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A Strategic Atlas: Comparative Geopolitics of the World's Powers

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advocate the passive or hands-off stance toward Latin America. Both camps, says Lowenthal, are missing the point.

What has really happened, he argues, is that Latin America is no longer the region it once was, or the one we once thought it was. The parade of presidential policy clichés no longer apply, however sincerely they may have been conceived. Instead of the interventionist-neutrality dichotomy, Lowenthal advocates flexible partnership. The long-term interests of both the United States and Latin America, he believes, are served by policies which foster economic development.

Refusing to duck the regional thornbushes, Lowenthal (writing in 1987) wades into the Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua and the old U.S. policy of arming its opposition. He takes a well-reasoned jab at both the doves and the hawks. The Sandinistas really are, he affirms, a regional destabilizer and a genuine military threat; but the Reagan policy of arming an opposition which could not generate the popular support needed to overthrow the Sandinistas tended to push the United States to the brink of an armed showdown to avoid diplomatic humiliation. Such an intervention, he concludes, would have been condemned throughout Latin America and much of the western world.

According to Lowenthal, the Central American solution is to resurrect the Contadora Plan of 1982, which the United States quietly scuttled in the mistaken notion that

the Contras could achieve a military victory in Managua. The regional solution is for the United States and Latin America to drop trade barriers, share economic success, and seek a basis for genuine partnership. The old Washington notion of U.S. regional hegemony must go. Professor Lowenthal's arguments are trenchant, factually supported, and perhaps still in need of a significant political champion in Washington, D.C.

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Chiliand, Gerard and Rageau, Jeanne-Pierre. *A Strategic Atlas: Comparative Geopolitics of the World's Powers*. 2nd ed., translated from the French by Tony Berrett. New York: Harper and Row, 1985. 224pp. \$26.95

The authors of *Strategic Atlas* claim that theirs is the first book of its kind. They note in the preface a break from the traditional and long outdated Mercator projection "with its horizontal and almost pre-Galilean world in which the land masses appear to cover a larger area than the seas;" and they address a subject not often treated in an atlas: the perceptions held by states regarding their own security (including not only those of the United States and U.S.S.R., but also the lesser known regional powers such as Saudi Arabia, Brazil, India, South Africa, Japan and Israel). A section on physical resources, demographic

data, and suchlike seeks to promote a better grasp of North-South relations. Rounding out the study is a final section on the military balance, which centers partly on nuclear questions. In short, the authors' conception of strategy attempts to embrace all human, material, and cultural factors that make up the global balance of forces.

So far so good. One soon finds, however, that the reach generally exceeds the grasp. Mercator projections *are* used on several important world area charts including some framed in an oval to suggest that they are not Mercator. The "circular projection" used elsewhere is helpful in polar areas; other charts seem to be azimuthal equidistant projections but are not identified as such. The section on geopoliticians is sketchy, offering only a starting point for further study. This is surprising since the atlas is dedicated to, among others, two geopoliticians, Halford Mackinder and Friedrich Ratzel.

The treatment of natural resource constraints, economic factors, population data, North-South problems, and the Mideast, South Asia and Japan is quite good. Data on European population and wealth, French overseas interests, *et al.*, are excellent—undoubtedly a consequence of the French authorship.

The "Military Balance" section covers 22 pages, but includes very little statistical data. Statistics, the authors claim, are useful but are measured by experts, whereas "strategies are won with peoples and leaders . . . Figures are quickly out

of date." However, among the few statistical tables offered is a very important one that is rarely seen in U.S. compilations: the relative tonnages of the Soviet and American fleets. Few American planners seem aware of the great superiority of the Atlantic Alliance over the Warsaw Pact in gross fleet tonnages (for a great many decades the true measure of relative fleet strength). Other interesting charts show the deployment of U.S. and Soviet navies, overseas bases, U.S. and Soviet missile sites, the deployment of U.S. and allied forces in western Europe, and of particular interest, world charts of American aggressiveness as viewed by the U.S.S.R., and Soviet aggressiveness as viewed by the United States. Although the information is far less detailed than that found in typical western compilations of the military balance, the authors have designed a useful reference for the policymaker or strategist who is not an expert.

Strategic Atlas is valuable for its world view, its grand conception of what is required. The average student of strategy will find it useful as a handbook in picking his way through some of the international hot spots. It offers much less of the overconcentration on the U.S.S.R. to which Americans are prone, and even though limited by the rather amateurish cartography, it may frequently prove worthwhile.

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