

7

Cuba and the Central American Connection



MITCHELL A. SELIGSON

IT IS MORE than accidental that the end of the cold war coincides with the termination of the “hot wars” in Central America. The international tensions related to the East-West conflict spilled over to the Third World, and the easing of those tensions has helped bring a measure of peace to Central America. Revolutionary Cuba loomed quite large for the Central American republics throughout the cold war. For some, it was the most proximate external threat to their stability. For others, Cuba represented their closest ally in the struggle against U.S. imperialism. For Cuba, Central America presented perhaps its best opportunity to find allies in its conflict with the United States and in its effort to spread revolutionary socialism throughout the Third World.

This chapter looks at Cuba as it relates to and is perceived by Central America. First it reviews, in broad strokes, this relationship during a period of revolutionary turmoil in Central America. It then examines the policy implications of the relationship, with particular focus on the policy-relevant opinions of the mass public in Central America. The data come from a survey of more than 4,000 respondents drawn from the five Central American countries plus Panama.

Cuba’s Relations with Central America: An Overview

The cold war is over, but cold war thinking in the United States is still with us. Paradoxically, while the cold war was a time of great uncertainty about the future, especially regarding the constant threat of nuclear

annihilation, it was also a time of great certainty. It was certain that the Soviet Union, its allies, and communism were enemies of the United States. Identification of friend and foe was clear-cut. U.S. foreign policy was made in stark, black-and-white terms.

The end of the cold war has greatly reduced the threat of nuclear war, but it also has vastly increased the complexity of the world in which foreign policy is crafted. In Washington there has been much celebration—after all, “we won.” But it is a mistake to think that the simplistic lenses that used to define the world during the cold war will provide the clear vision needed to understand the complexities of the new world order being constructed “after the fall.”

Some optimistically see this new world order as wrought in the image of the United States. In military preeminence, the United States is certainly dominant. In the late 1940s the United States held an unchallenged monopoly of nuclear weapons. Today, while there are other nuclear powers, no one seriously doubts that the United States is *primus inter pares*. And in conventional warfare, as the war with Iraq demonstrated, no other nation can seriously challenge the United States.

But beyond the realm of military supremacy, the picture becomes far more nuanced. In the new world, friend and foe are no longer self-evident categories. It is a world exhibiting a great diversity of interests, interests that during the cold war tended to be sublimated to the larger struggle of East versus West.

Nowhere was this cold war pattern clearer than in Latin America. U.S. foreign policy there was long dominated by a national security doctrine firmly based on the East-West conflict. Other considerations, such as a defense of human rights, from time to time were added to the equation. But, as Lars Schoultz demonstrates, under this doctrine “Latin America becomes inert, a passive object of no intrinsic value, a place where the United States and the Soviet Union play out the drama of international politics. It is difficult to overemphasize how policy makers’ dominant concern for security leads to this conception of Latin America.”¹ The threat to U.S. security obviously came not from the Latin American military forces (whose principal threat was to the human rights of their own citizens) but, Schoultz argues, from the United States’ potential loss of control over strategic raw materials, military bases, and sea lines of communication. The ultimate fear, of course, was that Soviet control over a Latin American nation would, as happened in the case of

Cuba, introduce the direct threat of Soviet nuclear missiles right in our own "backyard."

In the 1980s, the focal point of U.S. attention in this hemisphere was Central America. As President Ronald Reagan forcefully stated, "The national security of the Americas is at stake in Central America. If we cannot defend ourselves there, we cannot expect to prevail elsewhere. Our credibility would collapse, our alliances would crumble, and the safety of our homeland would be put in jeopardy."² As a result, the United States "drew the line" against communist aggression and funded the contras to unseat the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, while in El Salvador the State Department embarked upon its longest and most costly war—twelve years, \$6 billion—since Vietnam.³

The concern with communist expansion in Central America was by no means misplaced. There is much evidence to support the view that by the early 1980s Central America had become a major, if not *the* major, focal point for Soviet and Cuban foreign policy in the Third World. Earlier in the cold war, Central America had been peripheral for the Soviet Union. A leading Soviet expert on Latin America, Kiva Maidanik, observes, "Nowhere have Soviet interests been fewer than with regard to Central America. The Soviet Union paid virtually no attention to this area until 1978."⁴ But after the Sandinista victory and the outbreak of civil war in El Salvador, that policy was to change markedly. Maidanik argues that the Soviets saw themselves defending the sovereignty of small states against the North American goliath. Cuba's strong interest in Central America predates that of the Soviet Union. Almost from the outset of the Cuban revolution, Central America was seen as a logical area for the expansion of Cuban interests. Several factors created this perception, not the least among which was propinquity. But Central America also seemed ripe for revolution, given its poverty, large peasant populations, and extensive U.S. capital investment in the form of fruit companies that could serve as a target of social unrest. One might speculate that had it not been for Che Guevara's South American origin, his venture to create a guerrilla movement in Bolivia might well have occurred somewhere in Central America.

Cuba's interest in Central America was greatly increased by the Sandinista victory in Nicaragua. According to an extensive analysis, based on original Soviet and Cuban documents, Rodolfo Cerdas finds that "in 1982, the Communist Party Conference in Havana declared that the

centre of gravity of the Latin American revolution had shifted to Central America and the Caribbean."⁵ And Sergo Mikoyan, quoted by Cerdas, makes it clear that armed struggle, irresolvable by negotiation, would need to counter any bourgeois drift toward democratic transition.⁶

Whatever the degree of Soviet and Cuban involvement in Central America's struggles of the 1980s, the U.S. State Department produced a flood of reports that may have persuaded many in Central America to believe that such involvement was indeed extensive. Hence, whereas one recent study says that secret documents in the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research reported only limited Soviet and Cuban interference in the region, State was saying publicly that the war in El Salvador was a "textbook case of indirect armed aggression by Communist powers through Cuba."⁷ And even that analyst, sympathetic to the view that the Soviet-Cuban role was overblown, admits that both provided material assistance to the Salvadoran guerrillas.⁸

The Soviet Union's and Cuba's ability to project their power into the region was far more limited than their desire to support revolutionary struggles there. No responsible scholar has suggested that the Nicaraguan revolution of 1979 was a product of Soviet or Cuban efforts. Indeed, the revolution seemed to surprise Moscow and Havana as much as it did Washington. Soviet-line communists and the parties they represented in Nicaragua had little directly to do with the revolution and found themselves scrambling to keep up with the "objective conditions" created by the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (FSLN). Cole Blasier shows that the Soviet-line parties in both Nicaragua and El Salvador were peripheral to the main centers of revolutionary power and armed struggle.⁹ Yet, once the Nicaraguan revolution occurred and civil war broke out in El Salvador, at least at the level of rhetoric and to a limited extent in terms of material support, the Soviet Union provided maximum backing to the insurgents in the early years of the Central American struggle.

Gorbachev's accession to power and his policies of perestroika and glasnost were to change the Soviet view and reduce its capabilities for international revolution. Cuba, however, remained hopeful that revolution could be spread to Central America. It invested heavily in Nicaragua and El Salvador. Ultimately, however, Cuba too recognized the difficulty of supporting revolutionary struggles in Central America.¹⁰ The defeat of the Sandinistas in the 1990 elections, the breakdown of the Soviet Union

in 1991, and the signing of the peace agreements in El Salvador in 1992 ended any hope that Central America would join Cuba in its socialism and opposition to the United States. In January 1992, Castro told an academic conference in Havana, "Times have changed, we have changed. Military aid outside our border is a thing of the past. The most important task is to see that the Cuban Revolution survives. Abroad we intend to live by accepted norms of international behavior."¹¹

Cuba hopes to put aside the stigma of the cold war and help resolve its pressing economic difficulties by breaking out of the U.S.-imposed trade embargo. One way it has attempted to do so is to expand economic ties with its neighbors in Central America. Cuba has something to offer, by way of public health and medical technology and administration, and could benefit from basic grains produced in Central America. One indication of early success was the reopening of trade relations between Costa Rica and Cuba in 1988.¹²

While this trade could be mutually beneficial, decades of official hostility expressed by every country in the region, except Nicaragua during the ten-year rule of the Sandinistas, will constrain these efforts. But a further difficulty will be continued U.S. opposition to any measures that could strengthen the Cuban economy. From the U.S. perspective, more than thirty years of economic embargo have not toppled the Castro administration because of extensive Soviet and Eastern bloc support. But now that such support is ending, the United States sees a greater opportunity than ever before to weaken and eventually dislodge Castro from power through economic pressure. The United States would not be pleased to see an expansion of trade between Central America and Cuba at this critical juncture.

In the absence of the cold war, divergences between Central America and the United States, devoid of ideological disputes but rooted in true differences in national interest, will likely come to the fore. Trade with Cuba is only one area, but numerous other questions concerning migration, the environment, human rights, and so forth, will emerge as points of potential conflict.

This chapter attempts to project what regional relations might look like in the future by measuring Central American attitudes toward Cuba. (It would be ideal also to have the converse—data on Cuban attitudes toward Central America—but it is still impossible to conduct free and open public opinion surveys on the island.) In the following section, I

argue that public opinion provides important constraints on the formulation of policy and, therefore, knowledge of popular opinion can help predict future foreign policy decisions.

Public Opinion and Foreign Policy

Political scientists have become increasingly skilled in analyzing public opinion, especially in predicting the outcome of elections or explaining why some groups of voters prefer candidate A over candidate B. But the science of public opinion analysis has been far less successful in linking mass opinions to policy outcomes. The problem is, quite simply, that once candidates are elected, their actions often vary significantly from the expectations of their supporters. Researchers wonder, therefore, about the importance of studying public opinion when its impact might be limited only to determining the outcome of elections.

The difficulty of linking public opinion to policy outcomes is perhaps greatest in the field of foreign policy. Walter Lippmann was a strong proponent of the view that the mass public was both uninterested and uninformed about foreign policy matters.¹³ Many years later, poll data led Gabriel Almond to conclude that Lippmann was right: public opinion was so unstable that foreign policy makers who followed it ran the risk of making bad policy.¹⁴ It became conventional wisdom that there are two formidable barriers to linking the views of citizens with the foreign policy decisions of elected officials. First, foreign policy is thought to be highly enigmatic, far beyond the ken of the average voter. After all, to take a stand on foreign policy, one must be knowledgeable about other states and alien cultures; further, with that knowledge one must decide how foreign policy can best take advantage of a complex, rapidly changing environment. Second, even if voters are capable of understanding complex issues, they are far more interested in local problems than in foreign policy. Voters are often intensely concerned about the quality of local schools and roads, yet fear the increased real estate taxes that may be required to pay for improvements. Of course, not all questions that stir voters' interest are local; national issues such as unemployment and inflation are also salient. But foreign policy, Almond argues, rarely touches the voter in any direct way, and therefore few decide how to vote on the basis of such issues and even fewer pressure their representatives to achieve changes in foreign policy.¹⁵

In recent years, however, our understanding of the relationship between public opinion and foreign policy has changed as a result of two factors, one political and the other scholarly. First, the Vietnam War demonstrated that, at least on certain foreign policy issues, public opinion can have a great influence. No one seriously disputes the view that it was the mass protests of the 1960s that brought a halt to the bombing of North Vietnam and, ultimately, President Lyndon Johnson's decision not to run for a second term. In addition, scholars made major advances in the study of public opinion on foreign policy during the 1980s. Whereas conventional wisdom held that foreign policy is so intricate that the mass public have no clear and systematic views on the subject, researchers have found that voters do indeed have rational, stable, and relatively consistent views on complex foreign policy issues.¹⁶ Moreover, in marked contrast to the classic idea that the public's views had no structure,¹⁷ research shows that people formulate views on specific foreign policy issues on the basis of an underlying set of beliefs—even when their information is fragmentary. We know, for example, that deeply held beliefs on militarism, communism, and xenophobia help determine how most voters feel about a variety of foreign policy issues, from defense spending to nuclear weapons and disarmament treaties.¹⁸ These findings not only apply to citizens of the United States; similar belief systems also influence the mass public in Central America in their foreign policy views.¹⁹

Not only has research demonstrated that the public holds some structured, rational foreign policy beliefs, it also proves that voters' opinions influence foreign policy. Whereas the classic view held firmly that leaders can make policy, especially foreign policy, with no regard for public opinion, a study of U.S. presidential campaigns between 1952 and 1984 reveals a strong impact of popular attitudes on the outcomes.²⁰ Moreover, defense expenditures authorized by the U.S. Congress during the Reagan administration show a very strong influence of public opinion.²¹

Central America is now ruled by democratic regimes, and, in democracies, public opinion counts.²² We can anticipate, therefore, that foreign policy will no longer be decided entirely by political elites in consultation with technocrats isolated from the pressure of public opinion. Leaders may enter into agreements, but masses can undo them if they find them objectionable. At one level, voters can vote out of office those whose policies differ from their own preferences. At another level, pres-

sure groups comprised of small farmers or industrial workers, whose opinions were of little import to dictatorial regimes, can today go out on strike, block highways and ports, and seriously obstruct normal economic processes, knowing that their actions are far less likely to provoke violent reprisals from security forces. Politicians who ignore those views do so at their own peril.

What are the opinions of Central Americans toward Cuba? In this chapter, I present the results of the largest systematic effort ever undertaken to tap the attitudes of Central Americans on various aspects of foreign affairs. It gives us a firsthand look at how opinions vary—in attitudes toward Cuba, the United States, and the USSR, and toward themselves and other nations of the region. Moreover, the chapter examines differences among subsets of respondents, such as those who are more informed on public issues versus those who are less well informed. After briefly characterizing the sample, I will describe the results.

Methodology

For this study, a total of 4,180 interviews were conducted in the five Central American countries and Panama. Although it might have been desirable to interview a national probability sample, urban and rural, in each country, limited resources dictated that the sample be urban.²³ Hence, when I refer to Central American public opinion, I refer to *urban* public opinion.²⁴ This limitation is not serious, however, since urban populations are more likely to be more attentive to foreign policy issues for two reasons. First, they have greater access to the mass media. For the sample as a whole, 61 percent of the respondents reported regularly listening to radio news, 63 percent regularly read a newspaper, and 81 percent regularly watched TV news. In rural areas, few people have access to newspapers, and a significantly smaller proportion have access to TV than in urban areas. Second, levels of education in Central American towns and cities are far higher than in rural areas, and education is a major factor in providing access to information about complex international questions.

The samples varied in size (Guatemala, 904; El Salvador, 910; Honduras, 566; Nicaragua, 704; Costa Rica, 597; Panama, 500). These differences partly reflect the size of the populations studied, but mainly

reflect the resources available to the study team in each country. To eliminate differences caused by unequal sample sizes, the entire sample was weighted so that each country represents one-sixth of all interviews.²⁵

It would have been ideal to conduct each survey at precisely the same moment, but this was not possible. First, Costa Rica was established as the locus of the pilot test of survey items. That sample was polled in fall 1990. Second, funding for the surveys in Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Panama was not confirmed until later, so those samples were interviewed during June, July, and August 1991. Finally, because funding for the Guatemala survey came last, it was conducted in February 1992. These differences in the dates of the surveys could influence some of the results. For example, the cold war ended just as the surveys were being conducted in El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama, but had not yet occurred at the time of the Costa Rican survey. The Guatemala study was conducted after the breakup of the Soviet Union.

Findings

I now turn to the results. First, I will describe the popular images of Cuba and the former Soviet Union revealed by the surveys, then compare them to images of other countries (the United States, Mexico, and the nations of Central America), noting similarities and differences. I will seek to explain the origins of these perceptions by analyzing respondents' views toward communism. I then attempt to determine if these views translate into specific foreign policy perspectives regarding trade with Cuba and the Soviet Union. Finally, I analyze the underlying attitudes that explain why some Central Americans are more predisposed toward Cuba and the former Soviet Union.

Images of Cuba and Other Countries

Trustworthiness. A fundamental theme in international relations is perception; policy makers and the mass public hold beliefs, or images, about the basic characteristics of other nations. Since how other nations are perceived is a key to policy, misperceptions—erroneous images—have often been the cause of misguided foreign policy.²⁶ One of the most revealing images concerns trust. Nations perceived as trustworthy by the mass public are those with whom constructive international relations

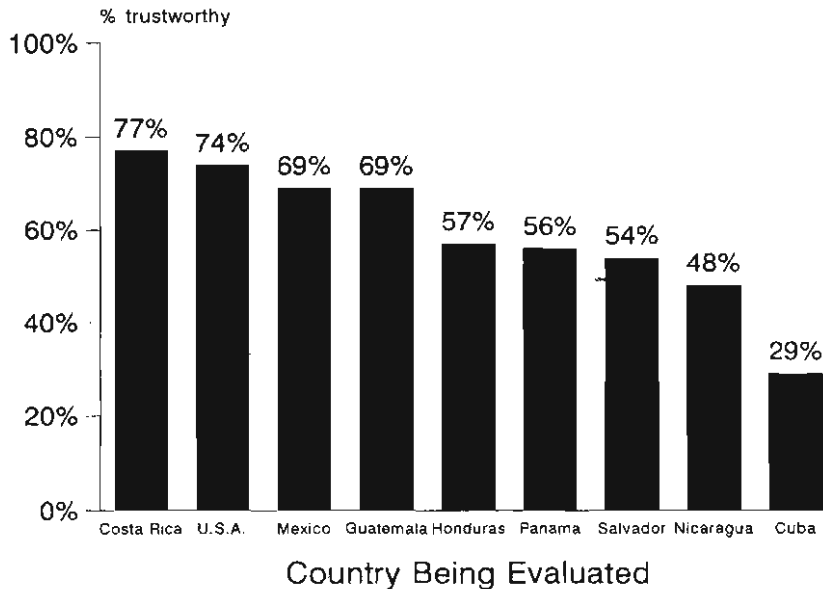


FIG. 7.1 Evaluation of Trustworthiness of Other Countries
(entire Central American sample)

may well take place. On the other hand, when another nation's actions are viewed with mistrust, international hostility and conflict will likely be the result.

To assess the images of Cuba held by Central Americans, we decided that the data would make sense only in a broadly comparative context. We would know little, for example, if we evaluated Central Americans' perceptions of the trustworthiness of the Cuban government without knowing how the image of Cuba compared to those of other nations. Similarly, it was important to distinguish among the popular attitudes in each country, since images of Cuba could vary substantially. As a result, we asked respondents how trustworthy was the government of each of the other nations in the region, as well as the governments of Cuba, Mexico, and the United States.²⁷

Figure 7.1 presents data on trust.²⁸ The combined responses for all six nations reveal a dramatic difference in the perceived trustworthiness of Cuba versus the other eight nations studied. Less than 30 percent of

respondents trusted the government of Cuba, compared to nearly half or more who believed that the governments of Honduras, Panama, El Salvador, and Nicaragua were trustworthy. Guatemala and Mexico had an even more positive image, with more than two-thirds of respondents trusting those governments. Most highly esteemed were Costa Rica and the United States, with approximately three-fourths of respondents finding them to be trustworthy.

In some respects, these findings are remarkable. The very high evaluation of the United States comes as a surprise to those who might feel that the United States' frequent political, economic, and military intervention in Central American affairs would result in a negative evaluation. Evidently this was not the case for the great majority of urban Central Americans. Less surprising is the high esteem in which Costa Rica is held. Costa Rica is known throughout the region as the most democratic and peaceful of all Central American nations. Moreover, Costa Rica's active role in agreements leading to the end of most of the region's military conflicts no doubt reinforced its positive image.

What clearly stands out in these initial results is the dramatic contrast between Cuba's image and those of the other nations in the survey. The government of Cuba was seen as trustworthy by only a small minority of urban Central Americans. These findings were complimented by others, to be discussed later.

The data in figure 7.1 present an aggregated pattern that ignores differences among individual nations. Presenting the evaluations of each nation's government would be too cumbersome for our purposes, but the survey data show that perceptions of Cuba's trustworthiness vary dramatically. Guatemalans, Salvadorans, Costa Ricans, and Panamanians overwhelmingly distrusted the Cuban government, with approximately 80 percent of each sample expressing negative views.²⁹ Not surprisingly, Nicaraguans were far more positive toward the government of Cuba than were citizens of any other Central American nation (51 percent), and it was similarly unsurprising that they were the least positive with respect to the United States (54 percent). Even so, mistrust of the United States by Nicaraguans was far lower than mistrust of Cubans on the part of the other Central Americans. These results, so obviously shaped by the last decade of Central American history, in which Nicaragua allied itself with Cuba and against the United States, gives one confidence that these data reflect meaningful public sentiments.

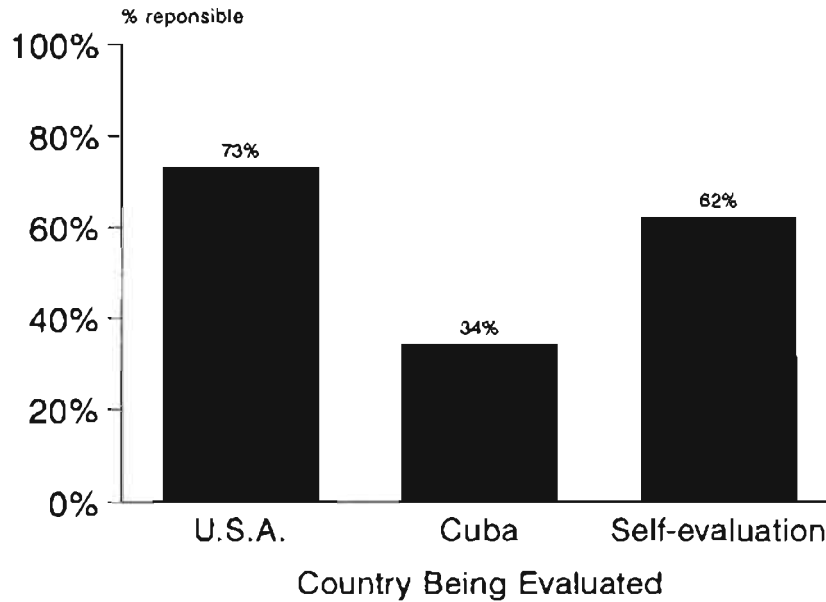


FIG. 7.2 Evaluation of Responsibility of System of Government (entire Central American sample)

Responsibility of the Government System. The survey reveals a similarly negative picture of the responsibility of the Cuban government. Respondents were asked how responsible were the governments of Cuba, the United States, and their own country.³⁰ Figure 7.2 shows that positive ratings for the United States were more than twice as high as for Cuba, and respondents' evaluations of their own countries were nearly as favorable. The individual countries' views on the responsibility of the Cuban government showed a pattern similar to that uncovered earlier; Nicaraguans differed from other Central Americans in being far more positive toward Cuba and more negative toward the United States.

Figure 7.3 shows that Central Americans were much more skeptical about the responsibility of the Cuban system of government than they were about the United States or their own government.³¹ Nicaragua again stands out, with over half of Nicaraguans finding the Cuban government to be responsible, and precisely half finding the United States responsible. Hence, on both trustworthiness and responsibility, Nicara-

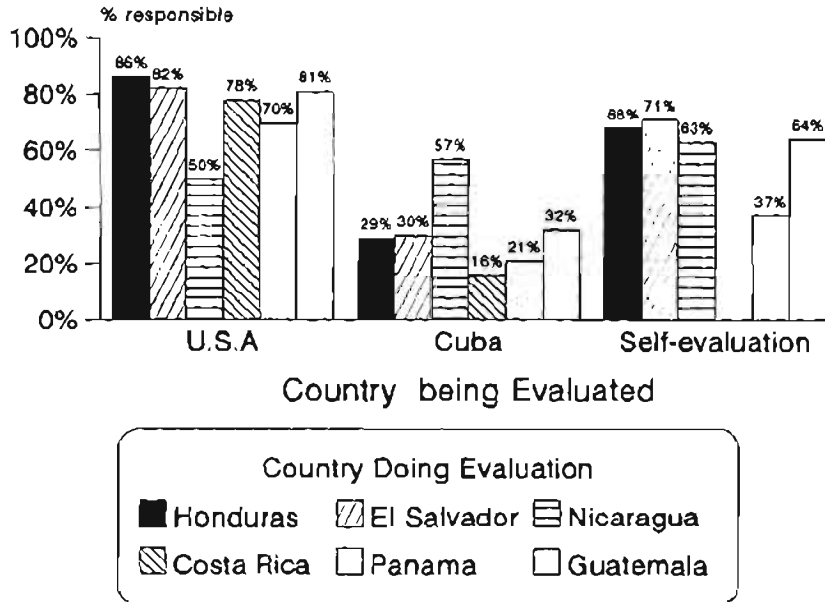


FIG. 7.3 Evaluation of Responsibility of Government (by country)

guans' views on Cuba were far more positive than those of other Central Americans.

Friendliness of the Government System. A final question about Cuba concerned the "friendliness" of its government. Responses were systematically more positive than those regarding Cuba's level of responsibility and trustworthiness (see figure 7.4). Yet the same pattern was found: twice as many Central Americans saw the U.S. government as friendly than saw Cuba in this way. Figure 7.5 shows the familiar pattern: Nicaraguans were far more likely—more than three-quarters of respondents—to view the Cuban government as friendly.

Explaining the Negative Images of Cuba

We now have a clear picture of the very negative image that Central Americans, except for Nicaraguans, displayed toward Cuba. The island was considered to be governed by an untrustworthy, irresponsible, un-

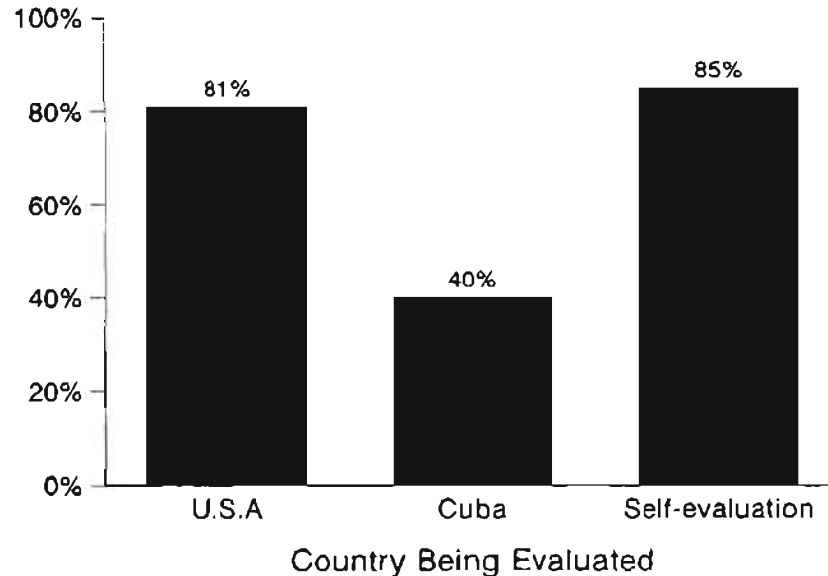


FIG. 7.4 Evaluation of Friendliness of Government
(entire Central American sample)

friendly regime by the great majority of Central Americans interviewed. We also know that these negative images were not merely the result of a generalized xenophobia, since images of other countries, both inside and outside Central America, were far more positive than were images of Cuba.

A hypothesis that immediately comes to mind is that these negative images of Cuba are associated with attitudes toward communism. Long before the Cuban revolution, communism was an important issue throughout Central America. As early as the 1930s, when labor unions first began to gain strength in the region, governments and the Catholic church expressed fear of communist influence. In fact, many union groups were indeed linked to incipient communist parties in Central America, and the parties, in turn, had links to Moscow. Communist influence grew during World War II, when the United States and the USSR found themselves allied in the struggle against Germany. Communist political power was a major issue in Costa Rica's civil war in 1948, and the U.S. intervention in Guatemala in 1954 was justified on grounds

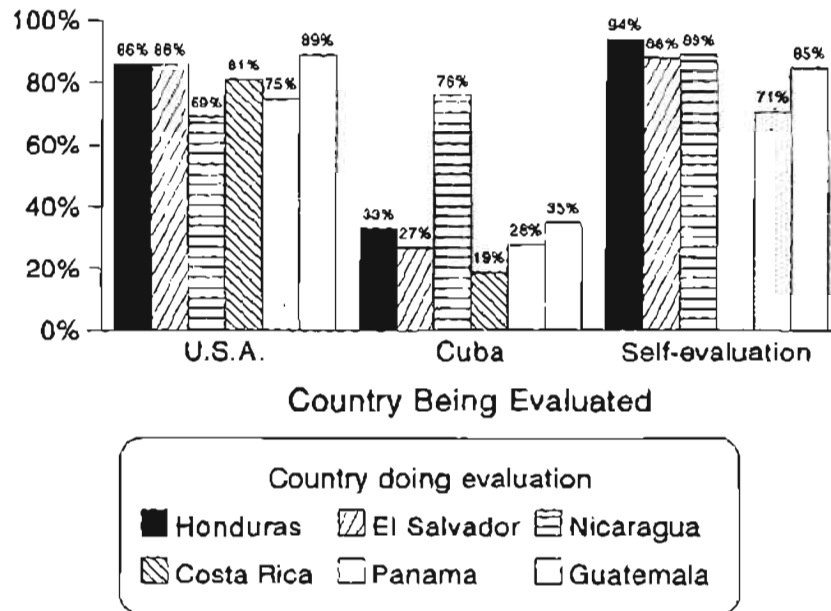


FIG. 7.5 Evaluation of Friendliness of Government (by country)

of fighting communism in that country. Central America's focus on the Soviet Union as a threat shifted to Cuba, once that nation became communist. Hence, from the early 1960s on, groups representing the status quo in Central America regarded Cuba with considerable suspicion.

Fear of Communism. Three items in the Central America survey indicated a widespread popular fear of communism in Central America. We first asked, "If a Central American country were to become communist, should it be considered a great threat to the national interests and security of _____." [The name of the respondent's country was inserted.] Results are presented in figure 7.6. Between two-thirds and four-fifths of all respondents, except for Nicaraguans, saw communism in Central America as a great threat to their country. In Nicaragua, slightly less than half of respondents saw such a threat.

Preventing the rise of communism in Central America also concerned the great majority of respondents. They were asked to what extent

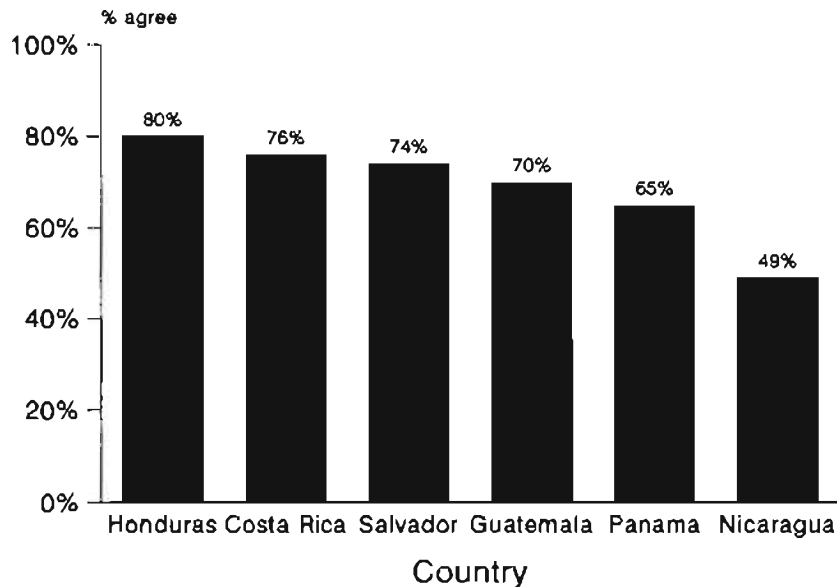


FIG. 7.6 Communism Is a Great Threat to Our Nation
(by country)

they agreed with the following statements: "It is extremely important for _____ [respondent's country filled in] to do everything possible to prevent the expansion of communism to other Central American countries." As shown in figure 7.7, majorities in each country, including Nicaragua, expressed an anticommunist bias, with the highest level in Costa Rica, where 85 percent of respondents felt this fear.

The final item evaluating communism provoked a somewhat more muted response. Those interviewed were asked to what extent they agreed with the following: "Communism could be an acceptable form of government for some countries of the world." In this item, the threat was less direct, since the focus was shifted from Central America to somewhere else. Majorities in each country except Nicaragua found communism unacceptable anywhere in the world, as shown in figure 7.8. The relatively low level of fear in El Salvador is somewhat surprising, but perhaps shows the effect of FMLN propaganda in which communism is portrayed as being a legitimate solution.

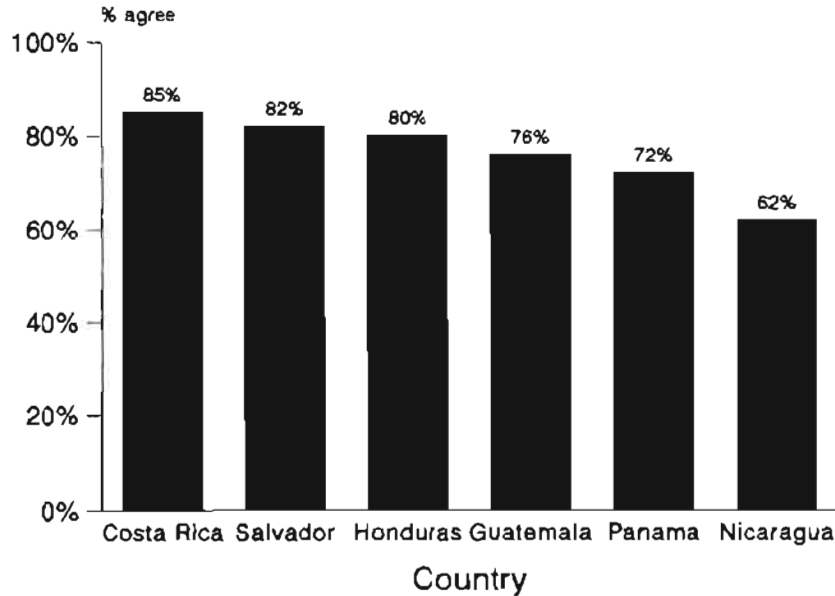


FIG. 7.7 It Is Important to Prevent Communism in Central America (by country)

The Cuban Threat. The survey then sought to determine, in light of the fear of communism, to what extent Cuba was seen as a threat. Respondents were asked whether they agreed with the statement, "Cuba is a great threat for the stability of Central America." Figure 7.9 shows that in every country except Nicaragua, majorities agreed that Cuba represented a menace. While these findings are consistent with those presented above, they also reveal that significant numbers of Central Americans did not feel threatened by Cuba. In Nicaragua, of course, nearly two-thirds of those interviewed did not. In Panama and Guatemala, only a slight majority felt that Cuba was a threat. This question was not asked in Costa Rica.

Policy-Relevant Attitudes: Masses and Elites

We now have a broad picture of attitudes toward Cuba on the part of the Central American public interviewed in our survey: they were quite negative for all countries except Nicaragua.

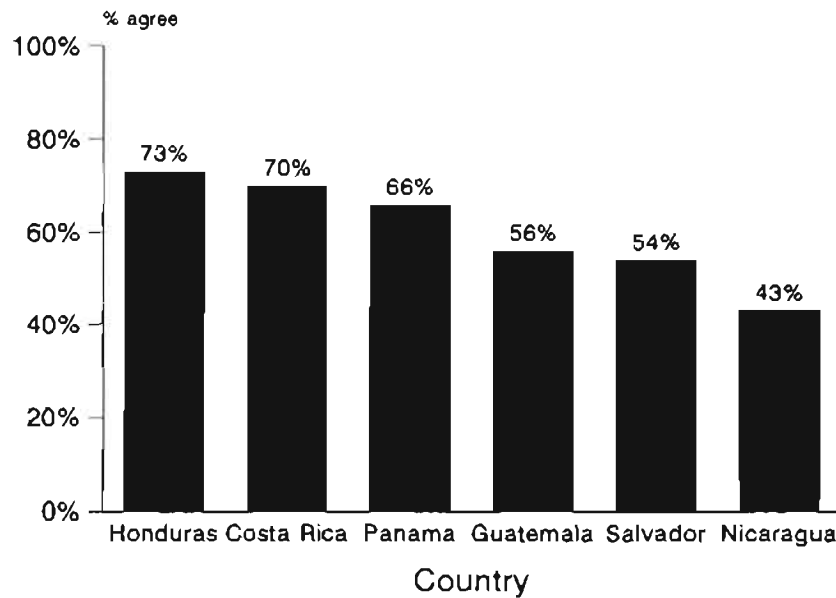


FIG. 7.8 Communism Is an Unacceptable Form of Government (by country)

Many of these attitudes also prevail in the United States, as numerous opinion polls have demonstrated. These views provide strong support for the U.S. State Department's consistently tough policy toward Cuba. Aimed at the isolation of Cuba, U.S. policy uses a total trade embargo as a means to achieve that goal.

Commercial Ties with Cuba and the USSR. Do most Central Americans support a similar policy toward Cuba? No. For the six countries in the study, more than half (57 percent) favored commercial ties with Cuba. Figure 7.10 shows that such support varied from country to country and was highest, not surprisingly, in Nicaragua. In other countries, majorities in Honduras and El Salvador supported trade with Cuba, whereas slim majorities opposed it in Costa Rica and Panama.

Trade with the Soviet Union, with its long history of backing radical movements in Central America, received much stronger support from Central Americans. As shown in figure 7.11, two-thirds or more of respondents favored such trade. This more positive view is possibly related

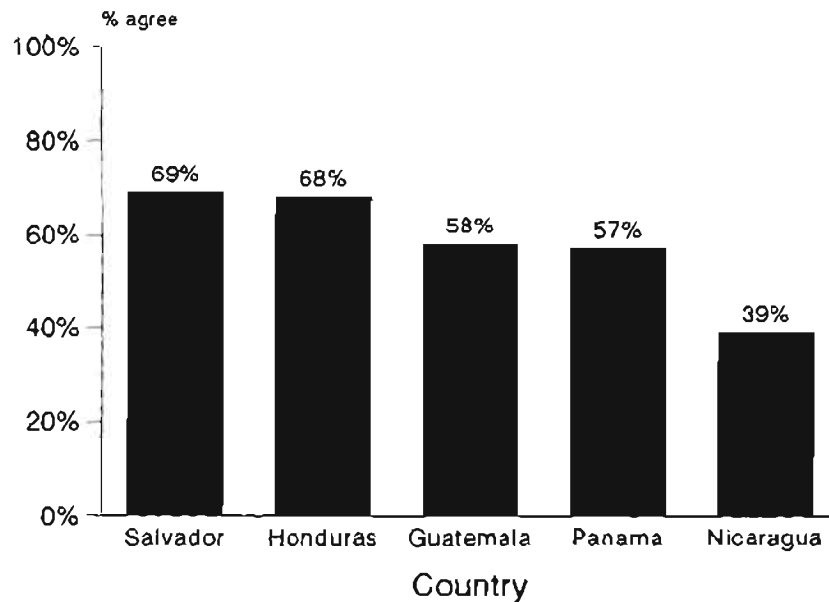


FIG. 7.9 Communism Is a Threat to the Stability of Central America (by country)

to the perception that the USSR, being more advanced economically than Cuba, might have more to offer. Another explanation is that despite Soviet aid to radical movements in Central America, its great distance makes it less of a threat. Unfortunately, the survey did not allow us to test these competing explanations.

Whatever the reasons for the more positive views toward trade with the USSR versus Cuba, there seems to be a strong dose of pragmatism among the mass public in Central America that allows people to overcome their fears and suspicions of communism and to opt for commercial ties with communist countries. In the United States, on the other hand, the cold war mentality of "evil empire" thinking produces popular support for the official policy of isolating Cuba. Hence, in the United States, mass and elite thinking are consonant.

Elite Perspectives. There is some evidence that in Central America elite thinking is even more tolerant of pragmatic policies, including trade with Cuba, than in the United States. As part of the larger survey, small

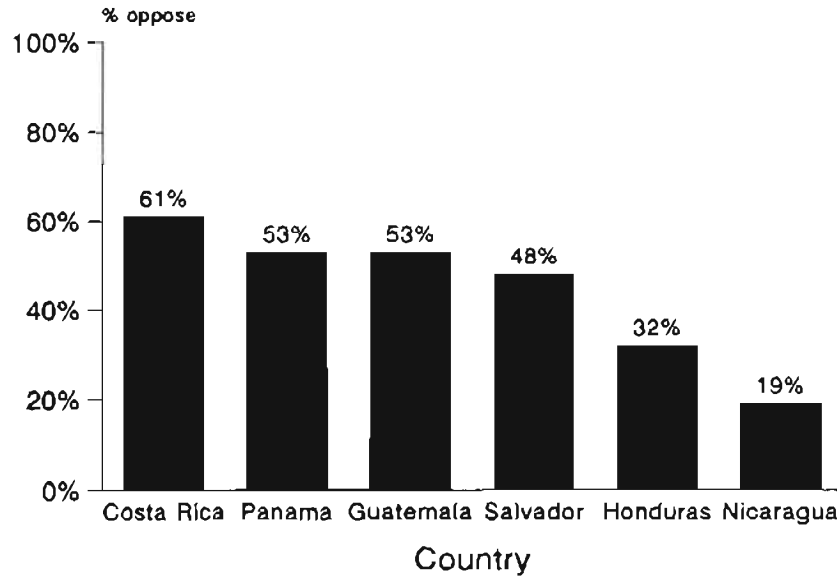


FIG. 7.10 Opposition to Commercial Relations with Cuba
(by country)

surveys were carried out among leaders in El Salvador, Honduras, and Panama. The largest was conducted in El Salvador, where sixty-three legislators, comprising 80 percent of the members of the Asamblea Legislativa, were asked many of the same items that were used in the mass sample. Even though 63 percent of Salvadoran legislators believed that communism was an unacceptable form of government, compared to 54 percent of the mass public, only 25 percent of the legislators opposed commercial ties with Cuba, compared to 48 percent of the mass public. The same pattern emerged in elite attitudes toward trade with the Soviet Union. Only 5 percent of Salvadoran legislators opposed such trade, compared to 37 percent of the mass public. A smaller sample in Honduras produced a similar pattern.³² Only 17 percent of Honduran leaders believed that communism was acceptable, compared to 27 percent of the mass sample. Yet 82 percent of the elites versus 68 percent of the mass public supported commercial ties with Cuba. A sample of twenty-nine Panamanian leaders revealed similar findings. Although elite and mass

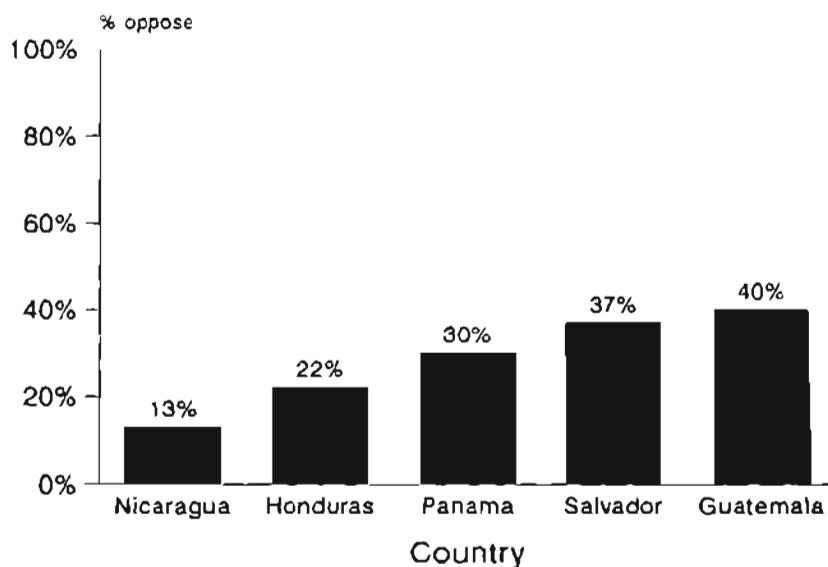
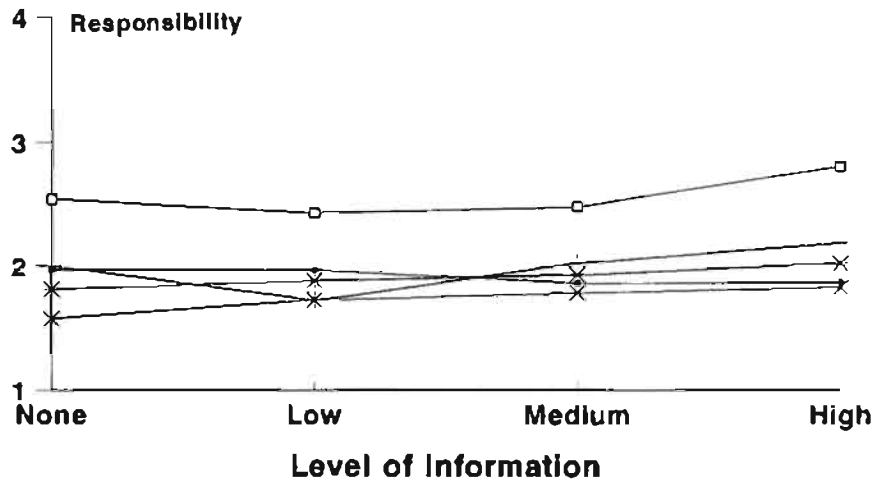


FIG. 7.11 Opposition to Trade with the Soviet Union (by country)

opinion on the acceptability of communism were nearly identical (35 percent of the elite versus 34 percent of the public), elites were much more favorably disposed to trade with Cuba (93 percent versus 48 percent of the mass public). Indeed, all Panamanian leaders favored trade with the Soviet Union. In sum, although mass and elite opinion show considerable parallels, in each country political elites were more apt to favor trade ties with Cuba.

These comparisons suggest that characteristics of subsets of the mass samples may help explain why some respondents were more predisposed toward Cuba. One factor may be access to information. Elite groups are more informed about all subjects, including politics. This suggests that attitudes toward Cuba among the informed public may resemble those of their leaders.

To explore this hypothesis, we constructed an index of respondents' political knowledge.³³ That information was then associated with some of the key variables already examined. In figures 7.12 and 7.13, respondents' attitudes toward the degree of responsibility and friendliness of the



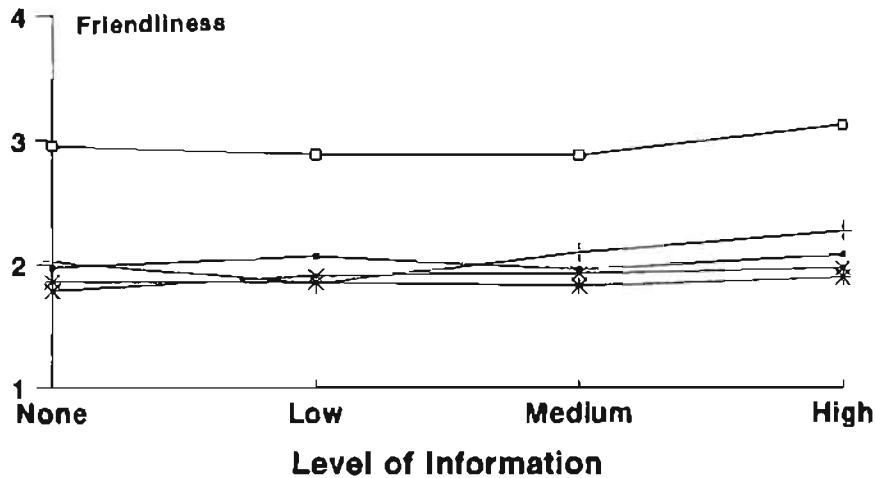
← Guatemala — Honduras × El Salvador □ Nicaragua * Panama

FIG. 7.12 Evaluation of Responsibility of the Government of Cuba
(controlled for level of information)

Cuba government are controlled by their level of information. Although the pattern is not dramatic, higher levels of information are clearly related to a more positive image of Cuba.

Explaining Differences Between Public Opinion in the United States and Central America

This analysis of both mass and elite views in Central America suggests a paradox. Even though for over a decade Central America has been engaged in civil war and revolutions in which communist influence has been a central issue and even though Cuba and the Soviet Union provided material and moral support to the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and to the FMLN in El Salvador,³⁴ pragmatic policies had much stronger support in the region than in the United States. Obviously, trade with Cuba is of little consequence for the United States, and therefore the embargo poses no economic threat. But the same can be said for Central American nations, the great bulk of whose trade is with the United States and Western Europe. Central America's largest trading partner beyond those ma-



— Guatemala + Honduras * El Salvador □ Nicaragua * Panama

FIG. 7.13 Evaluation of Friendliness of the Government of Cuba
(controlled for level of information)

For industrial powers is Mexico, but even there, total exports for all of Central America for 1989 was only \$55 million, amounting to less than 1 percent of regional exports and about 7 percent of imports.³⁵ Trade with the Caribbean community (CARICOM) was about 1 percent of exports and imports. The potential for significant trade with Cuba, a country whose major export, sugar, is also a significant Central American export commodity, is very limited indeed. Even so, Central American masses and leaders favored trade with Cuba and overwhelmingly supported trade with the Soviet Union.

The explanation for this paradox, I would argue, is that Central Americans do not view the world in the same unidimensional fashion that has been commonplace in the United States since the onset of the cold war. Central Americans have more than one focus in their attention to international affairs. On the one hand, they certainly have been concerned with threats of communist intervention—threats that were no doubt more keenly felt by the average citizen there than in the United States. At the same time, the United States, too, was a source of concern

for some Central Americans. After all, no country has more frequently violated Central America's sovereignty than the United States. One only need recall the sponsorship of the armed intervention in Guatemala in 1954, support for the contra war in Nicaragua, and the 1989 U.S. invasion of Panama to affirm this fact. Of course, U.S. intervention is probably viewed favorably by many Central Americans, given the positive images of the United States described earlier. The ability of Central Americans to view both the positive and negative aspects of intervention allows them to see the world order as more complex than it is for the average U.S. citizen.

One could pursue this interpretation too far, forgetting that not all Central Americans favor trade with Cuba. Indeed, as figure 7.10 shows, whereas four-fifths of Nicaraguans favored such trade, nearly two-thirds of Costa Ricans opposed it, with other countries of the region falling somewhere in between. Indeed, the division of opinion in the region is even greater than figure 7.10 implies, because that figure (like the others) clusters all those who favored (or opposed) a given position into one category and does not distinguish by intensity of opinion. For example, 61 percent of Costa Ricans opposed trade with Cuba, but it is important to observe that fully 41 percent of all Costa Ricans stated that they *strongly* opposed such trade. At the same time, whereas most Nicaraguans supported trade with Cuba, 14 percent *strongly* opposed it, while 57 percent *strongly* favored it. By measuring intensity of opinion, one can better determine what characteristics led some respondents to favor trade with Cuba and others to oppose it.

To explore the factors associated with supporting trade with Cuba, we used multiple regression analysis, with three sets of variables: demographic, socioeconomic, and attitudinal. The basic demographic characteristics were sex and age. A positive coefficient indicates that more males favored trade with Cuba than females. Socioeconomic variables included income, education, and the already discussed scale measuring how informed respondents were about world and national politics. Items about attitudes included religiosity, system support, democratic norms and leftist ideology. Religiosity was measured by how often respondents attended church.³⁶ System support was measured by five items that measured belief in the legitimacy of one's system of government.³⁷ Political tolerance was gauged by four items focusing on how far respondents were willing to extend key civil liberties to the opposition.³⁸

Support for democratic norms was measured by five items measuring the extent to which respondents advocated either conventional or violent means of expressing political demands. Finally, leftist ideology was measured by respondents' self-identification on a ten-point left-right ideology scale. The regression analyses are presented in table 7.1.

Some clear patterns emerged. First, demographic and socioeconomic factors were not consistent (significant) predictors of support for trade with Cuba. Only in Guatemala was education the strongest predictor, and it was of no significance in Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. Age played a role only in Costa Rica, where older respondents were slightly less apt to support trade with Cuba.³⁹ Sex differences were significant in El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Panama, with fewer females supporting trade with Cuba than males. Access to information played a role in all but Nicaragua and Guatemala, but in both countries, the simple correlation coefficients were also significant between level of information and support for trade with Cuba. In those two countries, the other variables played a greater role, and hence level of information receded in importance. This means that in all countries the more informed citizens were more likely to favor trade with Cuba. This pattern emerges clearly in figure 7.14.

Attitudes are the most consistent indicators of favoring trade with Cuba. Respondents who were more predisposed toward political participation (both democratic and violent) most consistently supported trade with Cuba. Similarly, leftist ideology and political tolerance played a role. Low levels of support for the system were also associated with greater support for Cuban trade.

The portrait that emerges from this analysis is that Central America's more informed, civil-libertarian, and left-leaning citizens were more likely to support trade with Cuba than those who were less informed, less politically tolerant, and more right-wing.

Conclusions

This chapter shows that since Castro fought his revolution, Cuba has been highly relevant for Central America. Leftists of all varieties have sought Cuba's support for their programs. In Nicaragua and El Salvador, such support took both material and moral forms. For some Central Americans—those seeking radical changes in their society—Cuba has

TABLE 7.1
Regressions of Support for Trade with Cuba on SES, Demographic Characteristics, and Attitudes
(Beta weights of significant predictors)

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>Guatemala</i>	<i>El Salvador</i>	<i>Honduras</i>	<i>Nicaragua</i>	<i>Costa Rica</i>	<i>Panama</i>
Demographic factors		.15			.16	.09
Sex						
Age					-.10	
SES: Socioeconomic status	.10					
Income	.23	.13				
Education		.23	.29		.13	.15
Information						-.22
Attitudes: Religiosity						-.09
System Support		-.15	-.20			.34
Tolerance			.19			
Democratic Participation	.11	.14	.29		.35	
Violent participation	.09	.09	.39		.12	.17
Leftist Ideology	.14				.17	.14
R ²	.11	.14	.33		.16	.24
Minimum N	516	514	507	419	400	453

Source: University of Pittsburgh Central American Public Opinion Project.

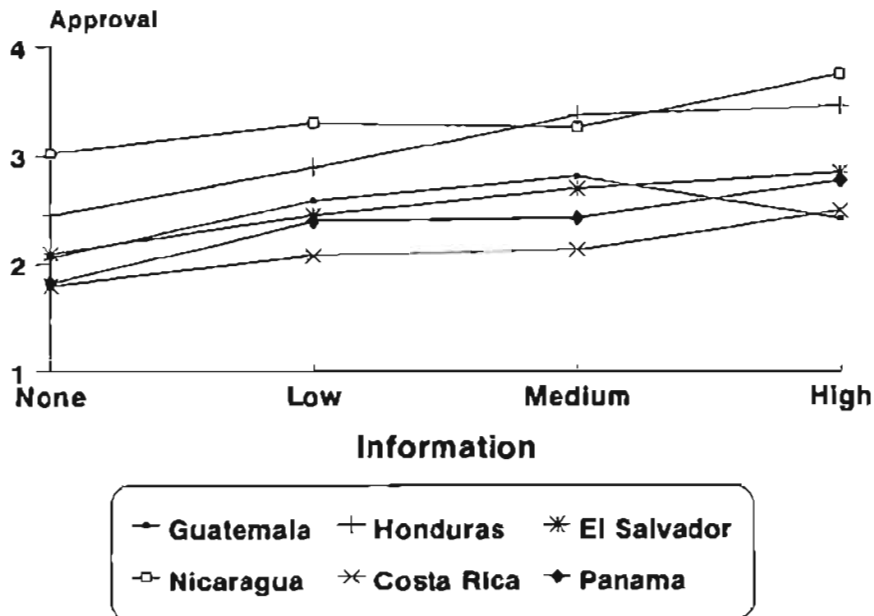


FIG. 7.14 Approval of Commercial Relations with Cuba
(controlled for level of information)

been viewed as a friend. But those who would defend the status quo have viewed Cuba with suspicion and even fear. The majority of citizens in all countries in the region fear Cuba, with the exception of Nicaragua.

The end of the cold war, coupled with the Sandinista defeat in Nicaragua and the cessation of civil war in El Salvador, has radically changed the face of Central America. Cuba's capacity to influence events in the region has greatly diminished, partly because it now must concentrate all its efforts on the survival of its own revolution, and partly because radical groups in Central America are not nearly as prominent as they were only a few years ago.

One can assume that in this new environment, fears of Cuba will diminish throughout the region. Yet, despite past fears, Central Americans express a rather pragmatic view of foreign policy. Even in the one survey we conducted after the end of the cold war (in Guatemala), fear of Cuba was still great; yet many Central Americans are willing to trade with Cuba. As democracy develops in the region, mass attitudes will likely

carry more weight. As Central America struggles to solve its economic problems, Cuba may come to play a role, albeit in a minor way, in that struggle.

NOTES

I would like to thank Rodolfo Cerdas and Richard Fagen for their helpful comments, and Carmelo Mesa-Lago for his numerous suggestions.

1. Lars Schoultz, *National Security and United States Policy Toward Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 325.

2. Ronald Reagan, address to a joint session of Congress in April 1983, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 269.

3. Benjamin C. Schwarz, *American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and El Salvador: The Frustration of Reform and the Illusions of Nation Building* (Santa Monica: Rand, 1991), p. 1.

4. Kiva Maidanik, "On the Real Soviet Policy Toward Central America, Past and Present," *The Russians Aren't Coming: New Soviet Policy in Latin America*, ed. Wayne S. Smith, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner), 1992, pp. 90-91.

5. Rodolfo Cerdas Cruz, "New Directions in Soviet Policy towards Latin America," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 21 (1) (February 1989): 7.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8. Cerdas bases his conclusions upon Mikoyan's papers, "Las particularidades de la revolución en Nicaragua y sus tareas desde el punto de vista de la teoría y práctica del movimiento liberador," *América Latina* (Moscow), no. 3 (1980): 103; and Sergo Mikoyan, "La creatividad revolucionaria abre el camino hacia la victoria," *América Latina*, no. 2 (1980): 4.

7. U.S. State Department, white paper, quoted by Donna Rich-Kaplowitz, "The U.S. Response to Soviet and Cuban Policies in Central America," in *The Russians Aren't Coming*, ed. Smith, p. 106.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 107.

9. Cole Blasier, "The Soviet Union," in *Confronting Revolution: Security Through Diplomacy in Central America*, ed. Morris J. Blachman, William M. Leogrande, and Kenneth Sharpe (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), p. 268.

10. Rodolfo Cerdas Cruz, "Perestroika y revolución: los cambios en la política soviética hacia América Central," *Anuario de estudios Centroamericanos* 15, no. 2 (1989): 5-24.

11. Fidel Castro, quoted by Anthony Lukas, "Fidel Castro's Theater of Now," *New York Times*, January 20, 1992, p. A15.

12. Cerdas, "New Directions," p. 13.

13. Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1922), and *The Phantom Public* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1925).

14. Gabriel Almond, *The American People and Foreign Policy* (New York: Praeger, 1950).

15. The classic statement is found in Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes, "Constituency Influence in Congress," *American Political Science Review* 57 (1963): 45-56.

16. The most important are Benjamin I. Page and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Changes in Americans' Policy Preferences, 1935-1979," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 46 (1982): 24-42; Robert Y. Shapiro and Benjamin I. Page, "Foreign Policy and the Rational Public," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 32 (1988): 211-47.

17. Philip E. Converse found that Americans did not hold views with any ideological coherence. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics," in *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. David E. Apter (New York: Free Press, 1964).

18. Jon Hurwitz and Mark Peffley, "How are Foreign Policy Attitudes Structured? A Hierarchical Model," *American Political Science Review* 81 (1987): 1100-20; Mark A. Peffley and Jon Hurwitz, "A Hierarchical Model of Attitude Constraint," *American Journal of Political Science* 29 (1985): 871-90.

19. Jon Hurwitz, Mark Peffley, and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Foreign Policy Belief Systems in Comparative Perspective: The United States and Costa Rica," *International Studies Quarterly*, September 1993.

20. John H. Aldrich, John L. Sullivan, and Eugene Bargida, "Foreign Affairs and Issue Voting: Do Presidential Candidates 'Waltz Before a Blind Audience'?" *American Political Science Review* 83 (1989): 123-41.

21. Larry M. Bartels, "Constituency Opinion and Congressional Policy Making: The Reagan Defense Buildup," *American Political Science Review* 85 (1991): 457-74.

22. There is good reason to be skeptical about the degree of democracy in some of the countries in the region, as human rights violations and military control over key policy areas continue. Nonetheless, elections have become the regularized mechanism for the selection of rulers and the peaceful transfer of power throughout Central America. See John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, eds., *Elections and Democracy in Central America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).

23. This study is based on the Central American Public Opinion Project of the University of Pittsburgh, conceived in 1989 to tap the opinion of Central Americans on a variety of issues, including attitudes toward Cuba. The study received support from the Andrew Mellon Foundation, the Tinker Foundation, Inc., the Howard Heinz Endowment, the University of Pittsburgh's Central Research Small Grant Fund, the North-South Center at the University of Miami, and the Instituto de Estudios Latinoamericanos (IDELA). Collaborating institutions in Central America were: Guatemala—Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales (ASIES); El Salvador—Instituto de Estudios Latinoamericanos (IDELA); Honduras—Centro de Estudio y Promoción del Desarrollo (CEPROD) and the Centro de Documentación de Honduras (EDOH); Nicaragua—Centro de Estudios Internacionales (CEI) and the Escuela de Sociología, Universidad Centroamericana (UCA); Costa Rica—Universidad de Costa Rica; Panama—Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos "Justo Arosemena" (CELA). Collaborating doctoral students in political science at the University of Pittsburgh were Ricardo Córdova (El Salvador), Annabelle Conroy (Honduras), Orlando Pérez (Panama), and Andrew Stein (Nicaragua). Collaborating faculty were John Booth, University of North Texas (Nicaragua and Guatemala), and Jon Hurwitz, University of Pittsburgh (Costa Rica).

15. The classic statement is found in Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes, "Constituency Influence in Congress," *American Political Science Review* 57 (1963): 45–56.

16. The most important are Benjamin I. Page and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Changes in Americans' Policy Preferences, 1935–1979," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 46 (1982): 24–42; Robert Y. Shapiro and Benjamin I. Page, "Foreign Policy and the Rational Public," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 32 (1988): 211–47.

17. Philip E. Converse found that Americans did not hold views with any ideological coherence. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics," in *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. David E. Apter (New York: Free Press, 1964).

18. Jon Hurwitz and Mark Peffley, "How are Foreign Policy Attitudes Structured? A Hierarchical Model," *American Political Science Review* 81 (1987): 1100–20; Mark A. Peffley and Jon Hurwitz, "A Hierarchical Model of Attitude Constraint," *American Journal of Political Science* 29 (1985): 871–90.

19. Jon Hurwitz, Mark Peffley, and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Foreign Policy Belief Systems in Comparative Perspective: The United States and Costa Rica," *International Studies Quarterly*, September 1993.

20. John H. Aldrich, John L. Sullivan, and Eugene Borgida, "Foreign Affairs and Issue Voting: Do Presidential Candidates 'Waltz Before a Blind Audience'?" *American Political Science Review* 83 (1989): 123–41.

21. Larry M. Bartels, "Constituency Opinion and Congressional Policy Making: The Reagan Defense Buildup," *American Political Science Review* 85 (1991): 457–74.

22. There is good reason to be skeptical about the degree of democracy in some of the countries in the region, as human rights violations and military control over key policy areas continue. Nonetheless, elections have become the regularized mechanism for the selection of rulers and the peaceful transfer of power throughout Central America. See John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, eds., *Elections and Democracy in Central America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).

23. This study is based on the Central American Public Opinion Project of the University of Pittsburgh, conceived in 1989 to tap the opinion of Central Americans on a variety of issues, including attitudes toward Cuba. The study received support from the Andrew Mellon Foundation, the Tinker Foundation, Inc., the Howard Heinz Endowment, the University of Pittsburgh's Central Research Small Grant Fund, the North-South Center at the University of Miami, and the Instituto de Estudios Latinoamericanos (IDELA). Collaborating institutions in Central America were: Guatemala—Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales (ASIES); El Salvador—Instituto de Estudios Latinoamericanos (IDELA); Honduras—Centro de Estudio y Promoción del Desarrollo (CEPROD) and the Centro de Documentación de Honduras (EDOH); Nicaragua—Centro de Estudios Internacionales (CEI) and the Escuela de Sociología, Universidad Centroamericana (UCA); Costa Rica—Universidad de Costa Rica; Panama—Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos "Justo Arosemena" (CELA). Collaborating doctoral students in political science at the University of Pittsburgh were Ricardo Córdova (El Salvador), Annabelle Conroy (Honduras), Orlando Pérez (Panama), and Andrew Stein (Nicaragua). Collaborating faculty were John Booth, University of North Texas (Nicaragua and Guatemala), and Jon Hurwitz, University of Pittsburgh (Costa Rica).

24. The sample was of a multistage stratified design. The first level of stratification was the most obvious; we divided the entire population to be studied into the six nations of the region. Hence, each country represents a stratum in the design. Within each country, the urban area was defined. We sought to narrow our definition of *urban* to include the areas of major population agglomeration. In Guatemala, this meant Guatemala City, as well as eleven other cities, including Escuintla, Quetzaltenango, and Chimaltenango. In El Salvador, it meant greater metropolitan San Salvador, including the city of San Salvador (divided into fourteen zones) and the eight surrounding *municipios*: Soyapango, Cuscatancingo, Ciudad Delgado, Mejicanos, Nueva San Salvador, San Marcos, Ilopango, and Antigua Cuscatlán. In Honduras, it meant the nation's two large metropolitan areas, Tegucigalpa (the capital) and San Pedro Sula. In Nicaragua, this definition included Managua (the capital) and the regional cities of Leon, Granada, and Masaya. In Costa Rica, the sample covered the greater metropolitan region, incorporating San José (the capital) and the provincial capitals of the *meseta central*—Cartago, Heredia, and Alajuela. Finally, the Panama sample was confined to the metropolitan Panama City area.

25. Country sample designs were of area probability design. In each country, the most recent population census data were used to stratify the urban areas into lower, middle, and upper socioeconomic status (SES). The sample size assigned to each stratum was based upon these SES estimates. Within each stratum, census maps were used to select, at random, an appropriate number of political subdivisions (for example, districts) and, within each subdivision, the census maps were used to select an appropriate number of segments from which to draw the interviews.

26. For the classical elaboration of this theory, see Richard W. Cottam, *Foreign Policy Motivation: A General Theory and a Case Study* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977), pp. 54–92. For an updated view of this perspective, see Richard K. Herrmann, "Perceptions and Foreign Policy Analysis," in *Foreign Policy Decision Making: Perception, Cognition and Artificial Intelligence*, ed. Donald A. Sylvan and Steve Chans (New York: Praeger, 1984).

27. Over 93 percent of the respondents gave an opinion for each of the countries, with fewer than 3 percent not responding in their evaluation of the U.S. government.

28. The respondents were asked to choose among "very trustworthy," "somewhat trustworthy," "little trustworthy," and "not at all trustworthy." For simplicity of presentation, figure 7.1 divides the responses into the two positive options versus the two negative options.

29. Hondurans were found to have surprisingly positive views toward Cuba—surprising because Honduras is considered to be a conservative nation with little that would bind it to Cuba. Closer examination reveals, however, that Hondurans were also far more positive toward the United States and Mexico than were the people of any other nation in the region, indicating that for this item, Hondurans used a different "metric" than did respondents in other nations. If one corrects for this overly positive evaluation by subtracting from the scores for each nation their overall mean score for all nations, then one finds that Hondurans, too, gave a negative evaluation of Cuba, with El Salvador giving an even more negative score. Even Nicaragua's scores are negative, but only slightly so. Hence, the anomaly of Hondurans' highly positive rating is explained by the differences in the metric used rather than any substantive disparities.

30. The question asked was: "Do you think that the government of Cuba is very responsible, somewhat responsible, a little irresponsible, or very irresponsible?" For simplicity of presentation, the chart shows only the overall percentage evaluation of the nation.

31. Note that the Costa Rican survey did not include a self-evaluation item on this dimension.

32. The Honduran sample was comprised of only eighteen respondents.

33. Respondents were asked if they could identify the leader of the Soviet Union, the U.S. secretary of state, and the number of representatives in their national legislature. In the case of the Guatemala survey, which took place after the collapse of the Soviet Union, we accepted Yeltsin or Gorbachov as the leader of "Russia, the former Soviet Union."

34. It is unclear whether such support was also provided to guerrilla groups in Guatemala and Honduras. No doubt, as researchers gain access to security files in the former Soviet Union (and perhaps, one day to Castro's Cuba), this issue will become clearer.

35. "La Cooperación del Banco Nacional de Comercio Exterior con Centroamérica," *Revista de Comercio Exterior*, supplement (April 1991): 5.

36. Several other items in the questionnaire measured religiosity, such as a scale of religious fundamentalism, but the item used here seemed to work the best.

37. This measure has been labeled "political support-alienation." Its five-item administration in this survey included pride in the system, belief in the fairness of trials, respect for the system, degree to which the system protects basic rights, and belief in the need to support the system. Further discussion of this scale is contained in Mitchell A. Seligson, "On the Measurement of Diffuse Support: Some Evidence from Mexico," *Social Indicators Research* 12 (January 1983): 1-24.

38. These liberties include the right to vote, run for office, and exercise free speech. The items are discussed in Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth, "The Political Culture of Authoritarianism in Mexico: A Reevaluation," *Latin American Research Review* 19, no. 1 (January 1984): 106-24.

39. The negative sign of the beta weight shows that greater age is associated with lower support for trade with Cuba.