

Good Neighbours? Inter-state relations in the Americas

In Need of a Paradigm Shift: An Examination of American Security Policy in Colombia

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Recent accounts of American involvement, what some might justifiably term interference, in the economic and political affairs of Latin America over the last half century have likened the region to an “empire’s workshop” (i.e. Greg Grandin’s *Empire’s Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the rise of the New Imperialism*) or a testing ground for neoliberal “shock doctrine” (i.e. Naomi Klein’s *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*). Both analyses imply that a combination of counterinsurgency tactics and neoliberal economic policies have been “experimented” in the Latin American “laboratory” prior to their use in other parts of the world. However, American-sponsored economic and political projects in the region have largely failed, as both the rise of the New Left and ongoing conflict in Colombia can attest. Despite recent “successes” that might speak to the contrary, American security policy has not led to the cessation of conflict or increased security for the Colombian populace. American security policy in relation to Colombian conflict requires a paradigm shift; a move away from the constraining and martial posture of the “War on Terrorism” that has responded to the Colombian conflict according to the national security paradigm, towards the adoption of the UNDP’s human security paradigm. If American security policy, which has also greatly influenced President Uribe’s *Democratic Security* initiatives, made the proposed paradigm shift, it could potentially better comprehend the Colombian situation and be able to assist more effectively, instead of causing greater insecurity and operating counterproductively. The reverberations of this potential success might assist American efforts worldwide.

Striking the Aid Balance: The Case of Bolivia under the MAS Government

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The situation of foreign aid has been much discussed in recent years, with debates ranging from its importance, the factors defining aid priorities, the interests served and the impacts on recipient nations. In particular, criticisms of aid as an ideological and economic tool have come to light. Although these critiques have not yet led to significant changes in the aid paradigm, we can consider the case of one country that is attempting to change the traditional donor-recipient aid relationship. Since the election of Evo Morales in 2005, Bolivia has embarked on a new political program, emphasizing popular participation, social programs, and promoting national sovereignty by strengthening its role in the international arena. Bolivia is a significant recipient of foreign aid but it has recently adopted policies to limit the conditioning of that aid, and demanded that donor nations accept the mandate of the current

government. Conflicts have particularly arisen in Bolivia's tenuous relationship with USAID (the aid agency of the United States), which has faced harsh governmental criticism and attacks from popular movements due to its prioritization of coca eradication as part of the war on drugs. Nonetheless, despite strong discourse and new policies, the government continues to maintain a fine balance of attracting high levels of aid, promoting public investment, and not truly jeopardizing the aid on which the country remains dependent.

"Calculated Diplomacy": John Diefenbaker and the origins of Canada's Cuba Policy

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This paper will revisit the Prime Minister John Diefenbaker era and the origins of the Canadian Cuba policy. Recently declassified documents form the basis for this new reading of Diefenbaker. They reveal a Prime Minister that had little choice but to follow the U.S. lead on Cuba, whether this meant maintaining trade relations under Eisenhower or ignoring John F. Kennedy's strong arm tactics to join the U.S. embargo. Both Eisenhower and Kennedy had a greater role in shaping Canada's Cuba policy than previously believed. Even as a Canadian nationalist, Diefenbaker's Cuba policy was influenced and in many ways constrained by the United States. With Eisenhower in power in the White House, Diefenbaker could preserve his staunchly nationalist stance so long as it did not interfere with the U.S.-Canadian strategic partnership. During the late 1950s Canada's position on Cuba closely followed the American lead. Once Kennedy entered the White House in the 1960s, Diefenbaker quickly discovered that Kennedy cared little for Canadian nationalist sentiments and expected Canada to follow the U.S. hard-line on Cuba. It was a position that Diefenbaker had little choice but to rally against lest Canada be viewed as an American satellite. Canada's Cuba policy derived initially from the idea of an allied North American front against the Soviets. But by the 1960s it became a symbol of Canada's independence in foreign policy. By revisiting the nationalist myth of Diefenbaker, Canada's Cuba policy appears to be more dynamic, evolving and self-serving than previously thought.

The Naming and Framing of the March 2008 Colombia-Ecuador Border Dispute in an Arena of Contested Power: Terroristas Tenebrosos, Mafiosos and Imperialistas

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This paper is a discursive analysis of the competing representations of the violent events of March 1st, 2008 when the Colombian government bombed a FARC camp inside Ecuadorian territory. The two competing discourses, of the Colombian government and the Venezuelan government will be analyzed in the larger context of the struggle for hegemonic dominance and the power to represent and define of reality. This paper argues that the Colombian government has structured the legitimate state use of violence through their use of the war on terror discourse that is

rooted in the larger hegemonic system supporting interventionism and human security. The Venezuelan government is attempting to counter this structuration of violence, through their own counter-discourse that is embedded in the larger 'new left' discourse that is gaining influence in the region. Furthermore, how the governments of Colombia and Venezuela utilized the events of March 1st to further their ideological and political interests in the region will be discussed.