

modernized urban elites, a development that has produced most of the military and political crises of the past 37 years.

In his essay "Political Aspects of Social Change" Kalman Silvert asks us to lay aside our "stereotypical freight" and to reassess such commonly held generalizations as the assumption that Latin America is stagnant, overpopulated, predominantly rural, and underdeveloped and that its social structure is characterized by such immobility and social distance that it must necessarily remain under the heel of an authoritarian elite. But national ruling groups differ from country to country (England vs. Spain, for example). If this difference is recognized, the meaningful question is not *whether* ruling groups exist or defend their interests, but rather, *how* they defend those interests in the light of developmental requirements in their countries.

After identifying five historical patterns of international relations in the hemisphere, Bryce Wood concludes that we may be entering a new period in which both the United States and the Latin American countries are losing confidence in the institutionalized arrangements for settling disputes under the OAS charter. This development results from a growing conviction in some Latin American countries that their "ideological and interest-based home" is with the world's underdeveloped countries and from doubts in the United States "about the capacity of the OAS procedures to satisfy (its) interests in an era when more than one Latin American government might become dominated by communist regimes."

The remaining essays by Gregory Wolfe and Tad Szulc are useful summaries of current trends in economic policy and the role of the North American press.

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*Nationalists without Nations. The Oligarchy Versus the People in Latin America.* By VÍCTOR ALBA. New York, 1968. Frederick A. Praeger. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. vii, 248. \$7.00.

Víctor Alba's volume is not so much a standard academic treatment as an expression of pain and outrage inveighing against a ubiquitous "oligarchy" that has "systematically opposed any move toward nationhood, any evolution that could be conducive to the emergence of national characteristics" (p. 16) since it would mean the end of its power. The "people" and the "submerged masses" are prevented from becoming aware of their potential and playing their

legitimate role in the building of a modern society. Accordingly, Latin American institutions become an endless charade, while the "real" decisions are made by an elite so powerful that its authority need seldom be exercised openly. Almost all "nationalists" are mountebanks, raising false hopes to distract the masses, creating bogey men like "U.S. imperialism" to divert attention from their own eternal shell game. The Communists, for reasons of their own, collaborate in this racketeering, glossing over and obfuscating the "anti-national" and inertial weight of the oligarchy.

There is a great deal of truth to the charge that Latin American latifundia and the inertia of the social structure prevent or greatly impede the complete integration of the population into the life of the country. To express this, however, Alba indulges in phrasemongering and often leaves the reader in doubt as to his meaning. On page 47, for example, he contends that the romantic populists "believed that the people mattered more than the nation." Yet he notes later that others "turned towards something other than the people, that is, other than the nation" (p. 61). Is the "people" (never satisfactorily defined) more than the nation or synonymous with the nation? On a related point Alba appears to dismiss arbitrarily any nondemocratic country as lacking nationhood by definition.

Alba tends to describe effects rather than analyze causes. How did the oligarchy get such a stranglehold on Latin American society? Why is nothing done about it? (To say that the oligarchy itself prevents anything from being done begs the question.) What if the "submerged masses" and the "people" do not want to be saved, either because they do not realize the need for salvation or because they prefer latifundist paternalism?

The specialist can read this volume with some profit after examining more analytical, dispassionate works like Jacques Lambert's. Alba's documentation and knowledge of sources are impressive, perhaps overbearing, and there are many nuggets to be mined if one will devote the time and attention. For the general reader, however, the work tends too much to personify evils in the manner of John Bunyan and to substitute description for explanation. Alba's justified sense of outrage would have been far more effective if expressed more pertinently and pointedly.

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*City and Nation in the Developing World.* By ASSOCIATES OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES FIELD STAFF. New York, 1968. Amer-