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## Soft Power And Hard Power Approaches In U.S. Foreign Policy: A Case Study Comparison In Latin America

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SOFT POWER AND HARD POWER APPROACHES IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY:  
A CASE STUDY COMPARISON IN LATIN AMERICA

by

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B.S. University of Central Florida, 2004

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts  
in the Department of Political Science  
in the College of Sciences  
at the University of Central Florida  
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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of soft power versus hard power in U.S. policy towards Latin America. In recent years America's unipolar moment has been challenged from populist leaders in the region to its inability to get a handle on the flow of illegal immigrants and illicit drugs that reach its shores. This thesis is a step to understanding the difference between power and influence as well as the effects of hard power and soft power in U.S. foreign policy.

A historical comparative case study analysis has been conducted utilizing the cases of FDR's Good Neighbor policy and Reagan's contra war policies. This qualitative approach examined specific short-term and long-term goals of each policy and analyzed each strategy's ability to achieve those stated goals. The results of the study reveal that both soft and hard power approaches can have positive as well as negative effects on American influence in Latin America.

For Nanny

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

This thesis would not have been possible without the assistance and guidance of my committee. Dr. David P. Houghton's suggestion to focus on two specific cases set the course for what has been presented here, without that insightful proposition the thesis would have gone in a much-troubled direction. Dr. Waltraud Q. Morales' expertise on Latin American affairs pushed my own understanding of the region to new promising heights and benefited the final product through her close investigation. Lastly, my chair Dr. Chris J. Dolan for his helpfulness, candor, and overall guidance over the past few years, his assistance in my endeavors as an undergraduate and graduate student have been greatly appreciated.

A personal thank you goes out to my family, my fellow students at the University who pushed my intellectual capacity further and further with each class and open debate – I am forever indebted to their service, and finally Brittany for allowing so much time to be shifted away from our relationship so this project could be completed. Thank you.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The current state of international relations is often referred to as the unipolar moment due to the uncontested military capabilities and overall prowess of the United States. However, with this power has come resentment and resistance, which ultimately questions how much bona fide influence the most powerful country in the world truly possesses. This paper is an analysis of U.S. power and how it affects influence in the Latin American region. I hypothesize that the traditional use of hard power as the predominant foreign policy method employed towards Latin America has damaged overall U.S. influence. By examining the effects of two historic cases, one that exhibits soft power traits and another that depicts hard power tactics a better understanding of American influence in the region can be attained.

What exactly is the difference between *soft power* and *hard power*? These terms were developed by former Assistant Secretary of Defense and Dean of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University Joseph Nye to illustrate the different characteristics of power when used to influence behavior. When power is used to coerce or induce conduct it reflects the concept of hard power. Hard power is typically associated with the realist perspective of international relations theory that mainly asserts power comes from military and economic means. In other words, the ability to financially implement economic sanctions on a nation or unilaterally invade another country with one's army in order to influence the behavior of it are hard power strategies. Therefore, hard power is the ability to *force* the outcomes one wants. Soft power on the other hand refers to the power of *attraction*. Rather than being threatened to a particular outcome actors willingly go along with the preferences of another state, thus "soft power rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others" (Nye, 2004, p.5). Political ideals,

popular culture, and cooperation like that found in multilateral organizations can often prompt actors to be attracted to the desires of another country. For example, during the Cold War freedom of political expression along with American pop culture caused many Russians to want what the United States had. At the same time, although soft power attracted the Russian people to the free market system, hard power through America's nuclear arsenal threatened the Soviets from intruding too far into the American sphere of influence. In sum, soft power can be linked to as Nye says, the "co-optive end of the spectrum of behavior, whereas hard-power resources are usually associated with command behavior" (Nye, 2004, p.7).

The specific cases I am utilizing to reflect soft power and hard power tactics will be Franklin Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy and the contra war in Nicaragua taken place during Ronald Reagan's Administration, respectively. By examining these two dissimilar cases one should be able to uncover which type of power approach leads to more influence in the Latin American region. Influence is vital because it equates to the achievement of American objectives.

The level of American influence in geopolitics has most recently come into question during the current Iraq War. In 2003, the United States led a military coalition in the swift and successful invasion of Iraq. There was little argument that the United States' massive military capacity was the chief reason for the victory, and it is without debate that the United States could have performed equally as triumphant on the battlefield if a 'coalition of the willing' had never been formed. However, the current situation of rebuilding war-torn Iraq has proven to be a challenge the United States does not appear to have the power to do alone. In regards to insurgents, radical Islamic fundamentalism, and sectarian violence U.S. influence is absent from the scene. During the early stages, perception of American power was exceedingly high for

members of the president's administration and other proponents of the war, thus a genuine attempt to reach out and garner more international support for the invasion did not take place. This has consequentially caused the United States to stand nearly alone in the rebuilding effort while members of the European community toss rebuffs at the country that pulled a deafened ear to their earlier concerns over the war.

While a majority of the world is trying to come to grips with the notion that the United States is the world's sole superpower with considerable unchecked military power, Latin America has had to face such a fact for most of its post-colonial history. For instance, Thomas Jefferson believed it was possible for the United States to take control over Spain's former empire "peice by peice [sic]" (Smith, 2000, p.18). And the interventions that would occur from Teddy Roosevelt's era through the Clinton Administration provided a constant scare that the colossal neighbor to the north had the ability to interject into Latin American affairs at its will. The fact that Latin America was the first to contend with America's undiluted power permits the region to be an interesting study population for an analysis on American power approaches. At the same time it provides reasoning behind why countless scholars claim there to be a troubled relationship between the United States and Latin America.

A more comprehensive literature review will follow in the subsequent chapter, however a brief overview of what scholars and practitioners are saying about inter-American relations and U.S. foreign policy approaches is pertinent at this time in order to introduce and understand the backdrop of my thesis study. While a great deal of authors criticize the United States for past policies that they argue have hampered its relationship with Latin America, others contend traditional U.S. policy is the only remedy to fix this troubled relationship and rebuild American influence in the region. For this first camp, their argument often centers on the notion that U.S.

policymakers do not fully understand Latin American affairs. As James Reston a foreign correspondent for *The New York Times* once stated, “the United States will do anything [aid, investment, political pressure, military intervention] for Latin America except read about it” (Wiarda, 2006, p.85). This lack of willingness to learn and have a handle on the affairs of its southern neighbors has consequentially caused difficulties to arise.

Julia Sweig of the Council on Foreign Relations notes that the United States often gathers intelligence about Latin American countries from its elite and powerful citizens rather than from those without power in the general population. She has coined this phenomenon the 80/20 Divide, where American policymakers concern themselves with the interests of the elite sector of a Latin American country while not paying any attention to the remaining eighty percent of the citizenry (Sweig, 2006, p.37). The electoral victory of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela is a prime example of the 80/20 Divide at work. For the past fifty years Sweig notes the United States has gained information about the country from the top twenty percent of Venezuela’s private sector, politics, and the oil industry; thus when Chávez came into prominence representing the needs of the unheard majority American policymakers were ignorant to his potential power. Therefore, Sweig asks without an understanding of the desires of the Venezuelan people how was the United States expected to build any influence?

In general it has been argued if it is not a matter of misunderstanding Latin American affairs it is forgetting the effects of past U.S. action that have hurt American influence in the region. In fact, there is an axiom in the history between the United States and Latin America that the United States never remembers and Latin America never forgets. Jorge I. Domínguez wrote in a 2003 article for *Foreign Policy* that “Nicaraguans have much to teach the cabal in Kabul about how the United States forgets its nice rhetoric and apparent commitment to its erstwhile

allies” (Domínguez, 2000, p.34). This inability to follow through on promises has often left a feeling of rejection and neglect amongst the Latin American people. Robert Pastor has likened U.S. policy toward the region to a whirlpool because the United States is often sucked into regional crises only to be released as events elsewhere capture American attention (Pastor, 2001, p.ix). This traditional strategy of policy by crisis combined with an array of hard-line unilateral policies from sanctions to military interventions has caused several scholars and former policymakers to make the case for a change in the U.S. stance towards Latin America.

For example, Moisés Naím, the editor in chief of *Foreign Policy* magazine asserts President George W. Bush should make two specific changes, end the embargo with Cuba and actively engage with Brazil. Naím claims U.S. obsession with crises in small nations like Cuba, Grenada, and Haiti have prevented it from focusing on building an influential alliance with Brazil, the largest and arguably most powerful country in Latin America, who could serve as a viable partner in achieving broader U.S. goals (Naím, 2006, p.35).

In addition, former U.S. ambassador Robert White has echoed this cry for less unilateral ventures. White argues the United States should have convoked a meeting with foreign ministers of the Organization of American States (OAS) after the temporary overthrow of democratically elected Chávez in 2002 (White, 2005, p.11). Although Chávez was an obstacle to U.S. goals, the decision to denounce him and praise the illegitimate un-elected regime went against America’s values of democracy, for which White contends hurt the U.S. image of representing democratic principles. As a result, U.S. influence diminished as exhibited by the unsuccessful bid of its hand picked candidate for secretary general to the OAS. Member states rejected the American nominee under Chávez’s lead, who was now seen as a hero in an event that had “all the elements of a David vs. Goliath morality play” (White, 2005, p.11). White further states, “American

failures abroad usually occur when we violate the ideals that undergird our society” (White, 2005, p.11).

This has been the case made by Joseph Nye who claims “those who scorn or despise us for hypocrisy are less likely to want to help us achieve our policy objectives” (Nye, 2004, p.55). In addition to following our own standards, Nye favors the use of cultural exchanges between Americans and citizens of foreign countries to help build lasting relationships, which he argues can ultimately increase U.S. influence. For example, he reports the account of a former high official in the Russian KGB who commented that “exchanges were a Trojan Horse for the Soviet Union” and that “they played a tremendous role in the erosion of the Soviet System” (Nye, 2004, p.46). Nye notes the reduction of funds for public diplomacy, travel bans like that with Cuba, and the overall focus on military hard power as areas where U.S. foreign policy has gone wrong.

However, are Naím, White, and Nye correct to assume a change towards a softer U.S. policy will increase America’s influence? In other words, could cultural exchanges with the Venezuelan public not only have prepared the United States for a Chávez electoral victory, but influenced the public to elect another candidate? Moreover, is the traditional hard-line approach truly responsible for less American influence in Latin America today? This thesis is an attempt to answer such questions.

I noted earlier that Latin America offers a valuable study population to analyze U.S. power approaches because of the region’s long history of dealing with American ascendancy. Also mentioned above I described my intentions to analyze two notable cases in the history of U.S. Latin American relations, the Good Neighbor policy and the contra war in Nicaragua in order to determine what effect the power approaches used in each of these cases had on immediate and long-term U.S. influence in Latin America. Through this comparative historical

case study it should be revealed whether or not soft power tactics like those used during the Good Neighbor policy or hard power techniques such as the ones implemented during the contra war against the Sandinistas produces more influence for the United States in Latin America. Therefore this study should also help explain why several scholars recognize a problem for the United States in its relationship towards the region.

My dependent variable is American influence. This concept refers to the overall sway the United States possesses in Latin America. In general a qualitative approach will be used to determine the variability of influence the United States holds. For instance, judging how easily and successful the accomplishment of subsequent objectives or desires were in the region provides an indicator of how much influence was obtained from that particular power approach. The independent variables soft power and hard power are also codified in a qualitative manner. A detailed explanation on how the Good Neighbor policy and the contra war fit the soft and hard power traits will be addressed in chapter three, nevertheless one should be able to comprehend the difference between soft and hard power using the definitions cited above in the chapter's opening paragraphs. However, the independent variables are certainly not limited to just those indicators, and furthermore it is quite possible after an extensive investigation, although unlikely because they were chosen for their polarity, to claim that my two selected case studies the Good Neighbor policy and the contra war in Nicaragua are a combination of the two power approaches at varying degrees.

The Good Neighbor policy refers to Franklin Roosevelt's foreign policy strategy towards Latin America during his tenure as president. It is a unique moment of time in inter-American relations because of the emphasis put on nonintervention and the importance of public diplomacy, which is a strong characteristic of a soft power approach. The foreign policy

techniques used before and after the Good Neighbor era contrast greatly from the events that occurred during Roosevelt's Administration, thus the Good Neighbor policy offers a valuable case for a comparison of power approaches. The contra war in Nicaragua is an equally beneficial case for this study because it reflects hard power policies such as military intervention and economic threats. Furthermore, the extensive use of coercive diplomacy and unilateral action by the Reagan Administration counters elements of the soft power concept. Moreover, as a relatively recent event in hemispheric relations participants in the episode can provide contemporary discussion on the affair's effect on U.S. influence today.

The selection of those two cases I believe best reflects the soft power and hard power approaches and U.S. foreign policy to the region as a whole. Of course, additional events could have also been selected with comparative significance to serve as the independent variables, however due to the constraints of this short study it has been decided to closely examine two events, one related to soft power and the other related to hard power, in greater detail rather than glance at a wide range of very old and perhaps inconsequential events.

I predict my investigation will reveal support for my hypothesis that hard power when not supported by soft power has diminished American influence in Latin America. I have this inclination because there are a number of examples outside of those in my case study that do point to this line of reasoning. As noted above cultural contacts during the Cold War have been cited as a 'Trojan Horse' for the Soviet Union in their defeat. In 1994 Reinhold Wagnleitner and Diana M. Wolf published *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War* to illustrate how America's pop culture influx into Austria following the Second World War triggered Austrians to imitate American life; they also note "Hollywood products were an important weapon in the arsenal of the United States" during the ideological fight with the Soviets (Wagnleitner and Wolf, 1994,

p.237). This helps explain why Austria, although militarily neutral during the conflict, maintained a capitalist economy while being nearly completely surrounded by communist states or members of the Warsaw Pact.

In addition to pop culture, soft power through the attraction of ideals has also proven to be influential. For example, Joseph Nye has written about China's success with their recent rise of soft power. He notes their entry into the WTO, assistance with the six-party talks on North Korea's nuclear proliferation, and the overall attraction of Chinese culture exhibited by the increasing broadcast coverage of China Radio International and the ever-growing number of tourists who visit the country each year as signs of increased Chinese soft power (Nye 2005). Nye believes this rise in soft power correlates with increased influence; despite the fact the country remains authoritarian. He argues the "Beijing Consensus," the combination of authoritarian government with market economics "has become more popular than the previously dominant Washington Consensus" (Nye 2005). Although the Chinese model may not appear attractive to the United States or Western Europe, Nye contends it has made way in parts of Asia, Africa, and Latin America where semi-authoritarian regimes are trying to develop.

Just as an increased amount of soft power can help a country gain influence on the international stage, a decrease in soft power can have adverse affects. This is evident in the comparison of the coalitions President Bush Sr. and current President George W. Bush were able to construct in each of their American led invasions into Iraq. By consulting foreign heads of state and genuinely respecting multilateral organizations the first President Bush was in the end able to gather a coalition that did not burden the U.S. military as much as the one constructed by his son. In a 2003 interview with John Meacham the elder Bush candidly compared his and his

son's efforts by correctively stating, "My coalition-building was far easier;" a keen observation that reflects how soft power has affected influence (Meacham, 2003, p.43).

The Mexican-American War provides an additional example where hard power not supported by soft power can hurt influence. The controversial conflict between the United States and Mexico regarding competing claims to modern-day Texas eventually resulting with Mexico losing a third of its territory instigated not only over a century of anti-American sentiment, but major difficulties for subsequent U.S. presidents trying to achieve regional influence. For instance, the war caused Mexico to look outward for assistance and security to prevent further U.S. encroachments, such as creating ties with France; thus countering the intentions of the Monroe Doctrine to keep European powers out of New World affairs (Smith, 2000, p.22). Therefore in conclusion, through the Cold War, Chinese, Gulf Wars, and Mexican-American War examples I am confident that soft power plays an intricate role in international influence, and thus when analyzing the Good Neighbor policy and the contra war in Nicaragua I expect to find similar results.

In regards to this project's contribution to academia and the political science discipline it will undoubtedly increase the overall knowledge of the relationship between the United States and Latin America. As lawmakers and political scientists confront the rise of intermestic issues in the American political dialogue, a greater understanding of how to deal with Latin America on the matters of immigration, drug trafficking, and the outsourcing of jobs becomes increasingly crucial. Specifically this paper will shed light on the impact different power approaches have had on American influence. While a great deal of scholarly work has been conducted on the concept of power and analyzing hemispheric relations, little if any have tested the soft power and hard power approaches of U.S. foreign policy in a historical setting. Moreover, the conclusions

of my thesis report should help policymakers determine the best types of power approaches to use in constructing American foreign policy.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

It is impracticable to determine which foreign policy approach produces more influential gains for the United States without examining what scholars have stated about soft and hard power and investigating past hemispheric relations. As peace advocate and former editor of the *Saturday Review* Norman Cousins once stated, “History is a vast early warning system,” and therefore current U.S. policymakers would be foolish not to use such a practical system for prescribing future Latin American policy (Cousins 1978). An overwhelming majority of the literature on past hemispheric relations recognizes a long history of problems between the United States and Latin America that continues to exist today; from scholars such as Howard J. Wiarda who questions the degree of neglect the United States has shown to its southern neighbors, to former diplomats like Robert A. Pastor who regards U.S. policy to the region to be erratic and one that solely reflects crisis management. Although not all authors call for a radical adjustment to the U.S. strategy towards Latin America, nearly all write about the rapport in a manner that resembles an unhealthy relationship that has affected American influence; very few attempt to counter this otherwise accepted fact. For example, Henry Raymond titled his text on U.S. Latin American relations *Troubled Neighbors* to accentuate this reality. At the same time a great deal of scholarly muscle is spent analyzing and debating who is at fault for these poor relations and almost always the United States is deemed responsible; not so much in the sense that the United States has been attempting a form of neo-colonialism, but rather for repeatedly and blatantly disrespecting its southern counterparts. Hence, current literature is besieged with such critical titles as *Talons of the Eagle* and *Beneath the United States*. These scholars blame the tradition of

policies characteristic of hard power approaches as the root of the problem between the United States and Latin America.

On the opposite end of the spectrum there exists a small assortment of literature on U.S. Latin American relations that does not recognize a serious problem with the U.S. tradition of focusing on hard power tactics within its foreign policy approach towards the rest of the hemisphere. For example, Mark Falcoff of the American Enterprise Institute and former professor Susan Kaufman Purcell have written extensively for the inclusion of hard power policy approaches to Latin America in response to America's difficulties in acquiring more influence in the region. Although small in number these writings deserve attention not so much for balance, but for the sake that U.S. policy towards Latin America has remained relatively consistent to their preferred policies of hemispheric imperialism, military intervention, and paternalism; thus these writers can be deemed successful in their attempts to persuade policymakers to implement more of the same, even though a tremendous amount of literature argues for a softer approach. This chapter will be presented in three sections: an analysis of the theoretical foundations on the concept of power, an examination of foreign policy adaptation in terms of continuity and change, and lastly a review of the current literature on U.S. relations with Latin America. The intent is to conduct an examination of prior analyses on hemispheric affairs in order to provide a greater understanding of why certain approaches may have been utilized over others.

## The Conceptual Framework of Power

### History

Prior to a review of the current literature on hemispheric relations one must ask why the world's most powerful country even has a problem with influence in Latin America? Ultimately the answer rests on how one defines power. In 1970 Robert Dahl defined power as "the ability to get another actor to do what it would not otherwise have done or not to do what it would otherwise have done" (Brown, 2001, p.91). However, that definition is limited because it does not address the power of having an actor *want* what you want. A more encompassing description of power has been labeled as "the ability to influence the behavior of others to get the outcomes one wants" (Nye, 2004, p.2). In this respect power can be broken up into separate types, as Joseph Nye notes, "there are several ways [successful and unsuccessful] to affect the behavior of others"(Nye, 2004, p.2; *see also* Bachrach and Baratz 1962). Therefore, none of these separate types or abilities should automatically equate to influence.

Nevertheless, historically power has been viewed as being of concrete attributes, such as size and quality of raw materials or of the armed forces of a particular country (Brown, 2001, p.89). In fact, power in the traditional sense was synonymous with military might. Hence the classic anecdote of Joseph Stalin mockingly inquiring about how many divisions the Pope had when the Church questioned his repressive policies toward Catholics. The perception that one with more might had more influence may have begun with the earliest of interactions between human beings, but it still holds resonance with contemporary political theorists. For example, the realist and neo-realist perspective often emphasizes the importance of hard power.

## Realists and Liberals

A discussion on the realist perspective of power ought to begin with Hans Morgenthau who placed the concept of power at the very center of international relations studies. He argued that states compete for power with one another out of national interest. Similar to Morgenthau John Mearsheimer, professor of political science at the University of Chicago offers a strand of realism (offensive realism) that claims that because of anarchy in the international system states will struggle for power and seek hegemony (Mearsheimer, 2001, p.xiii). Taking this theory into consideration, it becomes easy to see why Mearsheimer recommends for the United States to reexamine its policy towards a rising China. Mearsheimer believes China will not rise peacefully and the likelihood of intense security competition will create the potential for war (Brzezinski and Mearsheimer, 2005, p.46). And although at the present time he notes China does not have the capability to militarily challenge the United States he believes by 2025 they could. Therefore, because of the anarchic context of international politics he suggests to U.S. policymakers “it is better to be Godzilla than Bambi” and thus military buildup is prudent for a response to a growing China.

This logic coincides with the theory of the security dilemma. Since it is in the interest of all countries to gain security the likelihood of improving one’s security through military buildup becomes a certainty. However, as one state increases their military capabilities other countries feel less secure, thus causing a security dilemma and a fierce arms race to occur between insecure states. As the father of neorealism Kenneth Waltz once proclaimed, “[rational] states, unsure of one another’s intentions, arm for the sake of security and in doing so set a viscous circle in motion” (Waltz, 1979, p.186). Considering this fact, Mearsheimer believes it to be wrong for the United States to even engage with the Chinese on economic terms (Mearsheimer,

2001, p.4). Although he concedes the argument has been made that successful engagement with China could lead to a wealthy and democratic state, he perceives economic might will certainly translate to military might, which reflects his emphasis on the importance of U.S. hard power.

Lawrence F. Kaplan gives credit to the use of American hard power and specifically the military intervention in Iraq for the “democratic wave sweeping over the Middle East and Central Asia” (Kaplan, 2005, p.22). Citing the examples of Georgia, Krgyzstan, and the Palestinian Authority, Kaplan contends, “absent direct U.S. intervention [in Iraq], not one of these movements would have succeeded” (Kaplan, 2005, p.22). Charles Krauthammer agrees noting that it has also been America’s hard power tactics particularly with its interrogation techniques that have prevented another terrorist attack on the United States. For instance, he specifically mentions the controversial interrogation method of water boarding as one of the reasons why President Bush has been able to keep Americans safe (Krauthammer, 2006, p.35). Furthermore, Krauthammer opposes arms control because it limits the means for which the United States can protect itself. In 2000 he supported Bush’s proposal to end American compliance with the ABM treaty because he believed tailoring U.S. defensive strategies to the desires of other nations did not make sense. He commented,

If we want to build a defensive shield, why ask the Russians? . . . We build to order. Our order . . . Read my lips. No new treaties (Krauthammer, 2000, p.132).

In contrast, the liberal internationalist view argues it does matter what other states think because in part fueled by globalization, the United States cannot be isolated from the rest of the world, and thus cooperation and international institutions become necessary components for success in world politics. Nearly thirty years ago Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye wrote that, “where there are reciprocal (although not symmetrical) costly effects of transactions, there is

interdependence” and “interdependence, mostly simply defined, means mutual dependence” (Keohane and Nye, 1989, p.8-9).

Therefore, the use of hard power becomes less imperative between states with shared economic and political interests; Keohane and Nye stated explicitly that “military force could, for instance, be irrelevant to resolving disagreements on economic issues” (Keohane and Nye, 1989, p.25). Many proponents of globalization have echoed this conception. For example, Thomas Friedman’s tongue-in-cheek “Dell Theory of Conflict Prevention” claims that the interdependence of countries who work within the computer giant’s supply chain will never fight one another because they too heavily depend upon each other’s roles in the manufacturing process in order stimulate their economy and increase their standard of living, thus they would not sacrifice the benefits of interdependence for war (Friedman, 2005, p.421).

Michael W. Doyle noted similar military constraint occurred in the 1800s when the dominant Europeans would allow African tribal leaders to dictate their own local policies because it was more beneficial to their imperial trade efforts than to costly enforce rules on every individual in a particular territory (Doyle, 1986, p.180-181). In addition, Charles W. Kegley argues the unipolar moment for which the United States now benefits will not last, and the expected rise of multipolarity with future great and equal bodies like China, Japan, and the European Union will compel the United States to collaborate with these powers in order to prevent large-scale conflict (Kegley and Raymond 1994). Therefore, according to these liberals it is imperative for the United States to work cooperatively and use its stature to lead international institutions in a way that will bring benefits to everyone. As Robert Jervis once pointed out,

because there are no institutions or authorities that can make and enforce international laws, the policies of cooperation that will bring mutual rewards if others cooperate may bring disaster if they do not (Jervis, 1978, p.167).

G. John Ikenberry asserts that since the beginning of America's ascent the United States has taken strides towards cooperation, which has eased the worries of smaller powers, consequentially preventing a backlash. He cites the formation of the UN, IMF, World Bank, and GATT as examples of ambitious institution-building the United States has previously undergone. And although "the price for the United States was a reduction in Washington's policy autonomy, in that institutional rules and joint decision-making reduced U.S. unilateralist capacities," he contends "what Washington got in return was worth the price" (Ikenberry, 2001, p.20). Ikenberry claims the current trend to shy away from multilateral organizations and focus on unilateral hard power approaches has made a less stable environment for which the United States can pursue its interests (Ikenberry, 2001, p.21).

### Soft Power

Despite the importance of these liberal contentions, the most significant and recent contribution to international relations from the liberal camp has been Joseph Nye's development of the soft power concept, which countered the mistaken perception that military power was everything. For example, consider the Vietnam War and the supremacy of the U.S. military compared to the North Vietnamese, although the United States had far more bombs, warplanes, and professional soldiers on the ground the United States still failed to achieve its objective. In his 2002 book *Paradox of American Power* Nye quotes *Washington Post* correspondent Sebastian Mallaby who noted in 1999 that,

The paradox of American power at the end of this millennium is that it is too great to be challenged by any other state, yet not great enough to solve problems such as global terrorism or nuclear proliferation. America needs the help and respect of other nations (Nye, 2002, p.40).

Thus Nye enters the concept of soft power. Although briefly mentioned in the introductory chapter and a more in-depth examination will be given in the subsequent chapter on methodology, an additional look at soft power is warranted here. Hard power, as depicted above by the characterizations of Mearsheimer and Krauthammer is used by making inducements or threats. Soft power on the other hand is “getting others to want the outcomes that you want – [it] co-opts people rather than coerces them” (Nye, 2004, p.5). For instance, Nye uses the business world as a case in point; rather than a boss barking orders leadership can also involve “leading by example and attracting others to do what you want” (Nye, 2004, p.5). As opposed to being commanded what to do, soft power operates through the power of attraction. Popular culture, political ideals, and cultural exchanges can all be sources of soft power. For example, the Association of International Educators has noted that “the millions of people who have studied in the United States over the years constitute a remarkable reservoir of goodwill for our country” (Nye, 2004, p.45). Therefore, Nye would argue by attracting foreigners to American values it becomes far easier to influence policy on the international stage.

However, soft power like hard power is not merely the same as influence because behavior can be shaped in non-soft methods as well. Power is best understood by thinking of it as three-dimensional. As E.H. Carr stated in *The Twenty Years Crisis* political power in the international arena can be divided into the groupings of military, economic, and power over opinion (Carr, 1964, p.108). Nye reiterates that view by asserting that a three-dimensional

chessboard with a top layer dedicated to interstate military power, a middle layer of interstate economic issues, and on the bottom transnational resources (*think* soft power) should be the manner for which power is perceived in international affairs.

### Proponents and Opponents

However, some have argued against the validity of the soft power concept. Fouad Ajami, Director of the Middle East Studies Program at John Hopkins University, believes “the United States need not worry about hearts and minds in foreign lands” because if groups like Arab Muslims consider their “long winter of decline is the fault of the United States, no campaign of public diplomacy shall deliver them from that coherence” (Ajami, 2003, p.61). Syndicated columnist Cal Thomas agrees and stated it to be “fiction that our enemies can be made less threatening by what America says and does” (Thomas, 2003, p.21). Furthermore, there are some scholars against the policy implementation of soft power tactics. For example, Daniel W. Fisk and Peter Rodman oppose cultural exchanges between the U.S. and the Cuban military because they see it impossible “to be sending signals for change of the regime while consorting with the security organs that maintain it;” they further state, “ostracism will have better pedagogical value than seminars at Harvard” (Independent Task Force, 2001, p.45).

However, these critics of soft power tend to be small in number and are overshadowed by a much larger crowd who emphasize its use. For example, Wendy W. Luers President and founder of the Foundation for a Civil Society believes it is important for the United States to expand cultural activities and exchanges including theater, dance, and the graphic arts in order to establish and solidify friendly bonds with people of other nations (Task Force Report, 2001, p.40). Former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara urged the use of multilateralism and

empathy to be included in America's foreign relations in his 2001 coauthored book titled, *Wilson's Ghost*. He notes that the Vietnam War, a war for which he had a crucial hand in constructing, could have been prevented if the United States recognized the fact that none of its major allies supported the intervention; consequentially as a result the unilateral action hurt American prestige and influence (McNamara and Blight, 2001, p.53). It is argued by the authors that if the United States were to behave in a more multilateral fashion or practice McNamara's recommended policy of "zero-tolerance multilateralism" of never intervening unilaterally, this would encourage other nations to follow suit and consult with the United States, thus expanding the level of influence the United States would have in foreign affairs (McNamara and Blight, 2001, p.233).

Furthermore, German writer Josef Joffe commented in 2000 that American soft power was the reason why other smaller powers have not balanced America's high stature as European nations had done to Napoleon's ascendancy after 1793 (Joffe, 2000, p.6). Joffe believes America's attractive "culture, low-brow or high, radiates outward," which is responsible for making the United States out to be a "bumbling" elephant rather than an "800-pound gorilla . . . in search of conquest and empire" (Joffe, 2001, p.43; and 2000, p.6). However, in order to maintain this benevolent image Joffe urges that the United States must continue to do good for others and lead international institutions like NATO or risk the chance of becoming a target to be balanced (Joffe, 2000, p.6).

Julia Sweig, mentioned in the introductory chapter for her theory of an 80/20 Divide is also a proponent of soft power. She stresses the importance of America's political ideals as a means to remain influential; "the best antidote to Anti-America may well come not from how we fight (or prevent) the next war but from the degree to which we keep intact the social contract

and international appeal of American society” (Sweig, 2006, p.212). She notes that following FDR’s New Deal policies in America, many Latin Americans attempted to emulate the model in order to improve their impoverished societies (Sweig, 2006, p.6). However, the current economic divide in the United States where middle class citizens are compelled to work longer hours to make ends meet causes the United States to no longer have some of the appeal that originally made the American dream so attractive to foreigners. Therefore, Sweig worries the United States may be “loosing its claim to offer an economic model that truly promotes mobility,” which might provoke developing countries to look elsewhere for a viable model, thus generating a reduction in American influence (Sweig, 2006, p.77).

### Conclusion

In summation, power in general has been interpreted differently between realists and liberals and thus the policy suggestions for the application of power tend to contrast as well. In the third section of this chapter the reader will find a similar contrast between scholars and practitioners working in inter-American relations; for example, although there is near unanimous consent that the level of U.S. influence in the area is disconcerting, two camps emerge one advocating soft power the other a more hard-line approach. However, before moving on to an examination on the status of the U.S. relationship with Latin America, an overview of foreign policy continuity and change is warranted.

## Foreign Policy Continuity and Change

### Change and Adaptation

The different approaches toward the concept of power taken by realists, liberals, and other scholars prompt an assessment of the literature pertaining to foreign policy continuity and change and the notion of unilateralism versus multilateralism. This first section relates to the theoretical material on policy adaptation, in other words at what point does U.S. foreign policy stay the same and at what point does it change.

Jerel A. Rosati contends that American politics, foreign policy in particular, tends to “resist” change unless it is interrupted by crisis (Rosati, 1999, p.570). For example, the discontinuation of the containment strategy following the end of the Cold War. Rosati explains political systems regardless if they are elitist or pluralist in nature obstruct change and favor the status quo to prevail because “established groups and institutions throughout government and society engage in politics to promote their interests and protect the status quo from challenging groups and ideas” (Rosati, 1999, p.570). As V.O. Key noted, the established system can often work as a “powerful brake” to political change (Key, 1964, p.70). Therefore, in order for real change other than incremental changes to occur Rosati claims a crisis or a moment of political instability must arise to alter the behavior of those involved in the construction of foreign policy. Rosati refers to this as a “period of transition” or “disequilibrium” as opposed to a “period of stability” that would simply promote policy continuity (Rosati, 1999, p.571).

Public opinion is also worth noting in trying to understand foreign policy change. The mass public tends to favor policy continuity in part for their preference for stability, but also due to their support for mainstream institutions and benefits. As Robert Gilpin once remarked, “The

idea of radical changes that threatened accepted values and interests is not an appealing one” (Gilpin, 1981, p.6). However, public opinion and the desire for a shift in policy can come about when the legitimacy of a political system is called into question by the populace. Rosati notes that this occurs because of the “growing gap that develops between the incrementalist policies of the government and the inevitable change experienced throughout the global environment and society” (Rosati, 1999, p.571). James N. Rosenau adds that when societies are not “under static conditions” political leaders are confronted with conditions at home that require them to adopt adaptation strategies (Rosati, Hagan, and Sampson, 1994, p.4). Therefore, if adjustments are failed to be made to a changing international environment increased pressure and opposition mounts internally from members of society. For additional scholarship on public opinion’s effect on foreign policy change one may wish to consult (Holsti 1996) which focuses on the post-Cold War climate, or (Foyle 1999) who predicts the influence of public opinion wavers between different presidents.

Charles Hermann noted there are four sources of foreign policy change: external shocks, domestic restructuring, bureaucratic advocacy, and leader-driven change (Hermann, 1990, p.3). External shocks can include crises, as mentioned above by Rosati’s theory, but specifically refer to external events such as the fall of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Domestic restructuring is when a state undergoes dramatic alterations in its governmental structure, which triggers supplementary changes to the construction of foreign policy (i.e. the new Iraqi government). Lastly, bureaucratic advocacy and leader-driven changes both consist of the different policies being pushed by those involved in making policy. For example, the Communist Party in China choosing to make economic reforms rather than emphasize the projection of its military prowess, and the difference in foreign policy preference between the

2004 Bush and Kerry campaigns regarding unilateralism and multilateralism. In addition to producing a valuable context to understand adaptation strategies, the extensiveness of Hermann's model for sources of change is especially noteworthy because of the scant attention and overall focus the study of foreign policy change tends to receive.

Robert Putnam's theory regarding his notion of the two-level game theory is another such valuable study. The two-level game theory states that politics at both the national and international level shape and produce international agreements. As Putnam stresses, "it is fruitless to debate whether domestic politics really determine international relations, or the reverse" because it is mostly both (Putnam, 1988, p.427). Consider the hypothetical example that at the next G8 Summit one leader proposes reducing tariffs or even a free trade agreement amongst the other seven members. At one level there would be debate between the G8 leaders on issues regarding timetables for when what would go into effect, and at the same time there would be internal politicking taking place between the President and Democrats and or Republicans about the various domestic implications. Therefore, the final product or agreement of the proposed measure would be an outcome affected by the internal politics of each country as well as the politicking at the international level. In this sense changes to foreign policy are controlled at two levels of negotiation; Putnam asserts, "The crucial point [is] that central decision-makers ("the state") must be concerned simultaneously with domestic and internal pressures" (Putnam, 1988, p.431).

### Multilateralism Versus Unilateralism

Putnam's seminal work elucidates the factors of domestic and international constraints on foreign policy making, similar pressures are outlined by Arthur Schlesinger Jr. in reference to

internationalism and isolationism, and also the use of unilateralism and multilateralism. For instance, he notes the domestic difficulties from Congress that encumbered Woodrow Wilson and his desire to support the League of Nations (Schlesinger, 1995, p.3). Thus evidence that domestic politics or even who is president can affect the cooperative behavior of states.

Schlesinger also asserts that changes at the systematic level can spur changes between the preferences of unilateralism versus multilateralism. For example, he states,

It is now surely clear that the upsurge in American internationalism during the Cold War was a reaction to what was seen as the direct and urgent Soviet threat to the security of the United States . . . The collapse of the Soviet threat faces us today with the prospect that haunted [Franklin] Roosevelt half a century ago – the return to the womb in American foreign policy . . . The Isolationist impulse has risen from the grave and taken the new form of unilateralism (Schlesinger, 1995, p.5).

However, Schuller and Grant suggest unilateralism is merely an “ephemeral phase” for newfound and rather unchallenged superpowers because a state’s “interests cannot readily disentangle themselves from those of . . . [its] partners and allies” (Schuller and Grant, 2003, p.44). Expanding on that notion, Schuller and Grant refer to the work of German philosopher Jürgen Habermas who offers a theory rooted in sociology on the determining factors of multilateralism and unilateralism through his theory of communicative action. Habermas asserts that it is actually the fluctuating interests of states that shape their choice of communicative techniques, or more precisely the decision whether or not to act unilaterally or multilaterally (Schuller and Grant, 2003, p.44-45). Therefore, it should be understood that states make a strategic decision to involve or not to involve other states in their foreign policy actions. For instance, when interests are narrow and focus primarily on the benefit of the American political

system U.S. unilateralism is preferred, whereas with broader goals multilateralism is sought after. Therefore, in order to determine America's true interests in invading Iraq one could apply Habermas' theorem and determine that since there was not a genuine attempt towards multilateral support the actual interests of the United States were not to expand broader goals of peace and democracy, but something much narrower. The theorem may also be applicable to U.S. policy towards Latin America to help explain why the United States has traditionally behaved unilaterally with its neighbors to the South.

### The Relationship Status

All together the theoretical scholarship regarding power (section one) and foreign policy changes (section two) does explain a great deal of why U.S. policy towards Latin America has stayed the same or changed over time. For example, there have been moments of change due to crisis (Rosati's theory); case in point the policy shift toward containment and intervention instigated by the start of the Cold War. However, as a whole the nature of the relationship between the United States and Latin America has consistently been in a paltry state. As Arthur P. Whitaker once noted, "the marriage of the two Americas ended in divorce before there was even a honeymoon" (Whitaker, 1954, p.41). This section is an analysis of similar assessments of the U.S. Latin American relationship and the different approaches various scholars have advocated to rebuild what is widely recognized as a bad marriage.

### Misunderstanding and Neglect?

Journalist and professor Henry Raymont has closely covered the relationship between Latin America and the United States over the past fifty years. In his 2005 book titled, *Troubled*

*Neighbors* he concluded that a lack of understanding and genuine comprehension of Latin American affairs has caused the United States to implement ill-fated policies. The combination of this lack of knowledge with paternalistic attitudes toward the region by America's top policymakers Raymont believes is the cause for the existence of troubled neighbors.

However, America's cultural blindness to Latin America is by no means a former problem for which the United States is still paying the price for, but as Raymont demonstrates a continuous problem that darkens the history of inter-American relations as well as its current status today. A classic example of this problem he recalls was shown by Ronald Reagan during a 1982 goodwill tour. While at a state dinner in Brazil the U.S. president made a toast celebrating "the people of Bolivia" instead of Brazil (Raymont, 2005, p.249). Reagan tried to explain he made the mistake because Bolivia was his next stop, however that explanation only worsened the problem when it was revealed that Colombia was actually the next destination on his agenda. In general, Raymont notes that most presidents have had little experience in Latin American affairs, and because of this it has caused top policymakers to rely on assumptions and stereotypes of its southern neighbors rather than actual fact. This lack of compassion and general understanding has ultimately led to paternalistic attitudes. He argues,

Starting with the notoriously prejudiced high school textbooks of the nineteenth century, it became a habit to disparage the countries south of the border. It is a constant predicating of differences, from the old shibboleth that the southern half was colonized by gold grubbing, exploited and lazy Spaniards, while the north reaped virtues of the Puritan ethos that colored the life of its hard-working pilgrims (Raymont, 2005, p.308-309).

This attitude of thinking ‘*we know what’s best for you*’ is supported by numerous policy examples. For instance, Harold Molineu declared that it was actually the Monroe Doctrine that propelled this “paternalistic attitude in the United States toward the countries to the South” (Molineu, 1986, p.19). Paternalism would be further politicized by Teddy Roosevelt’s international policeman policy that specifically called for the United States to intervene “in cases of [domestic] wrongdoing or impotence . . . in Central America and the Caribbean” (Perkins, 1955, p.267). Furthermore, the removal of democratically elected Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán in Guatemala and Salvador Allende in Chile by American covert operations additionally support this historic trend of paternalism.

At the same time, Henry Raymond argues the United States often overlooks the problems for where it can be of assistance to its neighbors. For example, even the normally empathetic Bill Clinton was accused of ignoring Latin America’s problems when at the 1994 Pan American summit his administration was criticized by other leaders for using the conference for domestic political gain and not caring “a fig about our [Latin America’s] needs” (Raymont, 2005, p.286). In an effort to revitalize the relationship Raymond suggests moving away from the unilateral and paternal past while increasing cultural understanding, effective leadership, and paying closer attention to Latin America as a whole.

The issue of whether or not the United States is ignoring its southern counterparts has been thoroughly addressed by well known Latin Americanist and professor Howard J. Wiarda. Wiarda has asked whether or not U.S. behavior toward Latin America is one that reflects benign neglect. His deduction is that American foreign policy is not necessarily one of neglect, but rather active engagement at “relatively low policy and bureaucratic levels” (Wiarda, 2006, p.101). For example, at local, state, and regional areas of government as well as within civil

rights and human rights groups there is a degree of continual concentration on Latin American affairs. This is supported by Arthur P. Whitaker's 1954 assessment of the Hoover Administration. Whitaker commented that there was a conspicuous absence of Herbert Hoover from the policy development process towards the region, adding that for the most part Hoover simply left Latin American affairs to his Secretary of State Henry Stimson and other bureaucrats (Whitaker, 1954, p.136). Wiarda would concur contending a great deal of U.S. foreign policy is conducted at lower policy levels out of sight from media attention, and that Latin America is only of concern to high policy levels during times of crisis. However, similar to Henry Raymond Wiarda also argues American behavior tends to be "condescending and patronizing" and those in charge of U.S. policy typically "treat Latin Americans as 'little children' who must be educated" (Wiarda, 2006, p.86). As the late Columbia professor Frank Tannenbaum once asserted, "Our difficulties with Latin America are not merely economic and political. They are moral" (Tannenbaum, 1966, p.176). Therefore, the question really becomes whether or not the attention the United States does pay to the region is benign or malignant, and why Latin America is absent from the national agenda of America's top policymakers.

### The Whirlpool and Placing Blame

Robert A. Pastor, former director of Latin American and Caribbean Affairs at the National Security Council and current professor at American University in Washington D.C. refers to this problem as the *whirlpool* effect. Pastor first developed the whirlpool concept in 1992; he argues the U.S. government presidents in particular get drawn into Latin American affairs when they become crises, but are released from this whirlpool when matters of more urgent concern arise elsewhere (Pastor, 2001, p.ix). Thus, despite the intentions of the Washington Consensus and

the efforts of those at lower bureaucratic levels, U.S. foreign policy to Latin America is often piecemeal and without a consistent strategy. This is similar to George Black's claim in that,

when there was no crisis, or when the crisis did not discreetly involve the United States, it was as if the [Latin American] country in question had simply ceased to exist (Black, 1988, p.80).

Anita Isaacs criticizes Pastor's supposition on the basis that his findings are too heavily relied on case studies from Central America and the Caribbean (Isaacs, 1993, p.364). However, the American involvement in removing Allende from power and current U.S. attention to the policies of Hugo Chávez suggest the whirlpool explanation does account for the South American continent as well. In 2001, Pastor developed a strategy for the United States to exit this whirlpool phenomenon, stating the "consolidation of democracy and the expansion of freer trade" during the post-Cold War era as promising areas to build an engaging foreign policy to the region that stresses cooperation and continual collaboration between North and South (Pastor, 2001, p.ix).

At the same time Pastor asserts the United States should not be solely to blame for the troubled relationship with Latin America. As Latin American historian Herbert L. Matthews once asserted, "it takes two to make a relationship as well as a quarrel" (Matthews, 1963, p.121). For example, the perceptions of sovereignty by many Latin American leaders have hindered a positive relationship from forming. For instance, Mexico's past leaders have often constructed walls around their country, whether it was a state-managed protectionist economic strategy or a dominant-party regime that preached anti-Americanism "psychological, diplomatic, and economic boundaries" separated the nation from the United States (Pastor, 2001, p.271). Rather than rejecting the United States in the name of nationalism, Pastor is convinced countries in the

region should have been cooperating with the United States in efforts to improve their national well-being. Therefore, Latin America's failures in the past to confront the U.S. government have not only prolonged the whirlpool problem, but also makes Latin governments partially responsible for it. In the end, the failures of both the United States and Latin American countries to work cooperatively together Pastor argues is one reason why a poor relationship exists and the United States has less influence in the region than it often perceives.

However, Peter H. Smith and Lars Schoultz hold the United States almost solely responsible and attempt to demonstrate in each of their respected manuscripts that the history of U.S. policy driven by self-interest and corresponding hard power policies are to blame for bad relations and diminished U.S. influence. Smith contends the dynamics of hemispheric affairs and the variation in the behavior of the United States can be understood by examining the geopolitics during the time the actions took place, including the changes in the definitions of U.S. national interest and the perceptions of extrahemispheric rivalry (Smith, 2000, p.357). Therefore, according to Smith while self-interest can be seen as the motivation for the often callous policy aimed at Latin America, the perception of events on the international stage have also stirred American course of action. The prime example of this Smith claims is the 1954 intervention into Guatemala where combined with the American economic interests tied to the United Fruit Company, Arbenz's political left swing caused fear for U.S. policymakers that a Soviet led mission to spread communism throughout the Americas was underway (Smith, 2000, p.137).

Lars Schoultz also regards U.S. policy to the region as one synonymous with self-interest. For Schoultz this self-interest has revolved around the three themes of national security, domestic politics, and economic development (Schoultz, 1998, p.xv). The argument made is that

these three themes, which have been intertwined with American policy towards Latin America since the beginning of hemispheric relations, are supported and driven by a belief of cultural superiority over its southern neighbors, which Schoultz concludes is beneath the United States. For example, he recalls the belittling language used by President H.W. Bush against Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega when Ortega's domestic objectives became a thorn in the side of the U.S. government. Bush publicly referred to Ortega as a "little man," and when asked why he used such a scornful label Bush responded, "because he is - that's why" (Schoultz, 1998, p.xi). His notion is that such attitudes have propelled the United States to behave unilaterally rather than respect its Latin American counterparts and work multilaterally with them. For additional scholarship critical of the U.S. hard-line policy in Latin America one may turn to (Coatsworth 1994) who makes the argument for the existence of a client-state scenario where the United States has provided protection in exchange for the authority to supervise Central America's political and economic environment; or (Conniff 1992) for a specific case study analysis of past U.S. policy towards a Latin American country (i.e. Panama).

Although there is variability in who is at fault in a number of these works outlined above, the connection between Schoultz, Smith, Pastor, Wiarda, and Raymont rests on the cornerstone that something has gone terribly wrong in the relationship between the United States and Latin America. The exceptionality of the New World that was supposed to solidify bonds separate from Europe they argue is one with many cracks and is in need of desperate repair. In short many of these authors make the case for a revitalization of relations. Furthermore, all of these writers believe a shift in policy away from the traditional hard-line approach would improve relations. For Pastor, that would be working collectively on matters of democracy and trade as opposed to making unilateral demands that have historically pushed Latin American

countries away. And for Raymont having a better understanding of Latin American culture, whether it is through the form of cultural exchanges or other practices would be the remedy to improve U.S. influence in the region.

### Staying the Course

In contrast, there are a small number of detractors within the body of literature on inter-American relations who support maintaining the tradition of past policies, and if anything a shift to more hard-line policies they deem is more appropriate than the softer approaches like multilateralism advocated by the authors mentioned above.

William Kristol, editor of the influential *The Weekly Standard* is well known for his neo-conservatism and outlook on U.S. foreign policy in both Washington and academic circles. Although his writings tend to focus more on American foreign policy at large and not policy aimed directly at Latin America his opinions are often echoed by scholars and practitioners working in inter-American relations. For example, in a 1996 article co-authored with Robert Kagan, Kristol argued that during the Reagan Administration “the policy of putting pressure on authoritarian and totalitarian regimes had practical aims and, in the end, delivered strategic benefits” (Kristol and Kagan, 1998, p.27-28). Today this hard-line stance is shared by those encouraging tougher policies against Cuban President Fidel Castro and Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez. For instance, President Bush has tightened the travel ban for Americans wanting to travel to Cuba because he believes less tourist dollars equates to less money in the hands of the Castro government, thus making it more difficult for the regime to operate. In addition, the White House supported a coup d'état that temporarily removed democratically elected Chávez from power (Isikoff and Contreras, 2002, p.10). Kristol has also advocated regime change to be

carried out by the U.S. military; for instance at a 2002 conference on Middle Eastern affairs he agreed with former Director of the CIA James Woolsey that regime change should be the preferred policy of the United States to neutralize the growing threats to American security in Iran and Syria (Hearn, 2002, p.68). One year later, Congressman Henry Hyde made similar policy suggestions for the U.S. stance towards Venezuela and Brazil, contending the United States should do the utmost to oust Hugo Chávez from power, giving further evidence to the fact that Kristol's pro-hard power mentality has been influential for those working in inter-American relations (Corrigan, 2003, p.7).

In addition to policymakers, scholars like Mark Falcoff of the American Enterprise Institute also advocate tough policies toward Latin America. Prior to the Panama Canal handover, Falcoff warned that the departure of the American military authority in the country was "bound to have weighty consequences" and reminded his readers that Panama was not Switzerland or Luxembourg and the likelihood of civil unrest was probable (Falcoff, 1998, p.3). Therefore, according to Falcoff without the arm of the U.S. military to induce or make threats an unfriendly dictator could arise and end up controlling one of the most strategic locations on the planet consequently eliminating American influence.

Susan Kaufman Purcell, vice-president of the Council of the Americas and the Americas Society, shares Falcoff's hard-line views. In a response to former Chief of the U.S. Interest Section in Havana Wayne S. Smith's cry to lift the Cuban embargo as a stimulant to liberalize the state's economy, she countered that Castro has only attempted to make economic reform when he is under more pressure not less. She notes Castro was forced to make reforms when the Soviet Union collapsed and no longer could provide billions in subsidies as evidence that the embargo is working. Purcell believes "deeper economic reforms will be forthcoming during the

next few years – not because Fidel Castro has embraced Adam Smith but because he has no choice” (Purcell, 1996, p.161).

The different policies supported by the likes of Raymond and Pastor and that of Falcoff and Purcell fall on the fault lines of the soft power and hard power debate even though both camps do recognize a problem for U.S. influence in Latin America. At the same time it is easy to see how the differences on this literature can be regarded as a sub clash to the larger ideological war between realists and liberals, at least in respect to how each advocates the application of power.

### Conclusion

The body of literature on U.S. Latin American relations is entrenched with depictions of a troubled relationship, one for which clearly affects influence. The examples from Robert Pastor, Howard Wiarda, and the others mentioned above are more than suffice to bring this point home. However, is it necessary for America to set an example for the rest of the world; or is it correct to assume that America’s enemies cannot be made less threatening by what it says or does? Furthermore, in respect to Latin America has the absence of soft power and multilateralism during past interactions been responsible for affecting American influence in a negative way? This thesis will answer such questions and attempt to determine if soft power approaches or more hard-line polices best predict and describe U.S. influence in Latin America.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to compare two historical cases of U.S. foreign policy power approaches and to determine the effect each method has had on American influence in the Latin American region. Representing the soft power and hard power approaches will be the Good Neighbor policy and the contra war in Nicaragua, respectively. The case study comparison and the final analysis will be conducted in a qualitative fashion. Unfortunately this poses a variety of problems. For starters, “as a general rule, qualitative studies do not [typically] allow the researcher to identify cause-effect relationships” (Leedy and Ormond, 2005, p.135). However, in this study both the independent and dependent variables are concepts that are beyond the reach of quantifying. In fact, soft power, hard power, and influence are even difficult to operationalize as qualitative variables because of the vagueness and abstractness each encompasses. Therefore, it is my objective in this chapter to clarify as best as possible the bounds for which each term represents during this study in order to make a comparison possible between the two selected cases and to deduce whether or not different power approaches have different effects on influence. The final section of this chapter will address the general research strategy, in terms of why the employment of the case study comparison method is best for this thesis.

If the end result of this analysis were to find dramatic differences in the level of influence gained or lost from a particular power approach it would certainly beget further research and even the possible development of a theory that claims X causes Y. However, it should be noted that Barbara Geddes (2003) warns about the dangers of forming elaborate theories that do not hold up because of poorly constructed research design. She uses the metaphor of sandcastles to illustrate this problem. For example, she states that often researchers will build paradigms with

great effort only to see them washed away like sand castles by “the next generation of graduate students, whose research batters at the weak points” (Geddes, 2003, p.4). Certainly this study if not designed properly could fall susceptible to scientific scrutiny or what Geddes would refer to as a rising tide to my supposition. Therefore, this chapter’s intent is to present the details of my research design in an effort to persuade the reader that a sound research structure has been erected to sufficiently develop valid conclusions that will withstand the weather of any design criticism.

### Population and Variables

This chapter’s first section will concentrate on the difficulties of the study’s population and variables so that in section two a basis has been formed for explaining the general research strategy. Foremost, the abundance of literature describing the difficulties within the U.S. Latin American relationship (Raymont 2005, Smith 2000, Schoultz 1998, Pastor 1992, Wiarda 1987) compels an examination of U.S. foreign policy to be conducted. Moreover, the rise of intermestic issues that involve Latin America further add to the importance of the region to American interests, thus the significance of its inclusion in this study. In regards to reliability, using cases only from Latin America helps control for a handful of variables that might also affect influence; for example, similar history in terms of frontier and colonial pasts, the shared experience of independence and former U.S. policies (i.e. Big Stick, Dollar Diplomacy), as well as related economics and culture. Whereas comparing two events such one from Southeast Asia and another from the Middle East would not necessarily garner similar advantages.

However, there is a challenge to using the method of a case study comparison for events that have occurred within two very different historical eras. For example, the contra war in Nicaragua was during the bipolar Cold War where the international context of events was very different than the geopolitics of the 1930s and early 1940s. In that sense one may argue that this difference in geopolitics could account for variation in the amount of influence gained or lost following each of these power approaches. However, it is more likely that events on the international stage propelled what types of power approaches the United States chose to employ rather than the effect of how much influence was eventually gained or lost. Furthermore, it is important to remind the reader that the significance of this study is to compare two strong cases of hard and soft power. The Good Neighbor policy and the contra war examples were selected for their polarity, and although they each occurred during different historical periods they should provide a suffice sample in order to make a deduction on whether or not soft power or hard power is a better technique to make use of in order to acquire and maintain influence in Latin America.

### Influence

My dependent variable was not addressed in any detail in the previous chapter; and since it is intangible and quite vague it would be prudent to lay out my thinking about the term influence in order to understand the basis of where my operational definition comes from. After all it is crucial that the investigation is “measuring what we think we are measuring,” and therefore equally imperative for the reader to understand the exact phenomena being investigated (King, Keohane, Verba, 1994, p.25). To begin with it should be noted that the words authority, control, and power are often used interchangeably for influence. However, for this project influence is

the more accurate term to describe the phenomena I am investigating. For example, “authority is something that can only emerge in legitimate relationships which do not exist between states” (Brown, 2001, p.87). In other words, Latin American countries do not acknowledge that the United States has a right to exercise authority over it. Furthermore, the concept ‘control’ is also an inaccurate term used to describe influence because in order for one state to be in a position to control another, “the latter would cease to be a state” (Brown, 2001, p.88). Therefore, as Professor Chris Brown explains, since

“we have neither a world government (a world source of legitimate authority) nor a world empire (a world-wide source of effective control) . . . only relationships of influence remain” (Brown, 2001, p.88).

The word ‘power’ is more closely related to influence than authority or control, but it is still not the precise word to employ. As noted in the previous chapter, there are a variety of power methods a state can use to acquire influence, but none should be considered to guarantee or equate to influence. Power should be understood as a method or a tool because certain types of power can fail to compel, deter, or attract another actor. Influence on the other hand is the outcome of achieving compliance, deterrence, or attraction. Therefore, for my thesis influence should be understood as a successful outcome. The verdict of whether or not influence had increased or decreased is measured by the ability to achieve desired objectives. This similar method has been used by political scientists determining the effectiveness of economic sanctions (Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliot 1985). Furthermore, the level of difficulty in accomplishing such goals and the success rate of attaining particular objectives determines how much influence a state possesses.

The manner for measuring the amount of influence the United States possesses will be done qualitatively by examining the objectives the United States was attempting to reach just prior, during, and after the Good Neighbor and contra war policies took place in Latin America. By doing this it will reveal the difference in difficulty (if any) in trying to accomplish those goals. It is certainly possible that after the length of time each approach stretched out to be, the goals before the event may have changed and became something different than what they were beforehand. Nevertheless, a measure of influence can still be extracted from a comparison of the fluctuating challenges of meeting those various goals.

#### Soft Power and Hard Power

The independent variables can be equally as challenging to operationalize. As explained in the previous chapter soft power is the ability to get what you want through the act of persuasion rather than coercion, it is the practice of using attraction to shape the behavior of others rather than making explicit threats. However, there are a number of ways one can persuade others to go along with one's own objectives. Therefore, in order to understand where this study's operational definition of soft power comes from a short examination of soft power resources and indicators is warranted.

For this thesis the indicators of public diplomacy including cultural exchanges, bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, and the degree to which the United States had lived up to its own standards and popular political ideals are used to classify the concept of soft power. Each of those soft power indicators can be found in the Good Neighbor case and for that reason its inclusion into this study case is valuable. For example, the emphasis on cooperation, nonintervention, and public diplomacy through a variety of mediums was done with the purpose

of building a magnet towards Latin America in hopes to attract America's southern neighbors to broader U.S. goals and objectives. A more exhaustive look at the Good Neighbor case's ability to exemplify the soft power approach will be laid out in chapter four.

Hard power is the second independent variable of my thesis. In general, hard power rests on the utilization of inducements, commands, coercion, or threats, which can involve a variety of techniques other than simply military prowess. For this project military force or war, economic sanctions and payments (in the form of bribes), and coercive diplomacy serve as the indicators for the phenomena of hard power for which I am trying to capture in this study. The contra war case in Nicaragua resembles the hard power approach because of its emphasis on military intervention and economic pressure; for example, Ronald Reagan's efforts to fund guerilla forces to overthrow the established Sandinista government because of its leftist political position. A further examination of how the contra war fits the hard power approach will be carried out in chapter five.

In total, hard power for this study is considered the use of military force or war, economic sanctions and payments, and/or coercive diplomacy, being employed by a particular state; as opposed to the indicators of public diplomacy, bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, and attractive political ideals for soft power. In the subsequent chapters a great deal of effort will be given to explaining how the Good Neighbor and contra war cases exemplify the parameters laid out here for these independent variables before analyzing the effect each had on American influence in Latin America.

### The Exclusion of Economic Power and Other Remarks

A short discussion of economic power is necessary not merely to justify why it was not included as a third independent variable, but to give further clarification of the conceptual bounds of soft power and hard power in this study. In general, economic power is both soft and hard power; depending on how economic power is used determines if it is a hard or soft approach. Although I concede to the notion that the *possession* of power should be viewed on a three dimensional chessboard, I do not believe there are more than two *approaches* to applying those three forms of power. For example, when a nation uses its economic power to place sanctions or an embargo on another country it reflects a hard approach, but when a country uses its vast wealth to provide economic relief and assistance (without any strings attached) it is using a soft approach. Therefore, I find the two models of hard power and soft power to be sufficient variables in capturing the essence of foreign policy approaches I wish to examine in this academic exercise.

At the same time it should be mentioned that the Good Neighbor and contra war cases are worthy examples for this study because each often behaves counter to the other's power approach. For example, Ronald Reagan carrying out the contra war surreptitiously from Congress may not be a form of hard power by the means of coercion or deterrence, but it does go against the attractive political ideal of transparency, a trait of soft power. In addition, the policy of nonintervention and the refusal to use armed force to secure various political objectives in Latin America during the Good Neighbor era is not soft because it is power through attraction, but rather because it is counter to the hard power approach of armed force. Therefore, some qualities of both the Good Neighbor and the contra war cases are soft and hard power by default because they contradict the other's traits. The ability for these case examples to do so is an additional advantage of their inclusion in this study.

## Research Strategy

In sum, the methodology of this study is a qualitative comparison of two U.S. foreign policy cases. The Good Neighbor policy and the contra war in Nicaragua represent the soft and hard power approaches, respectively. The main strategy to conduct this qualitative study is a document analysis. Through an examination of articles, speeches, and actual legislation concerning each of the two cases the depth to which the Good Neighbor policy and the contra war in Nicaragua represent the soft and hard power approaches can be revealed. Furthermore, by using foreign newspapers, speeches by Latin American leaders and other elites, as well as journal articles and memoirs that not only assess the influence of U.S. policy, but also display the sentiment towards each of the cases in question, it provides the keys to uncovering the level of difficulty in achieving various U.S. objectives in the region; therefore revealing whether there was a gain or loss in influence. For those reasons the implementation of a document analysis is greatly beneficial.

The advantages of using a historical comparative case study method for this particular research question lie in its ability to concentrate on depth rather than breadth. By focusing on two specific cases it becomes possible to investigate the Good Neighbor and contra war instances in greater detail. In general case studies also help answer the “how” and “why” questions (Yin 2003), for example one of the general questions in this study asks why U.S. influence fluctuates in Latin America. Furthermore, in contrast to experimental designs where the conditions and environment are highly controlled, a lack of complete control over the context can be beneficial by allowing real life events to play out. As some political scientists have stated, it can show “that a theory actually works and is applicable in a real situation” (Johnson, Joslyn, and Reynolds, 2001, p.86). This can also be important for testing theories involved with government

policies and programs, which in effect this thesis project is attempting to do. In recent years some have promoted the use of case studies to develop policy-relevant theories that are beneficial to policymakers (George and Bennett 2005).

However, there are limitations to utilizing the case study method. To begin with case studies are seldom completed in a short period of time because they require extensive data collection and adequate documentation (Johnson, Joslyn, and Reynolds, 2001, p.84). Furthermore, there is the potentiality for bias to occur; after all “no one asks a question unless there is an interest in what the conclusion might be” (Hoover and Donovan, 2004, p.9). This is a logical criticism and in fact it is often the complaint from proponents of quantitative studies who never fail to remind those in qualitative work that *numbers never lie*. However such individuals seem to forget bias can also occur in conducting experimental research (Rosenthal 1966). To assist with the drawback of possible bias I have chosen to include a variety of scholarly assessments concerning the impact of each policy case on U.S. influence in Latin America; this will account for any unforeseeable personal bias. Despite some limitations the case study method does provide a snap shot of history and permits a “deeper understanding of the causal process” (Johnson, Joslyn, and Reynolds, 2001, p.88). In this regard the Good Neighbor policy and the contra war cases will reveal the causal effect of soft and hard power on influence.

The specific case selection of the Good Neighbor policy and the contra war are important because they represent the extremes of the soft and hard power approaches in foreign policy. For example, as elucidated above each case reflects the polar ends of what could be considered the soft and hard power continuum. This is an essential component of the study because the underlying purpose of the thesis is to compare and contrast the two types of power tactics in the

Latin America setting. The selection of alternative cases that do not fully represent the qualities of soft and hard power would allow the possibility of one to make an inference about the effects of soft and hard power that are simply not valid. Furthermore, the examination of the Good Neighbor and contra war cases permits a greater understanding of the effects of U.S. policy in Latin America. As stated earlier in the chapter the rise of intermestic issues that involve Latin America have added to the importance of this region to American interests. In terms of applying power, these two specific cases offer two very different methods for which U.S. policymakers can adopt to tackle these contemporary issues.

However, that does not mean the methods or findings of this study are not applicable elsewhere. The current situation in Iraq provides an example for where policymakers have made the choice between implementing soft and hard power. In addition, the current state of relations with China, North Korea, and Iran provide further areas for the discussion on the two power approaches in U.S. foreign policy. These examples illustrate this study's ability to account for external validity. For instance, in the case of Iran one could replicate my study by examining past U.S. policies to the country that reflect the characteristics of soft and hard power (i.e. the late 1800s' diplomatic efforts versus the 1953 overthrow). By doing so it could provide an answer to which approach towards the country was more beneficial in acquiring influence, and thus help decide whether the United States should now be more forceful or diplomatic.

Moreover, the results of the study will be significant to the Latin American region. The pending predicament in Cuba with the imminent death of Fidel Castro will in all likelihood result in a change of U.S. policy to the country. The results of this case study analysis on the comparison of the Good Neighbor policy and the contra war could serve as an indication for

what type of power approach to implement. In that regard the methodology chosen for this project is invaluable.

## CHAPTER FOUR: THE GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY

The Good Neighbor policy is the name used to describe Franklin D. Roosevelt's foreign policy strategy towards Latin America. Although it was actually Herbert Hoover who first used the phrase "good neighbor" the philosophy has become a part of FDR's distinct legacy (Black, 1988, p.59). At his 1933 inauguration speech there was not a great deal of text dedicated to international relations, but what did refer to the new president's foreign policy intentions was a clear shift in course from past administrations' policies in the Western hemisphere:

In the field of world policy, I would dedicate this nation to the policy of the Good Neighbor, the neighbor who respects the rights of others; the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of agreements in and with a world of neighbors. We now realize as we have never realized before our interdependence on each other; that we cannot merely take, but must also give (Black, 1988, p.59).

Therefore, Roosevelt's vision for future relations between the United States and Latin America was to be one synonymous with the characteristics of soft power. In order to illustrate this drastic change in approach towards Latin America a brief summary of the policies leading up to FDR's Good Neighbor policy along with the state of influence the United States held prior to the implementation of Roosevelt's plan is requisite.

### Preceding Policies

The Good Neighbor approach contrasts greatly from those before it. For example, Taft's Dollar Diplomacy was intended to use American economic power, with or without Latin American agreement, to improve the conditions in the region in order to prevent a climate of vulnerability

that would attract European nations to step in and interfere with the so-called U.S. sphere of influence. It was as Henry Raymond called it a “belief that U.S. investment was the recipe for political stability in the region” (Raymont, 2005, p.17). However, as a consequence this triggered intermittent U.S. military intervention into the domestic affairs of Latin American republics in the name of protecting American dollars.

For example, the U.S. government believed that revolutions in Central America were due to the actions of foreign financiers not social conditions, thus sending troops into places like Nicaragua in 1926 was viewed as a necessity to enforce the Monroe Doctrine and protect American interests. In fact, prior to the Good Neighbor policy there was little respect for the sovereignty of Latin American countries. Between 1898 and 1920 alone U.S. troops entered the territory of Caribbean states on no less than twenty separate occasions, and in 1924 U.S. Marines were sent to Honduras according to one government telegram to protect the “American colony” (Wood, 1961, p.5). Past interventions were often justified as a means to protect Americans and American owned property overseas. As President Calvin Coolidge saw it in 1927, “The person and property of a citizen are a part of the general domain of the Nation, even when abroad” (Guerrant, 1950, p.114).

The Platt Amendment to the Army Appropriation Act of 1901 exhibits the lengths the U.S. government was willing to go to enforce its will on Latin American countries prior to Roosevelt’s new approach. Article III of the amendment, which was required to be incorporated into the Cuban constitution, stated that, “The Government of Cuba consents that the United States may exercise the right to intervene for the preservation of Cuban independence” (Wood, 1961, p.49). Therefore, the United States could intervene into Cuban affairs at its own discretion. Until the abrogation of the Platt Amendment this would occur several times,

including in incidents of election fraud. For example, between 1906 and 1909 the United States had installed an interim president of Cuba.

U.S. intervention throughout Latin America was received disapprovingly and considered nothing more than Yankee interference and imperialism from their North American neighbor. One historian recalled that during this era, “In all of the Latin American countries there were strong feelings of distrust, suspicion, and fear of the alien nation of the north” (Wood, 1961, p.4). In addition, there was a lack of cooperation and respect towards the region to try to work with them. In 1912 U.S. marines landed on the shores of the Dominican Republic to enforce the payment of international debts the country owed; furthermore U.S. officials stayed to ensure the election of a Dominican president who would be in line with American objectives (Molineu, 1986, p.45). As a result anti-American sentiment sprouted as it would again in the mid 1960s when the United States chose to intervene in the Dominican Republic once more.

At times anti-American sentiment would compel Latin American nations to look elsewhere either for political/economic security or inspiration, which in turn affected U.S. influence. For example, it is implausible to suggest the anti-American sentiment that ran rampant through Mexico for generations following the Mexican American War had no impact on Germany’s decision to try and draw Mexico into the First World War against the United States. This is also visible with the attempts of Argentina, Brazil, and Chile to maintain financial ties with European states and institutions than to be trapped by American banks (Green, 1971, p.7). During this time the appeal of American style democracy and market capitalism declined evident from the scores of promising young Latin American students in the 1920s falling under the influence of Marxist economics, and the rise of dictatorships in Bolivia, Peru, and Argentina all by 1930 (Green, 1971, p.9). The New World exceptionalism that was supposed to avoid those

European like troubles for which the United States was hoping to be the benevolent leader of was not on the horizon in the early 1930s. As a whole, the situation was bleak for the United States to achieve policy objectives in the region, as FDR's Secretary of State Hull recalled, "Our inheritance of ill-will was grim" (Hull, 1948, p.308).

The Good Neighbor policy was designed to be a break from those past foreign policy approaches. In 1928 Roosevelt proclaimed, "Single-handed intervention by us in the internal affairs of other nations must end; with the cooperation of others we shall have more order in this hemisphere and less dislike" (Roosevelt, 1928, p.585). The following section is an outline of how the Good Neighbor policy case fits the characteristics of soft power stated in the previous methodology chapter; the final section is an analysis of how FDR's Good Neighbor strategy affected U.S. influence.

#### The Good Neighbor Policy as Soft Power

The Good Neighbor policy approach is in accordance with the soft power components outlined in the literature review and methodology chapters. The effort to work bilaterally and multilaterally with Latin American countries, the push to extend public diplomacy, the dedication to stand by popular American political ideals, and the strong emphasis on nonintervention exhibits the manner in which the Good Neighbor strategy was attempting to use the power of persuasion to gain influence. This section will address these tactics in greater detail.

## Nonintervention and Political Ideals

The plan to not use war or armed force reflects the non-hard power qualities of FDR's intentions, and as a centerpiece of his overall strategy for Latin America nonintervention deserves some attention. As Secretary of the Navy FDR actually favored U.S. intervention as a foreign policy tool in Latin America, however it should have been no surprise that by the time of his presidency he had reversed his position and intended to usher in a new approach. For example, quoted above in the previous section's last paragraph is an excerpt from his 1928 article written for *Foreign Affairs*, for which Roosevelt stated, "Single-handed intervention by us in the internal affairs of other nations must end" (Roosevelt, 1928, p.585). During his first year in office he would continue such statements to exhibit his non-coercive intentions; "the definite policy of the United States from now on is one opposed to armed intervention" (Raymont, 2005, p.43). Words turned into action when in 1934 the Platt Amendment was terminated at the delight of both Cubans and members of the Roosevelt Administration. Sumner Welles, the Assistant Secretary of State, had said there was "no greater impediment to the free exercise of the people" than what Platt had done (Guerrant, 1950, p.3). The Good Neighbor policy was therefore to be a new course.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that there were tense moments where U.S. intervention seemed like the perceptible policy. For example, months after Roosevelt became president economic and political instability in Cuba was rising to the brink of revolution. However, whereas previous administrations under the Platt Amendment would have put U.S. Marines on the ground to stabilize the situation and protect American owned property, the Roosevelt team chose another option. When confronted by hawkish reporters with the notion of intervening or demanding then Cuban leader Gerardo Machado to step down, Roosevelt simply responded,

“That would be obvious interference with the internal affairs of another nation” (Wood, 1961, p.64). In fact, the visual threat of American Naval ships off the Cuban coast was about as close as the Roosevelt Administration would get to applying hard power in Latin America. FDR handled the Cuban situation with cautious diplomatic skill and a show of respect to the Cuban people to settle their own affairs without the United States dictating their every move.

Other intense events that pressured FDR to interfere occurred in Bolivia and Mexico, both pertaining to oil. For Mexico interference included the coercive diplomacy used by the U.S. government to favor North American oil companies. However, even in this area the new administration was more neighborly than those before it. For example, when U.S. ambassador to Mexico Josephus Daniels was pressured by private interests to make a formal protest against a proposed amendment to the Mexican constitution that would affect foreign investors, he refused claiming it would contravene U.S. commitments made at the 1933 Montevideo conference, stating:

The Good Neighbor policy calls for patience, toleration, justice, mutual helpfulness. Like Democracy, it can be purchased only at a heavy price, but no other policy can be upheld by a nation which respects the sovereignty of small countries and believes in self-determination (Wood, 1961, p.165).

A similar temptation of intervention occurred at the end of the 1930s where the U.S. government was pressured to intervene in the dispute between the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey and the Bolivian government. However, by restraining their role to that of an intermediary the United States was able to prevent violating the Good Neighbor policy (Smith, 2000, p.75-76). Years later historian Bryce Wood (1961, p.157) would call the approach to Mexico and Bolivia

“the policy of Pacific Protection.” In sum, the Cuban, Mexican, and Bolivian examples further illustrate Roosevelt’s dedication to the soft power approach.

As mentioned above, in 1933 there was an inter-American conference held in Montevideo, Uruguay, which in part addressed the issue of foreign intervention. The representatives at the meeting were able to concur on a resolution; Article VIII asserted, “No state has the right to intervene in the internal or external affairs of another” (Smith, 2000, p.69). U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull (quoted in Smith, 2000, p.69) further vowed that, “no government need fear any intervention on the part of the United States under the Roosevelt administration.” Hull’s words meant that the United States was renouncing the use of force in regards to interfering with the domestic political affairs of Latin America. However, there was still some fear amongst Latin American leaders that the United States would continue to utilize its armed forces to protect their citizens or property if they perceived the smallest of government infractions put them in harm’s way.

The FDR Administration was able to ease some of this anxiety at the 1936 Buenos Aires conference, where a formal protocol was adopted making intervention “inadmissible . . . in the internal or external affairs” of other countries (Matthews, 1963, p.135). This move by Roosevelt was a complete rejection of the hard power approach laid out by his distant cousin Teddy in the Roosevelt Corollary. When the United States agreed to nonintervention, political scientist Peter H. Smith contends this meant the United States was now abstaining from,

any form of meddling in the internal affairs of sovereign states – through coercion, enticement, manipulation, or other means that might range from unsought advice to economic pressure to the threat or show of force (Smith, 2000, p.70).

Therefore, Roosevelt was dedicated to the notion of nonintervention and the absence of hard power tactics in his approach.

The act of nonintervention was also not only a shift in policy towards Latin America but a representation of the long-standing American ideal of self-determination. As described in both the literature review and methodology chapters the attractiveness of various political ideals can serve as an important tool of soft power. The Roosevelt Administration's foreign policy stance to forbid interference was compounded with attractive domestic policies, which created an environment open to imitation throughout the region. For example, the domestic aims of the New Deal provided an example for Latin American nations to follow. The New Deal, designed to assist the common folk, a group the born aristocrat Roosevelt did his best to identify with, helped the president gain esteem around the world. According to historian John Patrick Diggins, "No other American president has so deeply touched the lives of the American people as Franklin Delano Roosevelt" (Diggins, 1988, p.10). As it will be discussed later in the chapter, this sense of empathy for the downtrodden and the New Deal policies that were created to lift people up from oppression also created admiration and replicated strategies in Latin America that were inline with overall American policies.

### Multilateralism

In addition to the policy of nonintervention, the series of inter-American meetings brought a climate of general cooperation and multilateralism to the table that had not been conveyed by previous American presidential administrations. Assessing the situation historian Bryce Wood wrote, "The meetings of foreign ministers gave the governments of all Latin American countries

a sense of participation in the framing of certain decisions affecting the hemisphere as a whole” (Wood, 1961, p.338). Considering the policies preceding Roosevelt’s tenure, this new relationship was a critical shift in course for American foreign policy.

In fact, the Montevideo and Buenos Aires conferences as well as those to follow were a direct step towards multilateralism. For instance, at the 1936 Buenos Aires Conference there was a resolution passed that called for the American states to “consult together for the purposes of finding and adopting methods of peaceful cooperation” (Smith, 2000, p.69). Also proposed by the Americans at Buenos Aires was an inter-American system of collective consultation, which would later be cemented at two separate conferences held in Rio de Janeiro. At the 1942 meeting held in Rio there was a successful agreement on a regional defense pact, a few years later again in Rio diplomats signed the Inter-American Treaty of Peace and Security (Raymont, 2005, p.31). In all there would be six meetings of foreign ministers held between 1933 – 1944 demonstrating FDR’s desire for multilateralism in the hemisphere.

These rounds of talks on cooperation eventually gave way to expanding trade. Roosevelt’s Secretary of State Cordell Hull believed trade liberalization would not only expand the market for U.S. products, but would also diminish the tendency toward conflict; similar to the argument made by Keohane and Nye (1989) forty years later. From 1929 to 1932 American exports to Latin America declined by 78% and imports declined 68%, in part because of the Hoover approved Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of 1930 (Smith, 2000, p.72). In 1934 the government now under Roosevelt passed the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act, which paved the way for bilateral trade arrangements with Latin American countries. The intent was to improve the U.S. economy, but it also showed Latin Americans that the United States was willing to make some concessions to nationalism in the region by ignoring some of the immediate interests

of private investors. As a whole, the wave of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements produced a by-product of increased interactions between Latin American countries and the United States, creating a sense of cooperation atypical from past administrations. Therefore, the rounds of inter-American meetings to build a trusting partnership and the cooperative trade agreements were a new and less unilateral approach to American foreign policy in the region.

### Public Diplomacy

As noted in the previous chapter public diplomacy can consist of various components from cultural exchanges and strategic communication to establishing lasting relationships. The following section is a display of the Roosevelt Administration's attempt at public diplomacy.

Daily contacts as well as the establishment of lasting relationships are significant parts of public diplomacy because they construct the groundwork for trust and agreement on future policy decisions. The shift to build a cordial relationship with Latin American nations was a new direction for the United States under Franklin Roosevelt. Roosevelt was once quoted as having said that if he had been a Latin American during the decades preceding his presidency he "could not have been anything but an enemy of the United States" (Wood, 1961, p.323). This display of empathy was a fresh approach to the region, also one in-line with the soft power trait Robert McNamara has recently argued for in the formation of modern day foreign policy.

Between the time of the installment of the Good Neighbor policy and 1945 seventeen Latin American presidents or presidents elect were invited to Washington D.C. (Raymont, 2005, p.64). And during the 1939 World's Fair in New York City while numerous heads of state found their way to New York and Washington, it was Nicaragua's Anastasio Somoza García that received the warmest welcome. Roosevelt went as far as to personally greet Somoza at the

railway station, hold a military parade in his honor, and then lastly have the celebratory day end for Somoza with a night's stay at the White House (Wood, 1961, p.155). George Black recalled that it was the "most extravagant military reception the city has ever given a foreign leader" (Black, 1988, p.70-71). The event was just one example of Roosevelt's new diplomatic approach to Latin Americans.

In fact, it has been said that the entire Roosevelt team implemented the Good Neighbor policy with a "finesse and a sympathetic style of application," one that strived on an "informal atmosphere of communication between governments" ultimately allowing "growth of cordiality and respect among individuals" to flourish (Wood, 1961, p.337). For example, during the 1933 Montevideo Conference Cordell Hull practiced a form of shuttle diplomacy by going back and forth between the hotel rooms of the conference delegates. By doing so Bryce Wood claims, "he opened a new era of warm personal relationships that contrasted sharply with the coldness and hostility" of previous American diplomats (Wood, 1961, p.304). Sumner Welles, the Assistant Secretary of State, was involved with the day-to-day policy decisions of the larger Good Neighbor policy. Welles had even regularly invited diplomats to his home establishing what one author had called the "second State Department" (Green, 1971, p.161). By handling his post in this manner he was able to develop a large number of personal friendships throughout the region and within the American bureaucratic arm dedicated to Latin American affairs (Wood, 1961, p.340). As a whole developing lasting relationships was a crucial goal to Roosevelt's foreign policy makers.

At the 1933 Montevideo conference American delegates also concurred on resolutions that were designed to bring about "mutual knowledge and understanding of the peoples of the Americas" (Smith, 2000, p.81). Prior to Roosevelt's efforts to develop cultural contacts with

Latin America there was little interest or effort from the U.S. government to promote American culture or ideas overseas. As Fred Fejes notes, “While the Latin Americans tended to recognize the material progress and economic power of the United States, they looked to Europe as the source of cultural values and models” (Fejes, 1986, p.72). It was under the Good Neighbor policy that this would change and American culture would begin to be used as a foreign policy tool. For example, the Office for Coordination of Commercial and Cultural Relations between the American Republics (OCCCRBAR) was created in 1940 to establish cultural ties and cooperation between the United States and Latin America. The office was headed by Nelson A. Rockefeller and later renamed the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA) in 1941. Edward O. Guerrant, a political analyst who worked in the OCIAA, wrote that the efforts of the office fell into two general categories, “informational” and “specific cultural and educational projects,” what Joseph Nye would later refer to as strategic communication and cultural exchanges, respectively (Guerrant, 1950, p.121). However, it should be noted that attempts to develop cultural ties in Latin America were actually initiated much earlier in FDR’s presidency and years before the creation of the OCIAA.

For instance, at the 1936 Buenos Aires Conference U.S. delegates approved the motion to provide government assistance for a student-faculty exchange program and funding for an exchange of artistic exhibits and literary publications (Fejes, 1986, p.74). Two years later, the State Department had established a Division of Cultural Relations, whose purpose was to promote educational exchanges with Latin America (Wood, 1961, p.305). Sumner Welles also urged the nation’s colleges and universities to offer educational exchanges with Latin American universities as well as begin to incorporate courses on Latin American history and culture. In fact, even the once prejudiced American textbooks began to change, dropping words like

“imperialism” to describe the new U.S. conduct and interest in the region (Black, 1988, p.61). Furthermore, many U.S. universities responded to Welles’s call by offering scholarships and fellowships to Latin American students for them to study in the United States (Fejes, 1986, p.73). However, cultural diplomacy went much farther during the Good Neighbor era than merely student exchanges, it included a wide array of strategic communication and cultural promotion.

For example, a special Motion Picture Section of the OCIAA was established and directed by philanthropist and movie producer John Hay Whitney. The motion picture division was created in part to build hemispheric solidarity to offset the dangerous rise of German propaganda aimed at dividing it. Whitney noted it was his intent that:

The menace of nazism and its allied doctrines, its techniques and tactics, must be understood from Hudson Bay to Punto Arenas. Wherever the motion picture can do a basic job of spreading the gospel of the Americas’ common stake in the struggle, there that job must and shall be done (Black, 1988, p.69).

Whitney and Rockefeller thought the problem with U.S. movies in Latin America at the time was that it was showing a negative image of the United States. Therefore, it became their mission to “show the truth about the American way” through strategic communication (Fraser, 2005, p.75). This included a number of projects from newsreels, sports features, and musical programs, to educational films about everyday American life (Guerrant, 1950, p.123).

Furthermore, Walt Disney, who was not a supporter of FDR, accepted a role in Roosevelt’s cinematic endeavor to change the minds of Latin Americans, becoming what one historian has called, “the first Hollywood producer of motion pictures specifically intended to carry a message of democracy and friendship below the Rio Grande” (Black, 1988, p.69). Disney had already produced propaganda films using his famous cartoon characters in such

shorts as *Donald Gets Drafted* and *The New Spirit*; for the projects introduced to Latin American audiences Disney created *Saludos Amigos* and *The Three Caballeros* (Fraser, 2005, p.74). For inspiration he had taken several of his staff members to South America to help formulate ideas for the films. The trip was later turned into a documentary and distributed by the OCIAA to display America's friendliness with its southern neighbors. Although Disney's movies could be considered private initiatives since it was the Walt Disney Company that produced them, each project was under the auspices of the OCIAA and members of the Roosevelt foreign policy team (Guerrant, 1950, p.124).

The OCIAA support for private projects whether it be the Disney films mentioned above or individually owned newspapers and magazines illustrate Roosevelt's acceptance and awareness that the American message could be spread by both public and private means. This included personal travel by Americans to Latin America, which was just now starting to increase after years of economic hardship in the United States. One author has noted that as air travel became more available, "traveling south by the Pan-Am Clipper became one of the great adventures of the Age" (Black, 1988, p.65). This of course was in harmony with Roosevelt's broader aims to enhance cultural exchanges, which the OCIAA was willing to spend millions to achieve. While the budget for the OCIAA's first year of operation was only \$3.5 million, by the end of World War II it had swelled to \$45 million (Smith, 2000, p.81). The purpose of cultural diplomacy was built on the notion that conflicts between the United States and Latin American states had been based on mutual misunderstandings of one another. Therefore, through these various forms of cultural exchange people would become aware of and appreciate the "achievements and merits of each nation's culture and society," ultimately forming a bond of common values that would united the Western hemisphere (Fejes, 1986, p.75).

At the offset it can be argued the Good Neighbor policy was primarily negative in nature because it was pledging *not* to intervene and *not* to construct trade barriers. Laurence Duggan, one of Roosevelt's policymakers for Latin America referred to it as "clearing away deadwood" that was built up from previous administrations (Duggan, 1949, p.70). However, at the same time FDR's approach implemented assorted qualities of soft power, through positive political ideals, multilateralism, and through various forms of public diplomacy. Therefore, the Good Neighbor policy's ability to reflect the cornerstones of soft power outlined in the literature review and methodology chapters clearly indicates that the policy was a strong example of the soft power approach; thus the reason why it was selected to be included in this study. In fact, even Joseph Nye himself the founder of the soft power concept has repeatedly labeled Roosevelt's Latin American policy a soft power tactic (Nye, 2002, p.69; and 2004, p.9).

### The Effect on Influence

The methodology for this thesis study is to measure the level of influence gained or lost by a particular power approach through the examination of the goals and objectives of the United States around the time that power method was implemented. Although the U.S. government did not always specifically state or list its precise goals at the time of the Good Neighbor policy, its ambitions were clearly visible through speeches and recollections made by members of the Roosevelt Administration. These goals can be categorized into two general groupings, short-term and long-term. The short-term aim of the FDR presidency in Latin America was to protect U.S. owned property. The long-term objectives were to build hemispheric solidarity and establish more American style institutions in the region.

However, since this section pertains to influence the immediate reactions to the Good Neighbor policy must also be addressed. It has already been stated that there was a great deal of fear and hostility toward the notion of intervention and U.S. economic and political domination in Latin America by the time of Roosevelt's arrival. As one friendly Uruguayan newspaper had reported, anti-American sentiment was so rampant that it would not be surprising to hear "Yankee imperialism blamed for the bad weather" (Wood, 1961, p.298-299). Reactions to the new Good Neighbor policy were a shift away from this era of bad feelings, and it was Roosevelt that received all the acclaim. Bolivian Ambassador to the United States Victor Andrade stated, Franklin Roosevelt deserves full credit for repudiating the 'big stick' policy formulated by his cousin Theodore. In doing so he swept aside a century of fear and distrust which had divided Latin America and the United States (Andrade, 1976, p.54).

Furthermore, at the opening ceremony of the 1936 Buenos Aires conference FDR's twenty-five minute speech was interrupted fourteen times by standing ovations (Raymont, 2005, p.27). The mood had clearly changed in favor of the United States, however that alone should not be equated to increased influence. The following two sections analyze the effect of the Good Neighbor policy on specific policy objectives for which this study has deemed the most accurate measure and indicator of influence gained or lost in the region.

#### Short-term Objectives

The Roosevelt Administration used neighborliness as a tool to achieve U.S. interests; the intent was that through reciprocity where the United States behaved like a good neighbor Latin American states would respond in the same way, preferably by doing things that were in the interest of the United States. One of these interests was the protection of American capital and

U.S. owned property in the region. Numerous interventions had taken place during previous administrations in the name of protecting property owned by private U.S. citizens. The new American strategy under the Good Neighbor policy was a rejection of that approach; however, as will be explained this new direction had no instant positive bearing on halting the seizure of property. An examination of cases in Cuba, Bolivia, and Mexico reveals the failures of goodwill to achieve reciprocity in terms of protecting property and investment.

At first the U.S. government attempted mediation in place of intervention to protect property abroad in addition to the various soft power methods noted in the previous sections of this chapter. However, citizens and private companies of seized property wanted more forceful action from their government. Furthermore, Latin American states often simply refused to arbitrate or would continue with the policy of appropriating property. For example, in late 1933 groups of Cuban citizens seized numerous American owned sugar mills on the island during the chaotic transition of General Fulgencio Batista coming into power. Although U.S. warships were sent to Cuba, Cordell Hull was defiant that American troops would not be used. Hull had even sent a telegram to Americans with capital invested on the island to inform them that the U.S. had “no intention of landing forces” (Wood, 1961, p.76). Therefore, in a sense it became trouble-free for Cuban officials to destroy foreign owned buildings and machinery and confiscate the valuable sugar mills. The fact that the United States removed the use of armed intervention from its foreign policy playbook allowed governments in the region to have less fear of retribution for their actions of confiscating U.S. owned property.

In March of 1937, the government of Bolivia confiscated the oil properties of the Standard Oil Company. Bolivian officials argued Standard Oil’s claim to the properties was fraudulent because they had avoided paying taxes. Therefore, they could cancel the concession

that permitted Standard Oil to be there in the first place and take title of the property without any compensation (Wood, 1961, p.168). Months of negotiations and talks dragged on eventually ending up in a bitter legal struggle in the Bolivian Supreme Court. The matter was not completely settled until 1942 when Bolivia agreed to pay \$1.5 million for the properties of Standard Oil, under the agreement the U.S. government would fund a \$25 million economic development program (Green, 1971, p.49-50).

In 1938, just one year after the confiscation of Standard Oil's property in South America, American oil properties were expropriated by the Mexican government. Mexican President Cárdenas and his administration took claim to the properties due to what they called a "labor dispute" over wages between oil executives and Mexican citizens who worked for the American owned corporations (Smith, 2000, p.76). The oil company representatives believed that the Mexican government had long intended to take hold of the oil properties and the course of action taken by Cárdenas was a calculated move because he was fully aware of the U.S. pledge to nonintervention at Montevideo and Buenos Aires. Since the property was "expropriated" and not "confiscated" the U.S. government believed the oil companies were at the very least entitled to receive prompt payment and just compensation for the property taken. Mexico responded that the land and the resources of their nation were in the, "hands of the people who work it . . . [this] cannot be halted by the impossibility of paying immediately the value of the properties belonging to a small number of foreigners who seek only a lucrative end" (Guerrant, 1950, p.107). The oil companies wanted a cash settlement of \$260 million or the return of their property, the Cárdenas government was willing to do neither (Guerrant, 1950, p.108).

Using soft power and tactics that were designed to persuade were not bringing immediate results, consequently discontent and frustration was growing amongst members of the Roosevelt Administration. Following the Mexican episode in 1938 Cordell Hull stated,

The policy of this government during the last five years has been the policy of the Good Neighbor. During these years the American Government has repeatedly evidenced its fulfillment of that pledge . . . The policy of equity and of reasonable and just treatment must have a reciprocal character (Wood, 1961, p.161).

The actions in Cuba, Bolivia, and Mexico were not living up to the expectations set by the notion of reciprocity. The aim to protect American investment and property abroad was not being achieved.

The policy of nonintervention and extending cultural ties with Latin American states was supposed to prevent episodes like these from happening, not make objectives more difficult to accomplish. The Cuban, Bolivian, and Mexican cases illustrate the fact this was true throughout the region whether it was the Caribbean, South America, or Central America. Rather than waiting years for an agreement to be reached previous administrations that chose to employ armed intervention had little difficulty achieving their goals when they could overthrow the ruling government. As Peter H. Smith described the pattern, “Military forces would arrive . . . depose rulers . . . install a hand-picked provisional government; supervise national elections; and then depart, mission accomplished” (Smith, 2000, p.51-52). Therefore, in contrast it is logical to make the conclusion that the use of soft power had a negative impact on the objective of protecting U.S. owned property in Latin America, and thus brought a reduction in influence in the region.

## Long-term Objectives

As stated above the long-term objectives of the Good Neighbor policy were to build hemispheric solidarity and establish more American style institutions in the region. In contrast to the administration's short-term aims, these were goals the Good Neighbor policy was successful in achieving. In fact, one historian has considered hemispheric solidarity to be the "crowning achievement" of the Good Neighbor policy (Smith, 2000, p.83).

The intentions to secure ties in the Western hemisphere whether it was for military defense or other purposes was perhaps the chief objective and main interest in Latin America for the FDR Administration since the inter-American meetings held at Montevideo and Buenos Aires. Roosevelt and his foreign policy team of Hull and Welles made it exceptionally clear that the efforts to reach out to Latin America through multilateralism and public diplomacy were to establish a sense of fraternity in the region. In this regard the Good Neighbor policy was successful, whereas under previous foreign policies' attempts to construct a coalition it was a much more difficult endeavor.

The proverbial example is the difference in coalitions and opinions of Latin Americans during World War I and World War II. During the First World War the number of nations that would support the Allied effort was half of what it would be during WWII; eight of which were U.S. protectorates at the time (Smith, 2000, p.84). Furthermore, the only Latin American state to actually send troops to fight in the war to end all wars was Brazil (Skidmore, 1999, p.94). More importantly, it should also be noted that during WWI Mexico was tempted by Germany to enter the conflict as a means to reacquire territory taken by the United States several decades before, which would have brought the war to U.S. soil (Schoultz, 1998, p.251). Although some authors (Skidmore and Smith 2001) have made the argument that American influence might have been

on the rise during this time, it is quite clear the United States had difficulty achieving support for their side during the war and realizing other American objectives.

In contrast, where the policies of his predecessors “did not win many friends,” Roosevelt began to be embraced by many Latin American leaders (Whitaker, 1954, p.134). One of the clearest examples of this was with Nicaragua’s Anastasio Somoza García. Once a friendly relationship had been established America’s influence with the Latin leader began to grow. For instance, after Somoza and Roosevelt had met, Somoza replaced a composite picture of himself with Adolf Hitler in his office with four pictures of FDR; furthermore he renamed Managua’s main thoroughfare Avenida Roosevelt (Black, 1988, p.72). However, lasting relationships did not only propel streets to be renamed in Roosevelt’s honor, it also had important positive effects on policy implications for the United States.

After the attacks on Pearl Harbor Somoza proclaimed, “I consider every Nicaraguan aviator and soldier as a potential fighting man for the U.S.,” other Latin American leaders followed suit by declaring war on the Axis Powers (Black, 1988, p.75). It is unlikely that before the Good Neighbor policy went into effect these same countries that had to previously and constantly worry about American intervention would now subdue their anger to defend this same country after it was just attacked. By the end of 1941, nearly every American republic had “rallied around the U.S. in defense of hemispheric security” (Raymont, 2005, p.54). Toward the end of the conflict nineteen Latin American countries either declared war on the Axis Powers or broke relations with those countries (Wood, 1961, p.324).

Brazil offers a valuable example of this newfound support. Although the country was rather supportive during World War I, the desire to participate on the side of the United States was at a new high. For instance, Brazil permitted the use of its military bases and supplies in the

preparation of the North African invasion. In fact, President Getúlio Vargas offered FDR the use of its coastal bases in 1937, long before the United States had even abandoned its isolationist stance (Skidmore, 1999, p.117-118). Brazil also “insisted upon an active, on-the-ground combat role” in the war (MacLachlan, 2004, p.113). Considering at the time the nation faced a possible attack from neighboring Argentina and had a total of only about 60,000 troops, their decision to volunteer 25,000 soldiers to the European campaign was a personal sacrifice. To show their solidarity with American GIs Brazilian soldiers called themselves “Ze Cariocas” the name of a character that befriended Donald Duck in one of Walt Disney’s Latin American cartoons (MacLachlan, 2003, p.114).

Roosevelt’s diplomatic efforts to befriend President Vargas and the bilateral trade talks with Brazil were also stimulants to this support. Through bilateral negotiations the United States was able to secure exclusive contracts for Brazilian rubber; the same was done in Bolivia (Green, 1971, p.104). The much-desired resources of South America were heavily sought after by both the United States and the Axis Powers, but it was the United States that would benefit from Brazil’s participation.

The ability of the United States to attract support in Latin America for hemispheric security and overall assistance for the Allied cause was further verified by Latin Americans in their response to disparaging remarks to Roosevelt’s soft power approach. In 1943, Republican Senator Hugh A. Butler wrote an article for *Readers Digest* criticizing the Good Neighbor policy, complaining there was a great deal of wasted money being spent trying to buy support for the U.S. war effort. Although at home the article had an insignificant impact on the implementation of the Good Neighbor policy (most politicians including Herbert Hoover supported it) it did strike a cord with the Latin American press, which angrily replied with

examples to disprove Butler's claims. One Costa Rican newspaper responded that any attempt by the United States to "buy friends" in Latin America would be indignantly rejected by the proud citizens of Latin America (Wood, 1961, p.320). In Guatemala, the newspaper *El Imparcial* noted, "The Latin Americans have made sacrifices affecting their welfare, their progress, their lives and lands, simply out of the need for solidarity action" (*El Imparcial*, 1943). In Ecuador the press reminded Roosevelt's critics that many privately owned yachts were refitted as naval vessels to assist the Allies. However, an editorial in Venezuela's *La Esfera* perhaps brought the strongest retort in how effective the Good Neighbor policy had become:

Neither Butler nor the few who, chorusing him in nostalgia for the hard times of Coolidge's imperialism, can change the Rooseveltian line [which has brought] . . . a complete reversal in the sentiments of the Spanish American peoples who today look on the United States as a senior comrade, strong and just (*La Esfera*, 1943).

Hull had also rejected Butler's assertions, stating that Latin Americans had opened their harbors and ports to U.S. Naval ships, "welcomed and quartered our troops on their soil . . . [and] rounded up axis spies and saboteurs" (Wood, 1961, p.324). In the case of Mexico, which two decades earlier was tempted to fight against the United States was now aiding the Allies by refusing to sell its oil to Japan (Wood, 1961, p.312). "Mexico did not hesitate for a moment in helping protect the United States by preventing the Japanese, after their traitorous aggression, from making use of Mexican territory either for espionage or for belligerent actions" (*La Prensa*, 1943). Assessing the situation this was surely not the same Mexico that had received the Zimmerman Telegram.

One may cite the case of Argentina and the country's unwillingness to participate in the Allies' war effort to claim that the soft power approach of the Good Neighbor policy was not as

effective as it is being claimed here. However, it should be noted that from the start the level of pro-Nazi sentiment was much higher in Argentina than in other Latin American countries. Therefore, in order to bring the country into the Allied column it was certainly going to take more time; Argentina joined the Allies in March of 1945. Furthermore, Argentina's vigorous resistance to the attempts of the United States to transform the Pan-American association into a military alliance and the country's overall state of neutrality might be due to the lack of U.S. soft power applied to the country not because of the application of it. For instance, there was a great deal of difficulty in reaching bilateral trade agreements with Argentina in regards to the importation of beef because of domestic concerns in the United States. Characteristic of Putnam's two-level game theory (1988) Roosevelt was forced to politick domestically with Western state cattle ranchers and on the international stage with Argentine diplomats. This lack of cooperation on economic matters that was found elsewhere in the region resulted in less trusting and lasting relationships. Secondly, Edward O. Guerrant an official who worked in the OCIAA noted that Argentina was the one country that the United States refused to apply the "hands-off" policy of nonintervention because the administration did choose to implement what he called "mild economic sanctions" on the country (Guerrant, 1950, p.36). Therefore, it is possible to claim that the Argentine case actually further supports the argument for soft power proponents who would like to see more hemispheric solidarity today.

The second long-term objective of the United States and the Good Neighbor policy was to expand U.S.-style capitalism and democracy. While in the short run the existence of dictatorships remained, towards the end of the Roosevelt Administration the cry for democracy was spreading in part by the example set by the United States. In reference to the 1946 elections where Republicans took hold of the U.S. Congress, one Mexican newspaper reported it "was a

new proof of the effectiveness of democratic institutions” and that the U.S. incident would be a valuable lesson to those in Latin America that were “politically backward” and did not respect democracy (Wood, 1961, p.420). To a certain extent, motivated by FDR’s January 1941 “Four Freedoms” speech tyranny was becoming less accepted, and a new climate of tolerance for pluralism was coming about. For example, Nicaragua’s Somoza was feeling the heat from frequent protests about his unchecked power, and General Jorge Ubico of Guatemala was overthrown and replaced by the Abraham Lincoln admirer and New Deal proponent Juan José Arévalo (Black, 1988, p.80). Furthermore, Brazil’s Getúlio Vargas who had postponed elections in 1938 and 1943 was now at the end of WWII under pressure from citizen disenchantment and a manifesto signed by some of the nation’s most prominent citizens calling for the restoration of a liberal constitutional government, compelling him to hold a popular election for the presidency (MacLachlan, 2003, p.115). Therefore, while in the short run FDR was willing to make what journalist George Black had called a “Faustian bargain” with many of the dictators in Latin America by accepting their tyranny, it was the long-term objective of spreading democracy that was Roosevelt’s chief intent (Black, 1988, p.73). As Roosevelt reportedly had said, Somoza might have been a son of a bitch, “but he’s our son of a bitch” (Black, 1988, p.71).

In terms of influencing Latin American governments to adopt U.S. economic principles the domestic New Deal offered a persuasive example to follow. President Plutarco Elías Calles of Mexico wrote in a letter to FDR:

[your policy] coincides in general terms with the policy which we have sought to carry out in Mexico. You may be sure that we particularly appreciate and admire the magnanimous work of your administration in favor of the unemployed, the workers, and the forgotten man in general (Wood, 1961, p.302).

Similar content was found in Central and South America. A newspaper editorial in Uruguay noted the attractiveness of the New Deal because it opposed the “detestable oligarchy of the trusts and the bankers” (*Uruguay*, 1937). For years Latin American governments were opposed to incorporating the American economic model because of what they had seen U.S. capitalists do in their own territory. In addition, the photographs and news stories of the food lines and Hoovervilles of the Depression in the United States did little to attract Latin Americans to U.S. style capitalism, where the business of the country was business. The New Deal offered a new approach.

Latin American countries from all areas tried to emulate FDR’s economic example. Julia Sweig commented that states in the region looked to Roosevelt’s model as a means for “modernizing their own backward, corrupt, unequal, and impoverished societies” (Sweig, 2006, p.6). Furthermore, beginning in the 1940s the Caribbean Legion, a group of educated and idealistic men from the Caribbean and Central America fought for the development of democratic welfare states reflective of what was occurring in the United States.

In sum, the long-term objectives of promoting capitalism, democracy, and hemispheric security were successful for advocates of the Good Neighbor approach. On the other hand, the short-term goal of protecting the property and capital of Americans abroad was a disappointment. The subsequent section presents the views of other scholars regarding the success and/or failure of the Good Neighbor policy. The final section to chapter four will be a summation and conclusion of the policy and its effect on influence in the Latin American region.

### Additional Scholarly Viewpoints

Since this is a qualitative analysis and the potentiality for bias to occur is possible, it would be beneficial to include the thoughts of other scholars in addition to my own in regards to the impact the Good Neighbor policy had on U.S. influence in Latin America. Overall, others have assessed Roosevelt's soft power approach with high remarks. "There can be none [sic] doubt about the influence and effect it had as a positive phenomenon on inter-American relations" (Raymont, 2005, p.60-61). However, there are criticisms also worth mentioning, most of which point to early failures of the policy's ability to bring about immediate results. Nonetheless, most evaluations are affirmative.

On the positive side of the spectrum there is an assortment of praises from both historians and political scientists. Henry Raymont, a current history professor and prior long time journalist of U.S. Latin American relations noted that,

In a scant twelve years, the Roosevelt administration developed a coherent, long-range hemispheric policy that effectively dispelled Latin American mistrust, won overwhelming congressional support, and substantially improved and consolidated the inter-American system. The extent of the transformation brought about by Roosevelt's New Deal and Good Neighbor policies was reflected in the drastically changed attitudes of the region's liberal democratic movements previously opposed by Pan Americanism (Raymont, 2005, p.54).

Raymont had also commented that the Roosevelt era was "unparalleled in taking hemispheric relations to the most constructive level in the twentieth century," and that it "developed into a paradigm of harmony and cooperation against which all subsequent U.S. administrations were measured" (Raymont, 2005, p.xiv and p.33). Edward O. Guerrant wrote that "the United States

has never had a foreign policy toward any area that was more successful than the Good neighbor policy was from 1933 to 1945” (Guerrant, 1950, p.212). In regards to the Good Neighbor policy’s ability to achieve the objectives it set out to accomplish, the famed American historian Henry Steele Commager assessed FDR with much praise, “History may record that he did more to advance democracy than any president since Lincoln . . . and as much to strengthen capitalism as any statesmen since Hamilton” (Commager, 1950, p.354-355). Others have labeled the Roosevelt era a “happy period” or “an expression of American idealism at its best” (Matthews, 1963, p.133, and Humphreys, 1946, p.132). Even the political scientist Peter H. Smith who tended to brand the entirety of U.S. relations with Latin America in his 2000 book as nothing more than the aims of a greedy and self-interested nation, refers to the Good Neighbor policy as a “golden era” (Smith, 2000, p.63). He stated, “this new stance promoted goodwill and mutual respect,” and as a consequence it brought “nearly unanimous support for the U.S. throughout the Second World War” (Smith, 2000, p.63).

However, Smith’s view of the Good Neighbor policy is somewhat ambivalent. He may call it a golden era, but he also wrote that the policy “was not so much a departure from past practice as an adaptation and extension of it” (Smith, 2000, p.85). He clarifies his argument in that,

In the name of nonintervention, the Good Neighbor policy constituted yet another attempt to achieve, impose, and consolidate American supremacy . . . The United States was using new instruments in behalf of time-honored goals . . . Washington could [now] extract voluntary cooperation from Latin American governments (Smith, 2000, p.64). He refers to the United States as simply changing its techniques to acquire and expand its sphere of influence; it is proper for Smith to recognize the Good Neighbor policy as another approach

because soft power should be viewed as an alternative foreign policy tool, a form of benevolent Machiavellianism, one that works on persuasion in place of coercion. As Fred Fejes wrote, “what was occurring was the abandonment of old, ineffective methods and techniques of control and the search for newer and more sophisticated ones” (Fejes, 1986, p.64).

While Smith may not be critical of the Good Neighbor policy’s success as he is of its moral foundation, history professor David Green noted that “over the long run the Good Neighbor Policy was a failure” because of the rise of widespread revolutionary nationalism that took place in Latin America during Roosevelt’s tenure (Green, 1971, p.291). This is true, but Green fails to comment on the efforts of Latin Americans to secure hemispheric ties, which was the goal of the Good Neighbor policy, not curtailing revolutions in the region, which he assumes. Furthermore, it was not the intent of FDR to bring rapid change to the political characteristics of Latin America. As mentioned above, Roosevelt was willing to work with dictators and rising nationalism in the short run if it was able to assist in broader goals. Political scientist Harold Molineu also criticizes the Good Neighbor policy’s ability to bring immediate results. Molineu refers to the continued practice of confiscating U.S. owned property as evidence that the theory of reciprocity should have been rejected (Molineu, 1986, p.8).

In total, the praise for the Good Neighbor policy’s ability to achieve objectives overshadows the comments of critics, however their criticisms are valid and do offer a more well-rounded assessment of soft power’s effect on U.S. influence in Latin America.

### Conclusion

Through an examination of the events at the time, the Good Neighbor policy appears to have been able to attract a much friendlier Latin America, however that does not necessarily equate to

influence. Through a split analysis of the short and long-term objectives of the Roosevelt Administration it becomes clear that the claims that the Good Neighbor policy was either a complete success or an utter failure is much too simplistic. In the short-run the policy was unable to protect U.S. investment and property abroad, yet in the long run it did create the climate for hemispheric solidarity and American-like institutions.

These outcomes reveal a great deal about the effect soft power has on influence. It appears from the case study that soft power would be best understood as an investment to be reaped at a later date, rather than a tool used to bring swift results. Aware of this admirer of the Good Neighbor policy Henry Raymond attempted to remind his readers that,

The task confronting American democracy was not to lead a crusade against communism [or fascism]. The first duty was to create within the country, and later in the hemisphere as a whole, the conditions that would make communism [and fascism] impossible (Raymont, 2005, p.57).

In the end, perhaps FDR's vice president Henry Wallace said it best when he noted that the real benefits of the Good Neighbor policy were not to be achieved until well into the future; he stated, "We are children of the transition – we left Egypt but we have not yet arrived at the Promised Land" (Leuchtenburg, 1967, p.253).

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONTRA WAR

The second case study of this project deals with U.S. foreign policy towards Nicaragua during the Ronald Reagan Administration and the years that followed where his policies were continued. In contrast to Franklin Roosevelt's efforts to cooperate and build hemispheric solidarity, Reagan implemented a strategy of hard power tactics designed to achieve the administration's goals, which for the most part centered on the notion of rolling back communism in Latin America. Although the policy preferences of the president and the Congress often varied a great deal (*see*: Scott 1997), the focus of the case study here deals with the actions actually carried out, thus an emphasis on the administration's foreign policy. The Reagan Doctrine had called for providing assistance (including by military means if necessary) to anti-communist groups and friendly authoritarian leaders, who in return would ally themselves with the United States against the Soviet Union (LaRosa and Mora, 1999, p.10). U.S. support for the counterrevolutionaries, better known as the *Contras*, in their war against the Marxist Sandinistas in Nicaragua became the "test case" of this doctrine (Roberts, 1990, p.67).

Through an analysis of the specific U.S. implemented contra related policies and the success or failure of the U.S. objectives that such policies were aimed to accomplish, one can learn about the effect hard power has had on influence, which is the underlying goal of this thesis project. This chapter is laid out in the same fashion as the chapter on the Good Neighbor policy. It begins with a short discussion on preceding American policies and influence, followed by an examination of the hard power tactics used by the Reagan Administration, and then finally concludes with an analysis on the change in influence.

## The Beginnings of the FSLN and Preceding U.S. Policies

Perhaps more than any other country in Latin America, Nicaragua has understood the phrase *U.S. intervention*. Beginning with William Walker in the mid 1800s to the recent economic threats discussed by the current Bush Administration, the country has been forced to deal with the colossal neighbor to the north. This was especially true in the opening decades of the twentieth century. From disagreements over a possible canal route to Coolidge's decision to send in troops to protect American owned property, the presence of the American government in Nicaragua was a constant irritation.

In 1933, after the last U.S. marines were withdrawn from the country under the Good Neighbor policy, a power struggle occurred between the head of the U.S. trained National Guard Anastasio Somoza García and liberal activist Augusto César Sandino. Somoza was able to trap the widely popular Sandino and have him assassinated in 1934, and subsequently install himself into the presidency on January 1, 1937. Through the process of succession the Somoza family was able to maintain control of Nicaragua for a large portion of the twentieth century.

Although varying in degree, by the 1970s corruption, ruthlessness, and human rights abuses became characteristics of the Somoza Debayle regime (It should be noted that over their forty two years of rule leaders of the Somoza Dynasty themselves also varied on the degree of abuse and corruption). Moreover, some political scientists have gone as far to label the Somoza Debayle rule as "sultanic" (Paige, 1989, p.107; and Shugart, 1989, p.259). Since there was an absence of representative institutions that would allow dissenting views to the Somoza power grip, armed resistance became the only available outlet for opposition. Various guerilla movements sprouted in the 1960s eventually uniting into the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN); the name "Sandinista" was used to pay homage to the Nicaraguan patriot Sandino

whose killing had instigated the Somoza Dynasty. Some have hypothesized (Parsa 2000) that exclusive rule and extreme centralization of power can cause revolutions to materialize; the Nicaraguan case appears to support that statement. Nevertheless, for the majority of their rule the Somozas were backed by the United States for their loyal support during the Cold War, however rising revelations of corruption and human rights abuses caused the United States to distance itself from the Nicaraguan government in the 1970s.

The lack of strong U.S. support combined with growing domestic rejection of the regime's brutal tactics triggered the Somoza regime to collapse at the hands of the FSLN in 1979. Once in power the Sandinistas announced that Nicaragua would no longer submit to the United States, and that the country would implement an "independent and nonaligned" foreign policy (Skidmore and Smith, 2001, p.336). The Sandinistas also proclaimed they would take steps toward a mixed economy in order to improve the socioeconomic situation of its citizens.

Although the Carter Administration had desperately searched for a third option between Somoza's regime and the FSLN, after the revolution was deemed successful the president sought good relations with the Sandinistas (Raymont, 2005, p.226). In contrast to Ronald Reagan who would recognize the FSLN as an immediate threat to U.S. national security, in the eyes of Jimmy Carter the Sandinista takeover represented a typical "Central American revolution" for which the United States should "try to help it and contain it simultaneously" (Pastor, 1999, p.246-247). On July 24, 1979 the United States established diplomatic relations with the new government and began sending emergency food and medical aid to the war torn country; nearly one million Nicaraguans were in desperate need of food and another 250,000 had no shelter (Pastor, 2002, p.160). It was also the intent of the administration to handle the situation multilaterally, by working "with friendly democratic governments in the area and Europe to encourage them to be

helpful as well” (Pastor, 2002, p.160). According to Carter the purpose of aiding the junta was to prevent it from “turning to Cuba and the Soviet Union” for help (Raymont, 2005, p.226). As a result the policy was successful in achieving that objective. For one it did prevent Nicaragua from falling into the position Cuba had found itself in when it became trapped and dependent on one ideological bloc. In fact, a majority of the financial help coming into Nicaragua during this time was not from the Soviet Union, but from Western Europe and the United States exhibiting the possibility for expanding Western influence (Skidmore and Smith, 2001, p.336).

However, in 1980 the U.S. approach towards Nicaragua began to change. For instance, the Republican Party platform of that year “deplored” the Marxist Sandinista takeover of Nicaragua, and with the arrival of the Cold Warrior Ronald Reagan to the White House a dramatic shift in policies was put on the agenda (Skidmore and Smith, 2001, p.336). This shift was in part prompted over anger in the conservative ranks that felt America’s prestige had been weakened by a Democratic administration that had not only lost a valuable ally in Nicaragua, but also caused national embarrassment during the Iran Hostage Crisis by not reacting more forcefully. Therefore, a more hard-line stance in U.S. foreign policy, especially to what was perceived as a Soviet threat, was to be adopted by the new president. Professor Ivan Molloy stated that this included “military force to crush ‘communism’ in Nicaragua and a strengthened blockade of Cuba,” which he notes was considered “the major supplier of arms to Marxist forces in Central America” (Molloy, 2001, p.88). The change in tactics represented a clear contrast in the U.S. power approach. The following section is a description of how Ronald Reagan’s contra war policies against the Sandinistas is a reflection of the hard power qualities outlined in the literature review and methodology chapters. The final section is an analysis on how that approach effected U.S. influence in Latin America.

## The Contra War Policy as Hard Power

To counter the Marxist Sandinistas the Reagan Administration initiated a number of policies which up until this point in the paper have been simply labeled under the umbrella term “contra war.” However, the hard power approach to Nicaragua involved coercive diplomacy, economic sanctions, as well as military support for counterrevolutionary forces. These policies are described in detail below.

### Unilateralism and Coercive Diplomacy

It was noted in the methodology chapter that one of the advantages of utilizing the contra war case in this study is its ability to counter the qualities of soft power as well as reflect those of hard power. The unilateral approach carried out under Ronald Reagan resonates this notion. In order to support anti-communist groups and leaders in Latin America (a crucial component of the Reagan Doctrine) the administration contended it was forced to “free itself from restraints of the multilateralism” mandated under the treaties of the Organization of American States (OAS) (Raymont, 2005, p.236). The Assistant Secretary of State Elliot Abrams declared that,

We can't abdicate our responsibility to protect our interests to a committee of Latin American countries . . . The notion that if we have interests at stake we should ask Latin Americans what to do about it is wrong (Pastor, 2001, p.80).

The justification for a more unilateral approach was claimed to be in the name of national security (Smith, 2000, p.185), similar to the arguments made by the current Bush Administration in the lead up to the war with Iraq.

A noteworthy example of this unilateralism is the Reagan Administration's rejection and obstruction of the Contadora initiative and subsequent peace plans. In 1982 leaders from

Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, and Panama formed the Contadora Group in an effort to seek regional mediation of the conflict between the Sandinistas and the contra rebels, as well as the fighting occurring elsewhere in Central America (Roberts, 1990, p.82). The Reagan Administration resisted the efforts of the Contadora Group and appointed their own commission; predictably the commission concluded that “the United States cannot use the Contadora process as a substitute for its own policies” (Smith, 2000, p.214). Meanwhile the OAS, the European community, as well as several Latin American countries including the Nicaraguan government supported the proposals offered by the Contadora Group. In an effort to hinder this process the United States pressured Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Honduras not to sign the final draft, ultimately killing the proposed treaty (Smith, 1987, p.98). After the unsuccessful attempt by the Contadora nations, newly elected Costa Rican President Oscar Arias Sánchez introduced a plan to Central American leaders that called for them to negotiate the peace in Central America themselves without outside interference. Although Arias himself disliked the Sandinistas and offered a plan that would bring democracy to Nicaragua, his efforts were also blocked by the Reagan Administration (Pastor, 2002, p.209).

As a result of ignoring the multilateral forum of the OAS and hindering the peace plan presented by the Contadora Group and President Arias, hemispheric relations began to deteriorate at the disgust of not only regional leaders but also the world community. As Bruce W. Jentleson commented, “In Nicaragua, the Reagan policy never could credibly claim any significant international legitimacy;” and that the Reagan Administration’s unilateral behavior in the country was “rejected by the western allies, by the countries in the region, and by the United Nations” (Jentleson, 1991, p.82).

The use of unilateralism and coercive diplomacy, or “verbal assault” as it was once labeled by James S. Scott (1997), sprouted out of the perceived urgency the region played in the administration’s eyes; Central America was America’s “backyard” and any Soviet presence would be deemed too close for comfort and intolerable for national security (LeoGrande, 1998, p.10). For example, Reagan’s UN ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick claimed in 1981 that Central America was the “most important place” in the world for the United States in their fight against communism (Smith, 2000, p.182). In 1983, Reagan singled out Nicaragua; “The government of Nicaragua has treated us as an enemy . . . The national security of all the Americas is at stake” (Smith, 2000, p.185). Also that year the president publicly stated that the majority of the Congress and the country was not prepared “to stand by passively” while the Sandinistas fell into the communist bloc (Scott, 1997, p.246). In a 1985 press conference Ronald Reagan was even brash enough to say that he wanted the Sandinistas to “cry uncle” (*Department of the State Bulletin*, April 1985, p.11). Gradually, as former U.S. ambassador Viron P. Vaky claimed, diplomatic options were either “foreclosed or discarded” and tough talk ruled the day (Vaky, 1987, p.42).

One reason why Reagan refused to negotiate a peace process, even when other nations in the region were working relentlessly to offer one, was the belief that a Marxist regime was simply not trustworthy (*see*: Elliot Abrams, press conference, 8/17/1985). Using the threat of U.S. invasion members of the Department of Defense wanted the FSLN to know that “Nicaragua could not be trusted to observe a treaty and that the United States would have little choice but to intervene militarily if a peace agreement was signed and then broken” (Roberts, 1990, p.86). Although the United States would ultimately rely on guerilla fighters and not American marines

to carry out their objective, the intimidation of force was a believable threat given the history of U.S. intervention in the region and the recent invasion into Grenada in 1983.

### Economic Sanctions

In regards to economic hard power the United States was willing to use coercion and action as a means to make governing more difficult for the Sandinistas. One of the first tactics utilized by the Reagan Administration was the dangling of aid in front of the Nicaraguan government, which had been cut off right before President Carter left office, if the Sandinistas agreed to stop supporting the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) fighters in El Salvador. U.S. Diplomat Wayne S. Smith discussed the scenario as if it were a game for members of the Reagan Administration who had no real intentions of ever reinstating the aid. He wrote, “if Managua acceded to U.S. demands, Washington would consider resuming aid; if not, the United States would announce its definite termination” (Smith, 1987, p.91). However, when some evidence arose that pointed to the Sandinistas complying with U.S. demands, Smith comments that the administration accused the Nicaraguan government of bad faith anyway and cut off all remaining aid.

A more complicated use of economic leverage involved the blocking of loans, commercial credit, and international assistance. Not long after coming into office the Reagan Administration began lobbying against new loans the Nicaraguan government was attempting to acquire from both multilateral lending agencies and private banks. It was added to what one Treasury Department official called the “hit list” of countries the United States was going to deny loans and assistance (Morrell, 1985, p.1-7). In fact, there was one incident in 1982 where the U.S. government threatened the Bank of America from making a \$30 million loan to

Nicaragua for the purposes of allowing the country to make a scheduled debt service payment (LeoGrande, 1996, p.332).

However, most of the time the United States flexed its economic muscle within international lending agencies where it used its economic clout to apply leverage to the Sandinistan government's domestic projects. For example, in most cases voting stock within multilateral banks is based on each country's financial contribution, and like William LeoGrande noted, "as the largest contributor to all the banks, Washington naturally wielded considerable influence" (LeoGrande, 1996, p.333). The United States was able to use this influence in 1983 when it vetoed a \$2.2 million loan from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) aimed at finishing a rural road project in Nicaragua. The approval of the loan required a two-thirds majority, but with the United States controlling thirty-five percent of the voting stock the loan never had a chance of being approved (LeoGrande, 1996, p.333). (*See also*: Naylor and Blum 2001, for a deeper analysis of U.S. foreign economics as a means to pressure foreign governments).

A more controversial U.S. move occurred in 1984 when the Nicaraguan government requested \$58 million from the IDB to aid small private farmers. At first the loan seemed likely to be approved, for all preliminary committees had endorsed the advance and the United States was unable to veto it by itself, but at the final IDB board meeting U.S. Director Jose Manuel Casanova threatened to walk out if the Nicaraguan loan was brought up for a vote. Casanova's walkout was a serious threat because without the required attendance of directors needed to have a quorum, the United States would be paralyzing all IDB operations (Morrell, 1985, p.1-7).

In general, American participation within the network of international lending agencies was necessary for their success. Therefore, when Secretary of State George Shultz warned IDB

President Ortíz Mena that if loans to Nicaragua were to be approved U.S. Congressional support for the international financial institution would deteriorate and contributions would decrease, foreign officials felt the pressure (Kornbluh, 1987, p.112). This pressure was highly effective in stripping Nicaragua of aid; in the two years prior to the Reagan Administration's strong-arm tactics the country received \$193 million from the IDB and \$91 million from the World Bank, whereas in the first two years of applying economic leverage those numbers decreased to \$34 million and \$16 million, respectively (LeoGrande, 1996, p.337).

The most notable example of U.S. economic hard power directed at Nicaragua was the U.S. led embargo. Although the embargo did not officially begin until the spring of 1985, LeoGrande notes that the beginning of trade obstacles were initiated in 1981 when the United States denied Nicaragua's credit through the U.S. Import-Export Bank, which would have made short-term loans to the Sandinistas in order to aid them in their efforts to trade; without such loans the Sandinistas would be forced to use hard currency for anything that was imported from the United States (LeoGrande, 1996, p.337). In 1984 Reagan took a closer step to implementing an embargo when he signed National Security Decision Directive 124 (NSDD 124), calling for U.S. officials to "review and recommend economic sanctions against Nicaragua" that were likely to "build pressure on the Sandinistas" (Kornbluh, 1987, p.93).

On May 1, 1985, President Reagan used his executive authority by declaring a national emergency under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) to impose an embargo on Nicaragua without congressional approval (*Department of State Bulletin*, July 1985, p.74). Although by this time Nicaragua's trade with the United States was less than fifteen percent of its total trade, the embargo was still significant (LeoGrande, 1996, p.339). The embargo prohibited:

All imports into the United States of goods and services of Nicaraguan origin; all exports from the United States of goods to or destined for Nicaragua . . . Nicaraguan air carriers from engaging in air transportation to or from points in the United States; and vessels of Nicaraguan registry from entering into United States ports (*Department of State Bulletin*, July 1985, p.74).

This became troublesome for many of Nicaragua's workers who would do without spare parts for any of the U.S. manufactured goods and equipment they owned. In contrast, Nicaraguan products exported to the United States such as bananas and sugar could easily be replaced from other markets.

In total, the Reagan Administration gradually implemented piecemeal economic constraints on the Nicaraguan government. First by cutting off aid, then by pressuring international lending agencies from granting loans, to ultimately installing an embargo aimed at crippling the Sandinistas. Along with coercive diplomacy (i.e. using economic and military threats to establish pressure) these actions are forgotten and less discussed than the more publicized contra war, nevertheless these policies are significant components of Ronald Reagan's hard power activities in Nicaragua.

### Military Support to the Contras

The military support and aid given to counterrevolutionary forces in Nicaragua was the centerpiece of Reagan's hard power approach to what has been referred to here as the contra war policies. After the debacle in Vietnam, hostile public opinion and a resurgent Congress restricted the American president's ability to wage war. Considering these limited options the Reagan Administration was forced to adapt its preference to what was possible; from this the strategy of

low intensity conflict (LIC) was born. According to Molloy low intensity conflict allows U.S. intervention in a foreign conflict to appear local and domestic with “only peripheral American involvement” (Molloy, 2001, p.2). Therefore, the decision to support the contras in Nicaragua became the *hardest* power approach available for an administration under constraints from public opinion and checks and balances. As Viron Vaky called it, the “in-between response” (Vaky, 1987, p.42).

The contras were founded in 1981 under the sponsorship of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. American officials were able to organize the remaining heart of Somoza’s National Guard and combine it with a number of Miami-based backers and Miskito Indians to create the insurgent force that was to carry out the fight U.S. soldiers did not have license to do. Not until March of 1982 when the first military actions were underway by the contras did reports begin to surface about the Reagan Administration’s efforts to support them (Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1987, p.A-2). As a result the adverse Congress passed the first Boland Amendment barring the CIA and the Department of Defense from spending funds toward overthrowing the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua (Pastor, 2001, p.72). Nevertheless, President Reagan continued his public verbal support for the contras referring to them as “freedom fighters” while chastising Democratic leaders who wanted to cut off their aid (Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1987, p.A-2).

However, the contras were not the only arm of military force the Reagan Administration chose to utilize. In 1983, Dewey Clarridge, the CIA’s chief of operations for Latin America suggested the creation of a special commando force composed of CIA contract agents known as “unilaterally controlled Latino assets” or UCLAs (LeoGrande, 1996, p.340). Years later one of the UCLAs explained that their mission was “to sabotage ports, refineries, boats and bridges, and try to make it look like the contras had done it” (Kornbluh, 1987, p.47). William M. LeoGrande

claimed at times U.S. Navy SEALs were also involved and that between the fall of 1983 and April of the next year UCLAs and American Special Forces had conducted nineteen attacks, most of which were on Nicaragua's oil storage facilities causing millions of gallons of gasoline to be lost (LeoGrande, 1996, p.340-341). The success of these operations led to more elaborate plans including Clarridge's suggestion to mine Nicaraguan harbors. The mining began in January of 1984, and although the incidents had been public knowledge since then, it was not until April 6 that *The Wall Street Journal* revealed that the CIA had provided "logistics and supervision" for the mining of Nicaraguan harbors (Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1987, p.A-3).

This revelation had a striking impact on President Reagan's ability to support the contras' war effort, for at the time Congress was debating on allowing additional aid to the contras. In December of 1983, Congress under the second Boland Amendment had set a \$24 million cap on military funds, and therefore Reagan's request for an additional \$21 million in January was now being criticized and opposed by both Republicans and Democrats. Congressional leaders were outraged over the fact that they were not consulted on the U.S. government's foreign policy. In the aftermath of the Vietnam War and Watergate, Congress had taken steps to restore its "advice and consent role" including passing laws that demanded they have a "greater role in the policy-making process" (Rosati, 1999, p.332; and Rosati and Twing, 1998, p.39). These alterations were sidestepped by the administration. Furthermore, Congress was also distressed about a 1983 *Associated Press* report that claimed the CIA had approved a manual advocating the assassination of Nicaraguan government officials (LeoGrande, 1998, p.363). The full extent of the illegal actions undertaken by members of Reagan's staff would not be uncovered until the Iran-Contra Hearings in 1987.

However, after a short period of forbidding further support, it seemed Congress was willing to forgive these known mishaps and grant more aid. In 1985 the Reagan Administration was successful in acquiring \$14 million for the contras albeit with several stipulations on how the money could be spent, and in 1986 a total of \$100 million in aid was approved (Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1987, p.21). As a result of the reinstating of aid, “thousands of contras re-infiltrated” Nicaragua with a second wind to fight the Sandinistas (Roberts, 1990, p.93).

The financial support of the United States was crucial for the contras to be successful, as their principal military commander Enrique Bermúdez had admitted, “we live or die on whether the [U.S.] Congress decides to aid us again” (Vaky, 1987, p.45). During the two year absence of funding Ronald Reagan instructed his National Security Advisor Robert McFarlane to “assure the contras of continuing administration support [and] – to help them hold body and soul together – until the time when Congress would again agree to support them” (Pastor, 2001, p.72). It was during this time period that NSC staff member Oliver North would undertake the clandestine responsibility of finding alternative forms of financing for the contra fighters in Nicaragua.

These actions demonstrate the dramatic extent members of the administration and his staff were willing to go to support the contra fight without public knowledge and Congressional approval. Robert Parry and Peter Kornbluh note that,

to win the war at home, the White House created a sophisticated apparatus that mixed propaganda and intimidation, consciously misleading the American people and at times trampling on their right to dissent (Parry and Kornbluh, 1988, p.3).

Despite these efforts the administration still had difficulty obtaining domestic support. A 1986 *New York Times / CBS News* poll reported that the American public was against aiding the contras by a two to one margin; in fact polls never reached fifty percent in favor of aiding the contras (Pastor, 1987, p.260; and Vaky, 1987, p.46). As a result of the administration's illegal activities and unpopular moves, their actions went against what can be considered the appeal of American ideals. By skirting the U.S. Constitution the Reagan team was undermining U.S. soft power giving further evidence that the president's contra war policies are firmly and categorically synonymous with the elements of hard power.

### Conclusion

Although Reagan's successor ultimately would be held in higher esteem for his pragmatism and multilateral efforts, according to Kenneth Roberts, at first when George H.W. Bush came into power he "refused to relinquish the lever of military coercion" and "insisted that the contra army be left intact" (Roberts, 1990, p.95). Furthermore, the embargo was left in place until 1990, exhibiting the continuation of the hard-line approach beyond Reagan's time in office. The contra war policies are a well-rounded example of hard power because they involved unilateralism, coercive diplomacy, economic sanctions, and military force. However, in many respects the policies could have been *harder*, if sanctions had not been implemented in a gradual process, if the United States had chosen to put U.S. marines in Managua, and if the Reagan Administration had not been limited to its options after the Iran-Contra Scandal the case would reveal an even stronger example of hard power. However, the ability of the case to exhibit all of the qualities of hard power makes it superior to those that may only reflect one element at a greater extent. The

subsequent section analyzes the hard-line tactics of the contra war policy in terms of its effect on influence.

### The Effect on Influence

In order to determine what effect the contra war policies had on U.S. influence in Latin America the same method used for the Good Neighbor policy of analyzing specific objectives and outcomes will be implemented here. Unfortunately, the goals of the contra war policies are not as obvious as one may predict. For example, the short-term objective of removing the Sandinistas from power is too simplistic of a statement; although the overall aim of the Reagan Administration was arguably regime change, the goal of halting FSLN support to FMLN rebels in El Salvador and crippling the Sandinistan government apparatus from being able to operate were more specific aims. Therefore a combination of these goals has been considered here as the short-term objectives of the contra war policies, and thus that is what will be analyzed below.

The long-term objective of the contra war policies was to keep in place a pro-American anti-leftist region. In other words to maintain a Latin America compliant or at least friendly to American interests, and to accept a kind of “older brother” relationship with the United States where they would play the part of the obedient little brother (Raymont, 2005, p.237). It is faulty to assume the long-term goal of these policies was to win the larger ideological Cold War; there are too many other variables and additional fronts in that conflict against the Soviets to insist that this was the long-term aim of the contra war policies. To account for those variables, the objectives in the Latin America region, predominately with Nicaragua is what is being examined here. Therefore, it should be understood that the long-term objective of the contra war policies

was not to destroy the Soviet Union, but to ensure a submissive and pro-American region and Nicaragua.

### Short-term Objectives

As noted above the short-term aims of the Reagan Administration and the respected contra war policies involved various specific goals that revolved around the notion of regime change, but regime change itself was not the complete short-term goal. This confusion can be better understood with what Vaky has called the “maximum” and “minimum” goals of Reagan’s intentions (Vaky, 1987, p.50). The maximum goal was to overthrow the Sandinistas, and at minimum the objective was to contain the regime from assisting other leftist groups and to let it self-destruct through attrition. As Bruce Jentleson wrote, “the original rationale for supporting the contras was to impose foreign policy restraint on the Sandinistas in the interest of regional security” (Jentleson, 1991, p.66). Therefore, it should be understood that the immediate overthrow of the Nicaraguan government might have been desirable, but it was not the complete short-term objective. This has been argued and supported by several scholars (Hufbauer and Schott 1985, Vaky 1987, Jentleson 1991, Wiarda 1992).

Considering these objectives as the short-term aims of the contra war policies, evidence shows that Reagan’s hard power approach was successful in gaining influence. From early on economic leverage appeared to be effective in stopping the FSLN from supporting leftist rebels in El Salvador. In 1981, Secretary of State Alexander Haig offered the renewal of economic aid that had been cut off during the Carter Administration to the Sandinistas if they obeyed U.S. demands to halt their support for the FMLN guerillas in El Salvador. The economic threat worked, the Sandinistas pledged to stop their arms flow to the rebels and they shut down a

“clandestine” radio station broadcasting messages to the FMLN (Roberts, 1990, p.77). A month later, the State Department confirmed the actions reporting that they had “no hard evidence of arms trafficking within the last few weeks, and propaganda and other support activities [had] been curtailed” (Smith, 1987, p.91). Even the CIA Deputy Director Bobby Inman had acknowledged that the Sandinistas were “cutting back” their arms supplies to the FMLN (Jentleson, 1991, p.68). However, regardless of these concessions, Washington still refused to reinstate aid packages to the country, perhaps because this was around the same time the Reagan Administration started authorizing covert operations against the Nicaraguan government.

As support for the contras got underway the Sandinistas found themselves facing further economic challenges. For example, after the first attacks by contra forces the FSLN was forced to declare a state of emergency and mobilize their armed forces (Scott, 1997, p.243). As a result many of the socialist programs that the Sandinistas had initiated just a few years before now had to be canceled or condensed because of the need to extend military spending. These were the first of a series of blows the Nicaraguan government was forced to deal with.

Further compromises were made on the part of the Sandinistas after the 1983 U.S. invasion of the Caribbean island nation of Grenada. Fearing the Reagan Administration would choose to put marines in Managua next, the FSLN took steps to appease the United States. For example, the Nicaraguan government declared “partial amnesty” for contra rebels, “relaxed” censorship on the press, and even announced possible plans for an election in November of 1984 (Roberts, 1990, p.78). It was clear from early on that U.S. policy was having an impact on the FSLN’s policies and ability to maintain popular support.

The contra war along with economic sanctions employed by the United States also had a toll on the Nicaraguan economy. Although many of the socialist programs had been canceled by

the mid 1980s, the drastic increase in military spending to fend off the contras went from ten percent of the national budget in 1983 to forty percent in 1987, causing welfare initiatives unlikely to ever be reinstated (Roberts, 1990, p.92). For instance, the Sandinistas were forced to claim nearly \$1.15 billion in “war-induced damages” to the nation’s infrastructure and production (Roberts, 1990, p.92). After the start of the embargo in 1985 the economy fell into a crisis. In 1987 inflation topped 1,300 percent, and by 1988 hyper-inflation of 33,000 percent had set in, not to mention that over twenty-five percent of the country was unemployed (Roberts, 1990, p.92). Daily life in Nicaragua was becoming extremely difficult, and as a result it affected the Sandinistas ability to stay in power.

By the end of the decade the FSLN was forced to negotiate with the contras and hold an election in 1990, which ultimately brought their demise. Since many of the popular social programs that gave them backing in the beginning had to be dropped in order to fight the contras, support for the Sandinistas had evaporated. As one scholar wrote, “the vote in the 1990 election was anti-Sandinista” (Jentleson, 1991, p.67). Even Carter’s National Security Advisor for Latin America, Robert A. Pastor had noted it was Reagan’s hard power tactics that had “squeezed” moderates to the right after being squeezed to the left during the revolution (Pastor, 2002, p.248). And with the arrival of a new government, the Reagan Administration had accomplished their objective.

The desired goal of overthrowing the Sandinistas was a lofty ambition. Furthermore, as Bruce Jentleson wrote, “In Nicaragua, the uncle-saying objective to which the Reagan Administration aspired was quite disproportionate to the limited military means at its disposal” (Jentleson, 1991, p.70). Twenty years earlier Alexander George had stated, “demanding a great deal of an opponent . . . makes the task of coercing him all the more difficult” (George, 1971,

p.225). Therefore the ability to bring regime change and replace the Sandinistas with a coalition government composed of “Washington’s closest allies” was a notable feat for an administration that was unable to use American forces (Roberts, 1990, p.102).

In conclusion, the hard power policies implemented under Ronald Reagan were successful in achieving the various short-term objectives; however the ten years it took for the FSLN to be removed from power does question hard power’s effectiveness for more challenging short-term aims. Nevertheless, the evidence appears to show that the hard power policies of the contra war did have a positive impact on influence.

#### Long-term Objectives

The long-term objective of the Reagan Administration’s policies in Nicaragua was to secure the position of American hegemony in the Latin American region and to ensure that countries in the area would be obedient to U.S. policy preferences, specifically Nicaragua. According to William Robinson and Kent Norsworthy, “the [1979] Sandinista victory shattered U.S. pretensions to regional supremacy, and, in the eyes of some, signified the beginning of the end of U.S. domination in the region” (Robinson and Norsworthy, 1987, p.25-26). Therefore, while halting the Sandinista’s military support to the FMLN in El Salvador was one of a few immediate aims, the creation of a compliant Latin America was the administration’s more long-term objective, and thus Nicaragua would be the central battleground to reestablish this supremacy.

As a whole, many members of the administration viewed Latin American countries condescendingly. For instance, Jeane Kirkpatrick believed that “violence or the threat of violence is an integral part of these political systems” and that “coups, demonstrations, political strikes, plots, and counterplots are, in fact, the norm” (Schoultz, 1998, p.378). This sentiment

temporarily carried over into the Bush Administration where the new U.S. president publicly called the Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega a “little man” (Schoultz, 1998, p.xi). Therefore, with the perception of superiority and that Latin America was their own backyard, the Reagan team felt they should be able to dictate the behavior of those countries (hence why he was reluctant to work multilaterally); for that reason establishing a type of paternal relationship has been considered the long-term goal.

However, that would not necessarily be how things turned out. While Reagan’s hard-line tactics were eventually able to topple the Nicaraguan government, many leftist politicians were elected into power and managed to control some of the nation’s key institutions (Skidmore and Smith, 2001, p.338). Furthermore, even those that were elected from the right did not guarantee that the United States would have all of its demands met. The same could be said about the rest of Central America. As Robert Pastor noted, the United States was unable to “convince Latin America or impose its vision on the region” (Pastor, 2001, p.77). Historian Alan McPherson said Reagan’s war policies “aroused the indignation of much of Latin America,” and like many other Latin Americans, Mexican writer Carlos Fuentes promised to “oppose its [the U.S.’s] arrogant and violent policies in Latin America” (McPherson, 2006, p.99).

In fact, to limit its dependency on the United States, the new Nicaraguan government sought relations and aid from other foreign sources including countries in Asia and Europe (Aviel, 2003, p.53). For example, to the displeasure of the United States, Nicaraguan President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro visited Taiwan in early 1992 where she signed a series of cooperative agreements and received limited military aid (Aviel, 2003, p.53). In Europe, Nicaragua was able to secure financial aid from Germany, Spain, as well as from Scandinavian countries including aid to professionalize its police and intelligence services.

Even more so Nicaragua was able to solidify ties with its Latin American counterparts. In the post contra war years Nicaragua began to increasingly work cooperatively with its neighbors to improve its economic situation as well as strengthen overall regional collaboration. This collaboration along with increasing good relations with foreign states around the globe gave the United States less influence in controlling Nicaragua's actions. A more independent Latin America and defiant Nicaragua attempting to rise from the ashes of the 1980s made it more difficult for the United States to achieve objectives regardless if they were still considerably weak and the United States was the world's sole superpower. As Howard Wiarda noted, "the United States has not been much more successful in controlling its clients than the Soviets have theirs" and that it was no longer "the case of the colossus of the north . . . keeping Latin America in chains" (Wiarda, 1992, p.126, p.106).

Nicaragua and its regional counterparts also often stood on the opposite side of the United States in terms of international issues. Although Nicaragua was one of many Latin American countries to support the UN Security Council resolutions against Iraq in the early nineties, the nation remained devoted to the Non-Aligned Movement. This was in stark contrast to their behavior during the Good Neighbor era when the government was obliged to go along with the U.S. point of view. Furthermore, Nicaragua's 1993 votes in the United Nations only coincided with those of the United States thirty-five percent of the time; and for the Latin America and Caribbean region at large only two member states voted more identical with the United States than against (Aviel, 2003, p.56; U.S. Department of State, 1995). Not until a few more years into the Clinton Administration when U.S. foreign policy in Latin America differed greatly to that of Reagan's did Nicaragua's votes in the United Nations begin to coincide with U.S. votes at roughly fifty percent (U.S. Department of State, 1995). This alone is evidence that

the United States under the contra war policies did not make Nicaragua their Central American pawn. Even in 1992, Wiarda wrote that Congress was starting to see Latin America “as a black hole into which it pours billions of dollars and gets nothing in return” (Wiarda, 1992, p.80).

On the other hand, one may wish to contend that the sweep of democracies occurring in Latin America during the eighties (Brazil, Grenada, Uruguay, and Guatemala to name a few) should be credited to some of Ronald Reagan’s policies, and that this growing number of democracies equates to a more pro-American region. While regional democracy was and still is in America’s interest it did not necessarily guarantee that American objectives would be met. For example, foreign ministers from four newly created democratic governments joined the original Contadora Group that obstructed Reagan in his attempts to wage war against the Sandinistas. Furthermore, while there may be little dispute in academic circles that Reagan’s intervention in Grenada did replace a Marxist regime with a democratic one, other new democracies failed to credit Reagan. For example, Robert Pastor wrote that, “most of the newly elected presidents in South America risked his displeasure by acknowledging the contribution of his predecessor” instead of him for their new status (Pastor, 2001, p.79).

During the early nineties, Nicaragua along with much of Latin America was far from compliant with U.S. desires, the region either looked elsewhere or to countries within its own region for guidance, not to the paternal order of the United States. Not long after removing the Sandinistas from power, the FSLN began to slowly rebuild its support and in 2006 Daniel Ortega, one of the leaders of the 1979 revolution was elected president providing final evidence that the American long-term objective had not been met. Michael Shifter, vice president for policy at the Inter-American Dialogue noted that, “we got rid of the Sandinistas and said

everything else would take care of itself . . . his victory [Ortega] is a reminder of the price the U.S. so often pays for prematurely declaring its missions accomplished” (Padgett, 2006, p.51).

#### Additional Scholarly Viewpoints

The scholarly evaluation of the Reagan Administration is rather mixed, but slanted more towards the negative. While few distinguish between the success and failure of the contra war policies’ ability to achieve short-term versus long-term objectives, the remarks of historians, political scientists, as well as practitioners do offer a broader assessment of the policies at large.

One difficulty of examining the remarks of individuals on a rather contemporary political event particularly with those that were involved in the matter is that bias occurs. As Robert Pastor stated, there is a “stake in defending that policy” (Pastor, 2002, xiv). Ironically, Pastor himself is an example of this scenario. He has written that the U.S. government “did not succeed in dislodging the Sandinistas” while the Carter Center, with which he was affiliated, was able to help navigate a democratic transition (Pastor, 2002, xiv). This to some extent is true, but only after the use of hard power crippled the FSLN into making political concessions. The same problem occurs with comments made by Reagan’s UN ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick. In a March 1990 column written for the *Washington Post* titled, “Nicaragua: The Credit” Kirkpatrick praised Ronald Reagan for being “steadfast” in his effort to support democracy in Central America, however at the same time the article overlooked Reagan’s support for friendly authoritarian leaders (Kirkpatrick 1990). The comments from Pastor and Kirkpatrick are not only affected by personal bias but also simplify exceptionally complicated events. As Kenneth Roberts wrote, “events in Nicaragua are [were] considerably more complex than these [type of] interpretations would suggest” (Roberts, 1990, p.68).

However, an examination of the remarks made by scholars who did not have a direct personal interest in its outcome also reveals varied assessments. Historian Fredrick B. Pike noted that, “Beginning in 1979, Nicaragua’s Marxist Sandinistas managed for over ten years to stare down the United States in its efforts to oust them” (Pike, 1992, p.338). His argument centers on the notion that the hard power method utilized by Reagan should not be categorized as a success because the Sandinistas were able to fend off the United States for over a decade.

Journalist George Black is also critical commenting that,

The United States’s inability to work its will on one of its puniest neighbors, Nicaragua . . . when the great universal ideals of freedom and democracy were said to have been at stake, led to a devastating loss of the superpower’s most precious asset – its credibility (Black, 1988, p.xiii).

In contrast, Bruce Jentleson (1991) and Kenneth Roberts (1990), although reluctant to give the hard power approach too much credit, did recognize its strengths for achieving partial success in accomplishing U.S. goals. For instance, Professor Jentleson wrote that “the military presence from the contras was a factor in the Sandinistas’ acquiescence to an election,” and Roberts commented in 1990 that “Nicaraguan policies have clearly been shaped by U.S. pressure” and that, “indeed, economic coercion played an important role in the U.S. strategy to promote attrition in Nicaragua that would wear down and weaken the Sandinista government” (Jentleson, 1991, p.67, and Roberts, 1990, p.97, p.92). Howard Wiarda concurred noting “there can be no doubt that without the U.S. pressure there would have been no elections in Nicaragua” (Wiarda, 1992, p.185). Nevertheless, all three fail to see the end of the Sandinista regime as a direct response to only U.S. hard power. For example, Roberts credits the change in government to the “complex interrelationship between coercion, regional intermediation, and multilateral

negotiations,” thus a combination of soft and hard power, what Joseph Nye has called “smart power” (Roberts, 1990, p.101; Nye, 2004, p.32).

However, there are also those who sing praise to the contra war policies’ hard power ability to affect U.S. influence in a positive way. William M. LeoGrande gives credit to the use of economic hard power for destabilizing the government and causing it to collapse. He notes that the contra war helped magnify the effectiveness of the economic embargo in destroying the nation’s economy, which evaporated the base of popular support the Sandinistas had. As he states, “the sanctions did alter the domestic balance of Nicaragua political forces sufficiently to drive the Sandinistas out of power” (LeoGrande, 1996, p.344).

In 1985 Hufbauer and Schott gave similar accolades to the president by crediting Reagan’s economic hard power tactic for the progress made at that time against the Nicaraguan government. They noted that although economic sanctions had not been “calamitous” to the Sandinista regime they were “costly,” and if the economic leverage had been applied more decisively and not in a piecemeal fashion as it had been the Reagan team might have achieved their objectives by the time of their article’s publication (Hufbauer and Schott, 1985, p.732).

The Hufbauer and Schott argument brings up an interesting point. Criticism that Ronald Reagan’s hard power policy did not bring the immediate overthrow of the FSLN is not that hard power does not work, but that the contra war policies could have been much harder. As Hufbauer and Schott state, “Nicaragua is a case where a bolder use of economic weapons might have worked” (Hufbauer and Schott, 1985, p.733). As time would show they did work.

In the end most evaluations of Reagan’s handling of the affair are negative. However, it must also be said that most of these criticisms fail to connect the hard power tactics with the administration’s different objectives in Nicaragua. For example, George Black is critical of the

president because the events in Nicaragua damaged the “credibility” of the United States. That may be true, but his criticism has more to do with the type of tactics implemented by the administration and less to do on whether or not such policies were ultimately successful. Fredrick B. Pike’s conclusion also misreads U.S. goals because he focuses his criticism on the Sandinistas’ ability to stay in power against American opposition for ten years, but what Pike does not say is how the United States was able to halt the FSLN support to FMLN guerillas and chip away at the Sandinistas’ governing capability, ultimately causing their fall from power. These were minimum short-term goals of the administration; the overthrow of the FSLN in the country was surely a desired outcome, but it was not the complete short-term objective. As even the Carter Administration member Viron Vaky reminded in 1987,

The principal arguments have been that a longer war of attrition will so weaken the regime, provoke such a radical hardening of repression, and win sufficient support from Nicaragua’s discontented population that sooner or later the regime will be overthrown by popular revolt, self-destruct (Vaky, 1987, p.45).

After a review of the assessments made by various scholars it calls into question my previous verdict that hard power may not be as effective for more challenging short-term aims. What appears to be a more accurate evaluation is that the shortcoming of not bringing swifter regime change is not due to hard power, but due to not enough of it. However, in regards to my evaluation of the Reagan Administration’s ability to accomplish their long-term aims there is wide scholarly support to my conclusion that that was an objective where the president’s hard power policies did not work.

## Conclusion

The assessment of the hard power tactic, exemplified here as Ronald Reagan's contra war efforts should not be equated to an evaluation of his presidency or of his role in the events against Nicaragua. While some have labeled his eight years as a "committed Presidency" run by a "detached President," and others have remembered him as "sharp, informed . . . and on top of the issues," these assessments are not valid for what is being investigated here (Rockman, 1988, p.8; and Wiarda, 1992, p.7). The analysis of the hard power methods employed by his administration, which were carried out with or without his full knowledge, have been the sole subject of this investigation on how such methods affect influence. In conclusion hard power tactics were effective in acquiring the short-term aims of halting the Sandinista support to FMLN guerillas in El Salvador and crippling the FSLN's governing capability, and would have been even more effective in terms of regime change if the policy was harder. However, in terms of long-term objectives the hard-line methods sprouted resentment, ultimately making it more difficult for the United States to accomplish future goals. By no means did the fall of the FSLN usher in a compliant Nicaragua.

## CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

I began this study with the notion that an analysis of a soft power case and a hard power case would reveal which strategy has a more positive effect on American influence in Latin America. The results that were produced do not garner such a conclusion possible. In brief, what appears to be closer to the truth is that both power methods, exhibited by the Good Neighbor policy and contra war examples, have had both positive and negative effects for U.S. influence in the region.

The methodology implemented in this study examined specific short-term and long-term objectives of the Good Neighbor and contra war policies. By doing so it created criteria to evaluate the successes and failures of the soft and hard power approaches and the respective foreign policies of both Franklin Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan. In contrast, many historical assessments of presidential administrations' accomplishments in Latin America have been based on personal experience or less calculable qualitative factors (Raymont 2005, Pastor 2001, Wiarda 1992). Therefore, the results and subsequent inferences presented here in the concluding chapter should merit a more valuable product for foreign policymakers and the political science discipline at large.

### General Deductions

In Joseph Nye's 2004 seminal book *Soft Power* he stated that a combination of both soft and hard power, what he refers to as "smart power," is best for constructing a successful U.S. foreign policy (Nye, 2004, p.32). The results of this study support Nye's notion that both soft and hard

power matter in terms of acquiring influence, but they also question his assumption that the two power approaches must be complementary in action to be successful. In both cases utilized for this study, each was polarized towards one power approach, and yet both were successful in achieving stated goals albeit one in the short-term and the other in the long-term. While certainly a more exhaustive examination of additional historical case studies would be necessary to have more confidence in such a claim, the results of this thesis also indicate that hard power is more appropriate for immediate short-term objectives and soft power is better suited for long-term goals, regardless if the other power approach is present.

In the case of the Good Neighbor policy soft power was ineffective in halting Latin American governments from confiscating U.S. owned properties. When the threat of force and intervention was taken off the table the nations of Mexico, Bolivia, and Cuba had little to deter them from continuing their practice of seizing property. However, in regards to the long-term aim of the Roosevelt Administration to construct hemispheric solidarity the investment of soft power was successful. The clearest example of this success is the comparison of the feeble hemispheric alliance in World War I to that of World War II where nearly every Latin American government came to the aid of the United States. The establishment of friendly ties to America's neighbors to the south created a bedrock of support for America's goals that would exist throughout the remainder of Roosevelt's time in office.

In contrast, the hard power contra war case exhibits the inverse effect on influence. In the short-term the use of economic sanctions and military might was successful in halting FSLN support to guerillas in El Salvador and was also relatively effective in undermining the Sandinista regime. However, in terms of building a compliant client state of the United States, the hard power approach did not cause Nicaragua to fall under the thumb of the United States.

The long-term objective of using force to erect a pro-American region simply did not occur; the divergence of opinion on international matters at the UN and the collaboration of Latin American states to work against the will of the United States is evidence of that failure.

Therefore, these two cases reveal that each power approach can bring about an increase in influence as well as a reduction, thus showing the value of each at different times and for different goals. It is important to maintain international capital created by soft power to withdraw from in the future when needed, as it is to have the muscle to deliver a powerful punch when immediate harm confronts the nation and its pressing goals. The results from this study not only question Nye's assumption that soft power and hard must be complementary in order to be successful, but that each power approach might be more effective in a respected time frame.

### Short-term and Long-term Implications

This thesis study supports Nye's argument for soft and hard power to be implemented by U.S. policymakers because it reveals that both can have positive effects for American influence. However, by extending Nye's notions to a new level, the results from this study offer an additional contribution to the discussion on power within the political science discipline because it unveils the possibility that each approach might be best suited for different goals over a specific period of time.

### Hard Power

As described briefly above and in more in-depth in chapter five, a hard power approach was effective in achieving the Reagan Administration's short-term aims. This is because hard power via military might is possible of delivering harmful impacts immediately to a foreign foe's

national security. Likewise economic sanctions, although taking more time than bombs and bullets to take effect, can trigger economic ramifications in a short period of time. This was evident in the contra war case when the Sandinistas began to curtail their support to the FMLN guerillas in El Salvador in order to receive aid packages from the United States (Roberts, 1990, p.77).

Through this example and others described in the study, hard power is capable of producing influence in the short-term because it affects another state's behavior also in the short-term. States must instantaneously react to armed invasion and economic leverage, deciding either to comply with the aggressor's demands or resist them. When the decision is made to obey the aggressive state using hard power it plainly exhibits the power approach's effectiveness. However, if the target state elects to fight off the aggressor it then becomes a match between the two over who has the most hard power. This perceived outcome has caused realists (Waltz 1979) to claim that rational states will seek additional hard power and other realists (Mearsheimer 2001) to advocate an increase in U.S. military spending. This perception of international relations can be supported with an abundance of historical Latin American cases where the state with more muscle has been able to defeat the lesser state and thus maintain or acquire more influence (i.e. Falklands War, Mexican American War). Furthermore, incidents with non-state actors, including those unable to use military force, such as those in the economic realm where large corporations can employ economic hard power leverage against smaller retailers in order to drive them out of business displays hard power's effectiveness to bring results in the short-term.

However, as the cases of this study reveal, hard power is not as effective in the long-term. The goal to create a compliant Nicaragua or an entire region ready to assist the needs and wants

of the United States did not occur because that is an objective that stretches over a great deal of time. Hard power as explained above triggers an immediate behavioral reaction; it does not instigate a long-term change in behavior, only a swift temporary one. For example, World War I may have halted Germany's aggression in the interim, but it did not permanently stop the country from conquest; in fact the Allied Powers chose to adopt a different tactic towards the German people in 1945 because the severe post-war demands after the First World War did not prevent Germany from waging war again. Therefore, in order to change the behavior of a state or non-state actor for the long haul it suggests a different approach be utilized.

### Soft Power

In contrast to hard power, soft power does not cause a target state to immediately respond to the state or actor employing it. For this reason soft power could be considered ineffective for short-term objectives. This was evident in the Good Neighbor policy's attempt to bring about the end of U.S. property being confiscated by Latin American governments abroad. The influx of multilateral cooperation, cultural exchanges, and other acts of public diplomacy did not trigger the Mexican, Bolivian, or Cuban governments to instantly react to Roosevelt's approach with acts of cooperation. Rather in the short-term the absence of American military reprisal allowed these foreign governments to continue seizing property, exhibiting America's inability to achieve its stated goals, which was the measure of influence for this thesis.

However, in the long run the Good Neighbor policy was successful in changing the attitudes of Latin American governments, therefore aiding the United States for its long-term goal of hemispheric solidarity. It is perhaps more beneficial to view soft power as an investment towards long-term influence rather than a technique that provides a quick advantage as hard

power can. Since soft power persuades other actors to want what one wants rather than coerces them (Nye 2004), it requires more than a mere sudden change in the opinion of a target state; in order to genuinely alter the behavior and desires of another actor it takes more time. This was exhibited in the two case studies where the soft approach of the Good Neighbor policy had over time secured friendly ties with Latin America and the hard power strategy of the Reagan Administration was fruitless in its endeavors to construct a compliant region to U.S. demands. Therefore, soft power does not change opinions for the short-term, but rather remolds them for future use by the actor employing soft power.

The short-term objectives of Ronald Reagan and Franklin Roosevelt were both items that demanded a swift favorable reaction towards American policy. Reagan implemented a technique that delivered a swift response, while Roosevelt employed a strategy that did little to rapidly extend American influence. Conversely, these tactics had the opposite effect in terms of achieving the long-term goals of each administration. Therefore, the two case studies presented here in the study offer the possibility that both hard and soft power have different short-term and long-term implications.

#### Politicians and Theorists

Although the use of hard and soft power examined in this project were carried out under Republican and Democratic administrations, respectively, it should not lead one to conclude that within the use of different power approaches there is a partisan parallel. Lyndon Johnson's escalation of the war in Vietnam and Richard Nixon's diplomatic approach to open up dialogue with the Chinese are examples of how that notion can be misleading.

An examination of international relations theorists can be more productive in terms of understanding short-term and long-term implications of the different power approaches. The divergence of thought on the concept of power between realists and liberals was expounded in the chapter two literature review; in that section it was revealed that there was a tendency for realists to argue in favor of hard power and liberals to emphasize the importance of soft power (*see also*: Cooper 2004). These theoretical power type preferences can be better understood when one examines the realist and liberal perspectives of international relations.

The realist interpretation of an evil versus good world where predators are out to attack the United States requires one to respond quickly to such confrontations (Brown, 2001, p.31-33). Whether it is those that favor a troop buildup against a rising China (Brzezinski and Mearsheimer 2005), or those that believe torture can keep Americans safe from relentless terrorists (Krauthammer 2006), realists often perceive America's goals in the short-term. For that reason, it is plausible to suggest realists favor hard power because of its ability to change behavior in the short run.

In contrast, liberals have a more optimistic view of the world (Brown, 2001, p.22-23). They believe through the spread of free markets and democracy wars and attacks against the United States can be prevented. Woodrow Wilson's liberal internationalist position for democratic peace is not only an example of this optimism, but also of the long-term perspective for which liberals often view their policies. For instance, Wilson's theory of expanding democracy was not an attempt to bring swift change to American influence, but rather to create a climate that makes it more possible for the United States to acquire and maintain influence. In addition, liberals that argue that the unipolar moment will not last and therefore the United States needs to collaborate with other world powers (Kegley and Raymond 1994) are thinking from a

long-term point of view. For that reason of thinking ahead, liberals may be stressing the importance of soft power.

Neither realists nor liberals are wrong to assume their power approach preferences are capable of achieving their time-sensitive goals; the two case studies involved in this study support those claims. However, there is a fallacy in stating that both power methods must be implemented and “combined” together in order to improve a state’s level of influence; this is what Joseph Nye has claimed with his notion of smart power (Nye, 2004, p.32). In 2005 Nye stated, “In American foreign policy, it’s not that you can rely on one or the other alone” (Pathak, 2005, p.9). On the contrary, it is possible to have cases exclusive to one power approach that positively affect American influence; the soft power Good Neighbor policy’s ability to do so in the long run and the hard power contra war policy’s ability to bring influence in the short run is evidence of this. Therefore, there is an argument for the exclusive utilization of soft or hard power, consequently causing a problem of validity for Nye’s smart power concept.

#### Drawbacks to Nye’s Smart Power

The Good Neighbor policy and the contra war policies do not reflect Nye’s notion of smart power because each foreign policy approach was exclusive to a single form of power. According to Nye, these cases should have failed to bring influence to the United States in Latin America, however as reiterated throughout the paper each case was able to achieve goals of both the Roosevelt and Reagan Administrations. These cases reject Nye’s claims that soft power and hard should be complementary to be effective (Nye, 2004, p.32).

Therefore, is it necessary for foreign policymakers to follow Nye's prescription to combine both power tactics for today's problems? In other words, how will soft power defeat Al Qaeda terrorists that are currently planning attacks against the United States? The results from this study suggest hard power alone is capable of achieving this short-term goal. At the same time, soft power through cultural exchanges and the general attraction of American style democracy and free markets could persuade Middle Eastern governments to extend ties to the United States without being coerced to do so, allowing for the increase of long-term U.S. influence in terms of favorable oil prices and regional authority. In regards to Latin America, is soft power alone not also capable of doing the same thing in Cuba as far as persuading the Cuban people to adopt policies that would be more beneficial for the United States in the long run?

In sum, this study argues that it is possible to rely on a single power approach to achieve influence. This rebuffs Nye's assertions that soft power and hard power must be combined in order to be most effective. As described above, a single power approach is capable of accomplishing an actor's goal. However, in the grand scheme of foreign policy the implementation of both hard and soft power tactics is best to acquire and maintain influence. Therefore, as the results of this thesis make known, smart power may not be a necessity for individual policy responses to foreign policy problems, but rather more suitable as a theoretical foundation for an overall foreign policy doctrine.

### Conclusion

Although the findings of this study do indicate the possibility that hard and soft power are perhaps best suited for different time-sensitive goals and each can have a positive effect on

influence without the other power approach being present, it does not deem smart power to be irrelevant. The current war in Iraq is an example where the persistent use of an effective mix of both hard and soft power could have produced more favorable results than the existing outcomes. For instance, the use of U.S. military hard power was successful in overthrowing Saddam Hussein from power, but could have been even more successful if time had been spent beforehand building a genuine multilateral coalition (Matthews, 2003, p.51). Likewise, in the long run hard power is needed to protect Iraq's people and infrastructure from insurgents, as is the soft power of attracting Iraqi citizens to the notion of liberal democracy.

However, at the same time there are foreign policy examples of a persistent combined use of both hard and soft strategies that have failed to produce America's goals. For example, although originally initiated by Colombian President Andrés Pastrana as a means to end the drug trade in his own country through outside investment, Plan Colombia has become a significant centerpiece of U.S. policymakers' war on drugs (Crandall 2002). Hard power tactics such as the use of American military personnel to hunt down and kill drug cartel leaders combined with the soft power traits of bilateral collaboration and humanitarian aid have done little to nothing to remove illicit drugs from American neighborhoods (Isacson, 2005, p.44-45; it is also possible that the wrong soft and hard power tactics have been used). Therefore, after comparing the Iraqi and Colombian cases one is left with an ambiguous assessment on whether or not smart power can work.

Furthermore, there are times when using a power approach can hurt U.S. influence, not in its inability to achieve a goal, but to make situations even worse. For example, German political scientist Josef Joffe has written rather extensively on American soft power and its often adverse effects in Europe, where an influx of U.S. culture has occasionally led to government retort and

legal action (Joffe, 2005, p.16; *see also*: Johansson 2004). Therefore, rather than persuading other actors to American preferences soft power can also detract them further away from America's goals. Hard power can do the same. The implementation of the economic embargo towards Cuba during the 1960s was aimed at punishing Fidel Castro for his socialist policies, but rather than recanting Castro immediately turned to the larger socialist ideological block of the U.S.S.R. for assistance, consequently decreasing American influence within the context of the Cold War (Raymont, 2005, p.226). Therefore, the use and results of power can be complicated.

To confuse things even more, multilateralism and unilateralism are not perfectly correlated with soft and hard power. The Good Neighbor policy was a unilateral soft power approach that used multilateralism, whereas the first Gulf War was a multilateral effort to use hard power. Furthermore, although I claim the Good Neighbor and contra war policies were exclusive power cases, soft power and hard power are not always that disconnected to one another. In other words the application of power is perhaps not as black and white as these two cases suggest, and that not all foreign policy approaches fit nicely into these categories of soft and hard power (i.e. Clinton's Kosovo campaign). As stated by defense experts Kurt Campbell and Michael O'Hanlon (2006), employing hard power usually requires "elements of soft power in the mix;" and as British General Charles Guthrie noted (2006), a soft power case often "needs" hard power in order to back up its mission or purpose. In sum, the concept of power can be beyond perplexing.

In regards to this thesis's original intent to discover which power method produces more influence in Latin America, one is left with more complexity than a simple answer. Is hard power better suited for short-term goals than soft power? Is soft power the superior strategy to achieve long-term goals? There are clearly ambiguities in what scholars have assumed about

power. More research in the history of U.S. Latin American relations, as well as with other regions, states, and non-state actors is necessary to better understand the use of power. If political scientists and policymakers wish to be able to construct more effective foreign policies that will achieve greater American influence, they must first better comprehend the effects of various power approaches. This thesis is a contribution towards that goal.

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