from the Caribbean Basin. The Select Commission reported that an increasing proportion came from the Caribbean, including the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Haiti.³¹

An unprecedented number of consultations have occurred between the United States and Mexico on the immigration issue during the Carter and Reagan administrations, starting with President Carter’s first conversation with Mexican President José López Portillo on 14 February 1977 and continuing through high-level meetings by a subgroup of the Consultative Mechanism. On 4 May 1979, in response to an appeal by the president of Mexico, President Carter sent a letter to all fifty state governors asking them “to deal fairly and humanely with any persons accused of being undocumented workers.”

In addition, Congressional leaders frequently have visited Mexico for consultations. These encounters sometimes have failed to elicit a response from Mexican government officials, who later privately explained that their silence meant they did not want to interfere in the internal affairs of the United States. Other, more candid Mexican officials sought U.S. inaction because Mexico viewed the migrant flow as an essential escape valve in reducing unemployment pressures.³²

In a press interview on 25 April 1977, Mexican President López Portillo acknowledged illegal migration as a problem, saying “we want to resolve it. But it is not simple. We see it as a problem of commerce, a problem of finance. . . . We cannot resolve it as a police problem.” But he also admitted that “for us, the problem is a solution, a solution to the lack of work in Mexico. We know it is the obligation of Mexico to find work for our citizens. We are doing what we can.”³³

Since President Ford first issued a proposal on illegal migration, every president and every congress has been aware of the Mexican dimension of this issue and Mexican-American sensitivity to discrimination. This awareness is one reason why it has been easier to make a proposal than to pass a law. The various proposals have differed in some respects, but all have had four elements: first, employer sanctions to penalize businessmen for hiring illegal aliens; second, an improved workers’ identification system; third, legalization for those aliens who

can prove they have been in the United States for an extended period; and fourth, sensitivity to the possible repercussions on Mexico and a readiness to assist Mexico in its economic development. One form that the last element has taken was a proposal to expand the immigration quotas for Mexico and Canada to forty thousand, which is twice the established country ceiling. This proposal is incorporated in the Simpson-Mazzoli immigration reform bill.

Both Senator Alan Simpson and Representative Romano Mazzoli held extensive hearings on their bills, in which the foreign-policy implications were thoroughly reviewed. In addition, other committees, including that on foreign affairs and the Subcommittee on Census and Population, have explored the international implications of the bills. Although it is often assumed that curbing illegal migration would necessarily harm the economic development of Mexico or other sending countries, this assumption may be inaccurate. Illegal migrants tend to have relatively better education and skills than the national average, and most have jobs when they depart. It is quite possible that illegal migration impedes, rather than facilitates, development in the sending countries.³⁴

The principal argument in favor of prohibiting illegal migration is the need to gain more effective control of the borders, the first attribute of sovereignty. The bill faces formidable opposition from a number of groups: Hispanics who view the bill as discriminatory, civil-liberties groups who dislike employer sanctions and identification cards, businesses that prefer cheaper labor, and immigration lawyers who fear the bill may mean less business. Senator Simpson succeeded in winning approval of his bill by the Senate in August of 1982 and again in the next session on 18 May 1983, but the bill has not yet cleared the House.

More than any other immigration bill, the Simpson-Mazzoli package was assembled with a keen sensitivity to its implications for Mexico. This statement does not imply, however, that Mexico likes the package. Indeed, on 8 December 1982, when the Mexican government finally realized that the U.S. Congress might pass such a law, the Mexican Senate passed a resolution condemning the bill and expressing "our alarm and concern for the repercussions which will impact both countries. . . ." Nonetheless, by expanding the legal immigration quota for Mexico and by taking a number of other actions to assist Mexico in coping with its debt crisis, the United States has indicated a recognition of this new "special relationship." At the same time, however, Congress was saying (as Mexico often points out) that respect for national sovereignty must be the basis upon which the relationship must be built.

CONCLUSION: THE CHANGING DEFINITION OF "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP"

Contrary to the initial hypothesis, Latin America has weighed quite heavily in almost every debate on immigration policy. Indeed, U.S. policy toward the region really shaped the immigration policy toward the region rather than the other way around.

During the first period, from 1875 to 1921, when qualitative limits were defined and quantitative limits were contemplated, U.S. attention focused primarily on European migration; Latin American migration levels were quite low. At the same time, the idea of a Pan American Union was emerging as a more cooperative refinement of the traditional Monroe Doctrine, and congresses and presidents accepted this idea as a reason to exempt the region from the immigration restrictions that the United States was imposing on the rest of the world.

From 1921 to 1964, Congresses and Presidents assumed that there was a special relationship between the United States and Latin America, one that justified both intervention and preferential treatment. Latin American considerations weighed heavily on the debate on immigration policy and each time, Congress decided that the special relationship implied that Latin America should be exempted from the immigration quotas that were being applied to the rest of the world.

These decisions to treat Latin America better than the rest of the world were taken deliberately to prove, as one Senator said in 1924, "that all of our efforts were for their benefit and a protection against intrusion from countries across the sea rather than a selfish purpose." Some deviations from this affirmative approach occurred, for example, the racist restrictions against Caribbean citizens in 1952, but Congress largely shaped U.S. immigration policy in conformity with its vision of inter-American relations.

As the conception of how and whether to be "special" to Latin America changed in the 1960s, so too did U.S. immigration policy. Moving in small steps and weighing carefully the impact of each step on U.S. relations with Latin America, Congress sought to place Latin America on a more equal footing with the rest of the world. The carefully phrased report of the Commission on Western Hemisphere Immigration in 1968 reflected both a desire to blend Latin American policy into a single, global immigration policy and a continuing interest in treating Latin America a little better than the rest of the world. The 1965 law therefore restricted immigration by labor certifications rather than by quotas or ceilings; and the Western Hemisphere report, itself a reflection of the continuing power of the special relationship, stuttered its way toward accepting this new standard.

Interestingly, at about the same time that the commission was

trying to adjust immigration policy to a changing relationship with Latin America, the State Department was debating about whether to adopt a special tariff preference system for Latin America or generalized tariff preferences for the entire developing world. The Johnson administration and subsequently the Nixon administration as well decided that both the global and regional interests of the United States would be better served by a global preference scheme, but one that was tilted through a careful selection of products to give more benefits to Latin America.³⁵ This conclusion roughly parallels that of the Select Commission on Western Hemisphere Immigration.

Less than a decade later, Roger Hansen posed for the benefit of the Linowitz Commission on U.S.–Latin American Relations three options for an overall U.S. approach to Latin America: first, a policy of special relationship; second, a policy of pure globalism; and third, a policy of globalism with a tilt toward Latin America.³⁶ Clearly in such diverse fields as trade and immigration policies, the United States was moving away from the first option in the direction of the second. In the meantime, however, it was employing the third option.

By placing Latin American immigration under a quota and ultimately moving toward a single global standard, the U.S. Congress indicated that its view of a special relationship had changed. According to the newer approach, in order to have good relations in the current period, the United States should aim for more balance and mutual respect rather than granting special favors, which would imply a paternalistic attitude no longer suited to U.S.–Latin American relations. The best way to promote good relations would be to treat Latin America as the United States treated Europe and the rest of the world—on the basis of equality and as part of a global policy. Moreover, as *The New York Times* noted, such an approach would be less likely to lead to wide fluctuations in U.S. policy if circumstances—such as a large influx of immigrants—were to change. This view certainly reflected a more mature approach to inter-American relations, and in many ways, it anticipated the global policy toward the developing world that President Carter was to enunciate in two speeches on Pan American Day, 14 April 1977, and in Caracas in March of 1978.

Finally, the emphasis of immigration policy on the special case of illegal migration in the current period has coincided with the Latin American policies of both the Carter and Reagan administrations that have given substantial weight to the Caribbean Basin. As in the earlier periods, the overall approach to Latin America—or in this case, to the Caribbean Basin (including Mexico)—apparently has shaped U.S. immigration policy at least as much and probably more than immigration policy has affected the region.

Actually, it is surprising to find the extent to which Latin American concerns have been weighed in the formulation of U.S. immigration policy. Perhaps one reason for the generally accepted notion that the United States pays attention to Latin America only when a crisis occurs is that scholars have focused more attention on such crises than on more routine policy issues like immigration or trade.³⁷ The question of whether this case is characteristic or atypical of other global policies should be more fully explored. But in any case, some grounds exist for questioning the thesis that Latin America is slighted either in the course of formulating global policy or in the policy itself. A systematic test of this thesis in other areas obviously would require a much more detailed examination than is possible here. Nevertheless, let us look briefly at a partial list of global policies where there is supposedly little consideration of their regional effects.

In the area of trade policy, as was discussed, the United States in the late 1960s decided to give special trade preferences to all developing countries but to try to tilt the benefits toward Latin America. This approach has proven to be the general line taken in many trade policies that affect the developing world. In the early 1960s and then again in the late 1970s, the United States deliberately sought to negotiate international commodity agreements on those items of greatest importance to Latin America—coffee, sugar, and tin.³⁸ In the Tokyo Round of multilateral trade negotiations, which concluded with an agreement in 1979, the United States spent much more time and effort with Latin American governments than with others from the developing world. In the context of the global agreement, the United States consulted intensively and subsequently negotiated specific agreements to reduce or harmonize trade barriers with twelve Latin American governments. Perhaps the most significant new initiative in the trade-policy area, one that reflects the weight given to Latin American and Caribbean considerations by U.S. policymakers, is the Reagan administration's Caribbean Basin Initiative, which provides one-way free trade for numerous products from that region for twelve years.

As the United States moved in the late 1970s to develop new collaborative relationships in science and technology with the developing world, the Carter administration decided to start with Latin America. Frank Press, Science Adviser to President Carter and currently president of the National Academy of Sciences, led an impressive and broadly based delegation on a major trip to Brazil, Venezuela, Peru, and Barbados, and later to Mexico, where agreements and joint projects in the crucial new areas of science and technology were reached.

Finally, with respect to aid, although global policy since 1973 has concentrated bilateral assistance on the poorest nations in the develop-

ing world, few of which are in the Western Hemisphere, both the Carter and Reagan administrations have maintained relatively high levels of aid (particularly on a per capita basis) to the Caribbean and Central America. Although Abraham Lowenthal suggested that the Carter aid program to the Caribbean was "curtailed," U.S. aid to the Caribbean during the four years of the Carter administration actually quadrupled, and aid to Central America tripled. Moreover, the United States took the lead in negotiating significant new replenishments for the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, the two largest sources of concessional financing to Latin America. Perhaps the best illustration of a global policy tilted toward Latin America can be seen in U.S. support for the regional development banks. The United States agreed to the establishment of the Inter-American Development Bank in 1959, considerably before approving the Asian Development Bank or the African Development Fund; and U.S. contributions and voting strength reflect this tilt toward Latin America: U.S. support amounts to 34 percent of the Inter-American Development Bank, but only 11 percent of the Asian Development Bank and 24 percent of the African Development Fund. Moreover, the capital available to the Inter-American Development Bank far exceeds that available to the other two.

U.S. sugar policy is another example. Since 1934 the United States has offered only enough protection for U.S. sugar producers to permit them to serve half of the U.S. market. While the United States has not treated Latin American sugar producers as well as U.S. producers, it generally has treated them better than other countries. Moreover, U.S. policy has been much more protective of Latin American sugar interests than have comparable policies by other industrialized governments. The Europeans have subsidized their local sugar-beet producers to such an extent that Europe changed from being an importer to becoming a competitor with Latin America for third markets.

In short, Latin American considerations have been taken into account in formulating these global policies and have sometimes been influential. But "Latin American interests" have not always prevailed. Should they prevail? It is hard to see how such an approach would be compatible with an attempt to bring more balance to inter-American relations.

There is no doubt that initial statements of policy on Latin America or on almost any subject are not always fully or consistently implemented. The change in policymakers and particularly administrations, which attach different weights to different U.S. interests, explains some of the variations in policy. Moreover, policies do change over time to take into account changes in the world and in the positions of other countries. So there is often a "gap" between initial statements and future

policies.³⁹ But it does not appear that the explanation for that gap is to be found in the claim that Latin America has been ignored in the policy process. This claim is not true of U.S. immigration policy, and it does not appear to hold for several other global policies either. The search for the explanation of the gap continues, just as the elusive search for the proper relationship or the “special relationship” with Latin America continues.

NOTES

1. See his “Ronald Reagan and Latin America: Coping with Hegemony in Decline,” in *Eagle Defiant: United States Foreign Policy in the 1980s*, edited by Kenneth A. Oye, Robert J. Lieber, and Donald Rothchild (Boston: Little, Brown, 1983), pp. 320–21. Also, “Jimmy Carter and Latin America: A New Era or Small Change?,” in *Eagle Entangled: U.S. Foreign Policy in a Complex World*, edited by Kenneth A. Oye, Donald Rothchild, and Robert J. Lieber (New York: Longman, 1979), pp. 297–98; and “Latin America: Not So Special,” *Foreign Policy* 32 (Fall 1978): 119–20. Jorge Domínguez places this thesis in the context of scholarship on inter-American relations in the 1970s in “Consensus and Divergence: The State of the Literature on Inter-American Relations in the 1970s,” *LARR* 13, no. 1 (1978): 87–126.
2. Abraham F. Lowenthal, “Ronald Reagan and Latin America,” *Eagle Defiant*, p. 322.
3. *Global Trends in Migration: Theory and Research on International Population Movements*, edited by Mary M. Kritz, Charles B. Keely, and Silvano M. Tomasi (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1981), pp. xvi–xviii.
4. Many of these characteristics are shared by other “global” issues. See Robert Pastor, *Congress and the Politics of U.S. Foreign Economic Policy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), particularly pp. 12–14.
5. Testimony of the Reverend Ethelred Brown, *Hearings before the President’s Commission on Immigration and Naturalization, 1952*, p. 250; Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), pp. 60–61.
6. See Sidney Kansas, *U.S. Immigration: Exclusion and Deportation and Citizenship* (Albany: Matthew Bender, 1941, 2nd ed.).
7. Malcolm J. Proudfoot, *Population Movements in the Caribbean* (1950; New York: Negro Universities Press, 1970), table 24, p. 88.
8. Robert A. Divine, *American Immigration Policy, 1924–1952* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), pp. 16–18. In 1925 the House Immigration Committee published a report by Robert Foerster, a Princeton economist, who argued that because 90 percent of the Latin American population were of Indian descent, which was racially inferior to “white stock,” the United States should severely limit Latin American immigration (p. 56).
9. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
10. *Hearings before the President’s Commission on Immigration and Naturalization, 1952*, p. 247.
11. *Congressional Record*, Senate, 68th Congress, 18 April 1924, p. 6624. The following quotes in the text are from the Congressional debate on 18, 19, and 24 April, pp. 6622–33.
12. Robert Divine, *American Immigration Policy*, p. 52.
13. *Congressional Record*, Senate, 71st Congress, 24 April 1930, p. 7424.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 8842.
15. *Congressional Record*, Senate, 13 May 1930, p. 8842.
16. Cited in Robert Divine, *American Immigration Policy*, p. 60.
17. After the House of Representatives passed a bill on 10 April 1924 that unilaterally abrogated a “gentleman’s agreement” between the United States and Japan restricting Japanese immigration to the United States, the Japanese ambassador gave a note to Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes protesting the bill and warning against “grave consequences” if it passed. Hughes believed that this note might influence

- Congress favorably and therefore allowed it to be printed in the *Congressional Record*. Congressional reaction was exactly the opposite; Senator Henry Cabot Lodge angrily called the Japanese note a "veiled threat." The considerable opposition in the Senate to the House bill immediately collapsed, and the bill passed overwhelmingly. See Divine, *American Immigration Policy*, p. 23.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 65–67.
 19. Powell's remarks are from the *Congressional Record*, House, 25 April 1952, pp. 4431–40. "The New Immigration Bill," *New York Times* editorial, 1 May 1952, p. 28.
 20. Testimony cited in Marion T. Bennett, *American Immigration Policies: A History* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1963), pp. 190–91.
 21. *Hearings before the President's Commission on Immigration and Naturalization*, 1952, p. 54.
 22. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
 23. *Report of the Select Commission on Western Hemisphere Immigration*, January 1968, tables on pp. 40–55.
 24. Cited in Dennis Forsythe, "Black Immigrants and the American Ethos: Theories and Observations," in *Caribbean Immigration to the U.S.*, edited by Roy Bryce-Laporte and Delores Mortimer (Washington, D.C.: Research Institute on Immigration and Ethnic Studies, 1983), p. 68.
 25. Edward P. Hutchinson, *Legislative History of American Immigration Policy, 1798–1965* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), p. 374.
 26. "Progress on Immigration," *New York Times* editorial, 17 July 1954, p. 24.
 27. The Commission on U.S.–Latin American Relations, a private group of distinguished leaders chaired by the Honorable Sol M. Linowitz, issued two reports in 1974 and 1976 on ways to improve U.S. policy toward Latin America. One recommendation was to place U.S.–Latin American relations in a modern global context. The Carter administration borrowed this idea from the Linowitz commission.
 28. *U.S. Immigration Policy and the National Interest: Staff Report of the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy*, 30 April 1981, p. 208.
 29. *Report of the Select Commission on Western Hemisphere Immigration*, January 1968, p. 11.
 30. Robert Pastor, "Migration in the Caribbean Basin: The Need for an Approach as Dynamic as the Phenomenon," in *U.S. Immigration and Refugee Policy: Global and Domestic Issues*, edited by Mary M. Kritz (Lexington, Mass.: Heath, 1983), p. 97.
 31. *Staff Report of the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy*, 30 April 1981, p. 66.
 32. Over time and as a result of continuing efforts, however, a certain level of cooperation on the migration issue was attained. By June of 1980, the Migration Working Group of the Consultative Mechanism agreed on the following work program, which was already underway: joint training sessions for U.S. and Mexican immigration officials, exchange of information and research including joint review of methodology of a major Mexican migration study, cooperative efforts to oppose undocumented alien smugglers, and efforts to improve channels of communication to ensure high human-rights standards in the treatment of undocumented workers. (See the prepared statement of Ambassador Robert Krueger before the Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Update: United States–Canadian–Mexican Relations*, 17 and 26 June 1980, pp. 34–35.)
 33. "Interview with Mexican President José López Portillo," *Los Angeles Times*, 26 April 1977.
 34. For the profile of the average migrants, see Wayne Cornelius, *Mexican Migration to the United States with Comparative Reference to Caribbean-Basin Migration: The State of Current Knowledge and Recommendations for Future Research*, Center for U.S.–Mexican Studies, University of California, San Diego, Working Paper no. 2, May 1979, pp. 91–98. For discussion on migration and development in the Caribbean, see the *International Migration Review* 16, no. 4 (Winter 1982), particularly the article by Thomas K. Morrison and Richard Sinkin, "International Migration in the Dominican Republic: Implications for Development Planning," pp. 819–36. See also Thomas K. Morrison, "The Relationship of U.S. Aid, Trade, and Investment to Migration Pressures in Major Sending Countries," *International Migration Review* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 4–26; and

- Robert Pastor, "The Implications of U.S. Immigration Policy for the Caribbean Basin," prepared statement before the Subcommittee on Census and Population of the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, 9 December 1982.
35. Sidney Weintraub, *Trade Preferences for Less-Developed Countries: An Analysis of U.S. Policy* (New York: Praeger, 1967).
 36. Roger Hansen, "U.S.-Latin American Economic Relationships: Bilateral, Regional, or Global?," in *The Americas in a Changing World*, Commission on U.S.-Latin American Relations (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1975), pp. 231-34.
 37. I am indebted to Susan Kaufman Purcell for this point.
 38. Lowenthal pointed to the U.S. decision in the late 1970s to dispose of surplus tin as an example of failure to take regional concerns into account, although the decision involved only one country rather than a region (see p. 321 of his 1983 article and the list of global policies). This decision, however, was taken only after long and intense consultations with the Bolivian government. The Carter administration also refrained from disposing of the tin in any way that could harm the prospects for democratization in Bolivia, and as it turned out, the first major sales did not occur until the end of 1981. One reason for the 1978 decision was that the price was exceeding the ceiling set by the International Tin Agreement. Other tin producers, as well as some in Bolivia, thought that sales would steady the price on the high side just as commodity agreements are generally reached to lift and steady prices on the low side. Moreover, U.S. stockpile reserves of tin were excessive (over six times the required amount), and sales would narrow the budget deficit, an important domestic interest.
 39. For an alternative explanation of the gap between initial statement and final action, I analyze the changes and continuities in U.S. policy toward El Salvador in "Continuity and Change in U.S. Foreign Policy: Carter and Reagan on El Salvador," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 3, no. 1 (Winter 1984): 175-90.