

The Evolution and Causes of Territorial Peace in the Americas

Appendix 4

Appendix D. The United States in Latin America post-1945

In considering whether US hegemony might be responsible for the convergence of the three key factors, we first consider whether US influence was present in negative cases (i.e., cases of no-militarization, no-democratization, and no-third party intervention). We then consider the five resistant cases that settled in the post-1945 era and explore to what extent US influence could have been influencing our factors of interest.

1. Failure

If Washington was driving resistant case settlement we should see some convergence between US policy change and our three factors of interest. This implies US influences should have been absent when the three factors – and thus the outcome – are absent. Nevertheless, US influences seem to be rather constant throughout long periods of time and sometimes working strongly against our conditions of interest.

1.1. US Preferences for Democratization

A literature on the role of the US in Latin American episodes of democratization considers regime related influences coming from Washington to be relatively uniform across the region instead of country-specific. Thus, it is unlikely that these would have affected only our cases of settlement and not others. Regime policies were unclear – and sometimes pro-authoritarian – from 1945 to 1977 with exception of the Truman (Bethell and Roxborough 1992; Schwartzberg 2003) and Kennedy (Smith 1991; Tulchin 1988) years – and largely pro-democratic from the Carter Administration onwards – with the possible exception of the early Reagan years (Acevedo and Grossman 1996; Carothers

1991; Handelman and Griffin Sanders 1981; Legler et al 2007; Lowenthal 1991; Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán 2013; Robinson 2000; Sikkink 2004; Smith 1994; Whitehead 1986, 1996; Wiarda 1986). A recent study shows that even in periods when the US was insistently pushing for democratization, its causal impact is mixed. Only 9 out of 18 episodes of democratization happen post-1977 – i.e. during the most proactive era of democratic promotion during which the US be considered as having an important causal impact in the transition (Schenoni and Mainwaring forthcoming). Most transitions towards semi-democracy or democracy – i.e., those relevant to our analysis in figures 3 and 4 (see Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán 2013) – tend to occur when the US does not offer clear support for democracy (1945-1977) precisely because intermittent breakdowns happen in that period as well. More consistent support for democracy from Washington post-1977 meant countries democratized once and for all in that period. Relevant for our analysis is that dyads with resistant disputes democratized the most when the US was not pushing for democratization, and only three out of ten resistant disputes settled – thus, only three out of our twenty countries democratized – in periods when the US was uniformly pushing for democracy in the whole region. For these reasons the impact the US is exercising through democratization proves very small.

1.2. US Preference for Settlement and Disposition to Facilitate

One might think that the US could change its policy toward particular dyad of countries in a particular moment, simply causing the settlement of a dispute by intervening. Our review of US-Latin American relations literature that deals more or less directly with territorial disputes and militarization, however, suggests that the US was invariably in favor of settlement in most of these cases and yet was wary to intervene, doing so only in specific instances where both parties looked for its support and such intervention would not harm the US strategically. In particular, anti-

Americanism was always a concern in a region that was very sensitive to Washington's intrusions (Atkins 1999; Bertucci 2013; Cottam 1994; Francis 1977; Kenworthy 1995; Kryzanek 1990; Lieuwen 1965; Long 2015; Lowenthal 1991; Middlebrook and Rico 1986; Palmer 2006; Pastor 2001; Schoultz 1998; Smith 2000; Teixeira 2012; Tulchin 2016). During the Cold War and its aftermath the degree of US influence varies considerably (Brands 2010) with it increasing after the Helsinki Accords and, most notably, after the fall of the USSR. Yet these ebbs and flows do not correlate with the presence of third party intervention (see figures 3 and 4). Interventions also tended to produce negative outcomes. At different points in time, Washington tried to push for the settlement of the Malvinas/Falklands (Norden and Russell 2002: 27; Escudé and Cisneros 2000: 135), Antofagasta (Sater 1990: 73), Belize (Handy 1984: 154), and Essequibo (Erwel 1996: 254; Romero and Kelly 2002: 109-111) disputes, but this involvement failed to lead to settlement. Moreover, when US tried to intervene more forcibly, resistant disputes tended to harden because one of the parties became suspicious US involvement would harm its position. In general Washington seems aware of this and prefers not to intervene as a third party, not even when asked to do so.

1.3. US Preferences against Militarization

The main reason why the US is implausibly driving the convergence of our three factors of interest is Washington's invariable opposition to militarization in the hemisphere. The aim to prevent militarization and escalation was the most consistent feature of Washington's policy towards the hemisphere post-1945. Embassy cables often record every incident of this type with dramatic detail. Even if the US might have supported democratization effectively in many cases and did provide assistance as a third party in particular contexts, we fail to identify instances of militarization in the hemisphere that were supported by Washington. The only exceptions regard cases in

which the US was directly involved – e.g. interventions such as in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Panama, and Haiti – or indirectly involved – e.g., in the Central American crises. In most of these cases the MID was not caused by nor related to a territorial dispute. Thus, the US could explain settlement failure through deterring militarization – all the white boxes in our crossword diagram – but not success – black boxes, i.e. the phenomenon we are interested in. This leads to one alternative question: Did the US *prevent* the settlement of resistant cases by preventing militarization? Those who have entertained this particular puzzle find that MID occurrence in Latin America is far more common than this hypothesis suggests (Mares 2001) and American influence fails to predict the phenomenon (see also Kacowicz 2005; Martin 2006).

2. *Success*

Now we turn to our cases of successful resistant case settlement: River Plate, Beagle, Oriente, Cordillera del Cóndor, and Bolsones-Fonseca. If the hypothesis that the US is driving the process is to perform reasonably, we should evidence an important deal of American involvement causing democratization, third party intervention, and militarization in these cases, or directly causing settlement independent of our proposed causal mechanism.

2.1. *US and Democratization Preceding Settlement*

The settlement of the River Plate dispute was possible thanks to the change in preferences brought about by Argentine democratization in 1973, yet the US was supporting authoritarianisms at the time. This is evident in CIA's involvement in the 1973 coup against the government of Salvador Allende in Chile (Jensen 1989; Valenzuela 1978) as well as support for the coup of Bordaberry in Uruguay during the same year (Kauffman 1979: 11; Leighton and Lopez 2015: xv; Gillespie 1984), which reached to high level officials such as Kissinger and Nixon himself. Thus, US influence

worked in the inverse direction as expected. During the Beagle settlement (another episode of Argentine democratization) the US had changed to a more consistently pro-democratic policy. Washington did support Argentine elections in 1983. Unlike in other Latin American cases, however, the process seems to have been domestically driven with the US playing a very secondary role (Russell 1987: 43-44; Escudé and Cisneros 2000). Similar inconsistencies with this argument arise if one inspects the juncture of the Oriente-Mainas settlement. In the same five year period, Washington failed to condemn Colonel Odría's coup in Peru (1948) and thus cannot be seen as a pro-democratic actor (McClintock and Vallas 2003: 10; Clayton 1999: 175; see also Carey 1964).

Only in the junctures of the Bolsones-Fonseca and Cordillera del Cóndor settlements can US influence be seen as decisive in the way to democratization. In Honduras (Binns 2000: 53; Carothers 1991: 51) as in El Salvador (Arnson 1993: 158; Bosch 1999: 69-72; Karl 1986; Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán 2013: 186; McClintock 1985; Sikkink 2004: 170-173) moderates in Washington played a central role in generating some convergence toward centrist forces in those countries, which eventually succeeded in the elections of 1982 and 1984, respectively. Support was far from straightforward, however, with the US also supporting the training of military and paramilitary forces in both countries, and providing enormous amounts of military aid to dictators. The Cordillera del Cóndor, might be the only of our five cases of success in which settlement coincides with the success of US pro-democratic pressures that brought Peru back to the democratic track (Kenney 2004; Palmer 1996: 223). Still, other authors might argue that the OAS and not the US played the key role in that process (Pevehouse 2005: 133).

2.2. US as a Third Party in Successful Settlements

The case for influential US third party intervention in successful cases is similarly difficult to make. In fact, the contrary seems to be true, with Washington trying not to play a relevant role as a facilitator in the resolution of these disputes. The US played no role whatsoever in the settlement of the River Plate dispute. In the case of the Beagle, Bolsones-Fonseca, Oriente-Mainas, and Cordillera del Cóndor, the US was clearly interested in deterring escalation and bringing about a resolution, yet it always played a secondary role and tried to have a different actor assume protagonism. As noted above in Appendix C, Zbigniew Brzezinski, who had a close relation with Pope John Paul II, facilitated the timely involvement of the Holy See that led Argentina and Chile to the negotiating table (Villar 2016: 98-102). In the Central American crises, the US progressively lost a role as a possible facilitator to the members of the Contadora Group – then the Rio Group – formed by Latin American states (Wehr and Lederach 1991). In both Peru-Ecuador disputes, Roosevelt and then Clinton tried to avoid getting directly involved (St John 1999: 43; Wood 1966: 338; Wood 1978: 147) relying on the good offices of Brazil and the other guarantors of the Rio Protocol. In all these cases Washington seems to be trying to avoid being seen as interfering in other countries' sovereign affairs.

2.3. US and Militarization in Successful Settlements

In the MIDs that preceded our five resistant case settlements Washington seems to be in complete opposition to militarization. In fact, in all the cases the US seems clearly alarmed by the events and mobilizes its diplomacy in one way or another to prevent escalation. Thus, although the MIDs clearly capture the attention of Washington, it seems unlikely that they are caused by the US in even the most indirect fashion.

Appendices References

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