

seen as the most damaging element. The sad experience of Peru's Petroperú (1968–79) is seen as a case of political incompetence and gross mismanagement. Bolivia's YPF, ever since its establishment in 1936, has been the frustrated victim of unpredictable governments. Finally, Venezuela's Petroven (since 1976) has been the successful beneficiary of a gradual, smooth nationalization process and of two governments that have allowed it great autonomy. Again, though the state company experience has varied, a unified interpretive theme emerges. Politics are seen as the destructive force. When respect for economic considerations, particularly market forces, prevails, state oil companies can succeed.

Latin America's energy future looks very promising to Philip. Only 5 percent of its potential oil area has been explored. Technical expertise is being both imported and developed locally. The costly learning experience of emotional oil politics is paving the way for greater emphasis upon rational economic considerations in the years ahead.

University of New Mexico

EDWIN LIEUWEN

Communism in Central America and the Caribbean. Edited by ROBERT WESSON. Introduction by RICHARD F. STAAR. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1982. Notes. Tables. Index. Pp. xiv, 177. Paper. \$10.95.

This short book gives an overall view of communist parties, guerrilla movements, and Marxist-Leninist governments in the various countries of Central America and the Caribbean. It does so against the background of the social, economic, and political problems of these nations, and within the context of the worldwide Soviet–United States conflict.

The first chapter, by W. Raymond Duncan of SUNY-Brockport, surveys Soviet objectives in Central America and the Caribbean. It notes the growing interest of the USSR in the area as social tensions have exploded and United States influence has receded, and evaluates the assets and liabilities of the Soviet Union in its search for influence in these regions.

William LeoGrande of Syracuse University looks at the Castro regime's interests and operations. He notes the various shifts in policy of Castro, seeks to judge the Cuban regime's activities both in terms of its own interests and as a surrogate for the Soviet Union, and to assess the continuing attractiveness of Cuba as a revolutionary model.

James Nelson Goodsell, the long-term Latin American correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor*, sketches the advent of the Nicaraguan revolutionary regime. He notes the conflicting tendencies within the regime and in Nicaraguan politics generally, pulling for and against the Sandinista government's becoming completely Marxist-Leninist.

Thomas Anderson of Eastern Connecticut State College discusses the events that gave rise to the outbreak of civil war in El Salvador. He also traces the evolution of that conflict through approximately the middle of 1981. Daniel Premo of Washington College reviews the situation in Guatemala in a similar manner, while Neale J. Pearson of Texas Tech University presents a good picture of the "official" and dissident communist parties in Costa Rica, Honduras, and Panama.

Three chapters deal with the Caribbean area. Duncan looks at the relations of the Michael Manley regime in Jamaica with Cuba and the USSR, and stresses the fact that Manley and his PNP are generally not Marxist-Leninist but democratic socialist; he also notes the establishment of two communist parties in Jamaica during the 1970s. George Volsky of the *New York Times* sketches the situation in the eastern Caribbean, with special attention to the new Marxist-Leninist regime in Grenada. Finally, William Ratliff of the Hoover Institution sketches the opportunistic policies of the Forbes Burnham regime in Guyana, its coquetting with Moscow, Havana, and Peking, and the complications in Burnham's relations with those capitals caused by the open adherence in 1969 of Cheddi Jagan and his PPP with the pro-Soviet bloc of communist parties.

Robert Wesson, of the University of California at Santa Barbara and the Hoover Institution, sums up the book in a final chapter. He makes a point that is repeated in virtually all of the preceding chapters (sometimes by implication rather than overtly): that is, the United States is doomed to failure in its relations with Central America and the Caribbean if it deals with those regions in purely military terms. Wesson and the other authors condemn implicitly the militarist stance of the Reagan administration at its inception. They argue that only a program that deals with the economic, social, and political problems that create fertile ground for the work of the Marxist-Leninists can hope to curb the influence of the indigenous communists, and of the Castro regime and the Soviet Union.

Rutgers University

ROBERT J. ALEXANDER

BACKGROUND

The Age of Reconnaissance: Discovery, Exploration and Settlement 1450 to 1650. By J. H. PARRY. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982. Illustrations. Maps. Notes. Index. Pp. vii, 366. Cloth. \$25.00. Paper. \$8.95.