
Certainly Pamela Falk's goals are ambitious—to provide a broad overview of the Cuban Revolution's international relations (with special emphasis on Latin America and Africa), while simultaneously developing the thesis that there has been a continuity in Cuba's foreign policy throughout the twentieth century, its central strategy being "to secure international recognition of Cuba as an autonomous nation" (p. xiii). Although such a macroperspective, particularly one which stresses the too-often neglected nationalistic aspect of Havana's behavior, is sorely needed, it is questionable whether Falk has allocated enough space for the task since she devotes 132 pages to appendixes which are not always systematically related to the textual material. What she has written, however, will probably appeal to a wide audience, since it is presented in a refreshingly straightforward, jargon-free manner.

Counterbalancing such stylistic assets is the book's overall lack of analytical depth. Too frequently, Havana's actions toward a particular region or issue are discussed in isolation from other dimensions of its international relations, the result being that the complex motivational nuances and multifaceted interdynamics of Cuban foreign policy behavior are not fully conveyed to the reader. The only major exception to this tendency is an excellent chapter which probes the impact of Havana's economic links with the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe on its domestic developmental programs and its trade relations with the noncommunist world, especially the more industrialized Western nations.

Commendably, Falk closes by arguing that Washington should seriously seek to negotiate a better relationship with Havana. Yet the agenda items which she says must be addressed would seem to imply significant concessions on Cuba's part (e.g., withdrawing its troops from Africa and withholding support for Latin American revolutionaries) with no mention of possible U.S. reciprocity on similar matters which concern Havana (e.g., Washington's hostility toward Sandinista Nicaragua). Since there is little, if anything, to suggest that Cuba would want or needs to pursue normalization under such conditions, Falk's proposals regarding U.S. negotiating strategies leave something to be desired.

In the final analysis, then, Falk's book represents a useful starting point for acquiring a macroperspective on Cuban foreign policy. However, it is by no means the last word on the subject. It will be most useful to general readers who are just beginning to explore the topic.

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