

3/7/90

Dear Charles,

Herewith a copy of James' Latin America. When I spoke to Jerry about it I thought it was the first edition, which I'd used on OSS. It is one I bought later.

My second assignment in OSS was in the Latin America Division. I was not a Latin Americanist. They wanted me because of my investigative reporting and expertise in Nazi cartels. One of the division's executives had edited CLICK magazine when I did the cartel work. (He was, in fact, a Harvard man, major in music. He rescued what is now WGMS as its manager and part owner and later was manager of the National Symphony.)

I had to get better knowledge of Latin America pretty fast. The academic Latin Americanists in the division recommended James' book as then the best. I think that for the period it covers is may still be very good.

This reminds me of a bit of unpublished history that may be of interest to some students or faculty.

My expertise was wanted for the preparation of the conference of the American states at Chapultepec, Mexico preparatory to the organizational meeting of the UN in San Francisco. The question was the admission of Argentina, then under the Peron dictatorship and heavily influenced by the Nazis. I was in charge of the economic part. The finished work was for Nelson Rockefeller's ~~use~~ use at that conference. He was an undersecretary or assistant secretary. When the assignment came to our division, it was U.S. policy to oppose Argentina's admission as Nazi-dominated. At the conference, however, Rockefeller made policy by refusing to use our study and refusing to oppose Argentina's admission.

After that conference State reverted to the position Rockefeller had, without authorization, overturned. So, we were put to work again to update it and because the economic part had been done I was put in charge of the military part.

But after a few days, I stopped to think <sup>about</sup> it and decided that opposing Argentina's admission after supporting it, which I recall as the de facto situation, was bad policy. I was certain that it would be greeted with the cry of "Yankee Imperialism." I asked to be relieved of my responsibilities and I was but I did, informally, provide some services when the scholars could not. Like scrounging around and borrowing microfilm readers informally.

When the job was finished it was published as our Blue Book <sup>on</sup> Argentina.

My analysis was quite correct. There was the hue and cry I'd said we'd hear, of Yankee imperialism.

and despite U.S. opposition, Argentina was admitted to the UN.

Logically, one would have expected this to bring me kudos. It did not. It had the opposite effect.

Who was this upstart youngster telling the top of the State Department that their policy decision was against U.S. interests was the apparent attitude.

Going back to James' book, there came a time when the Paraguay desk was vacant. I was assigned to it until a permanent replacement was found. That was during a revolution by part of the army. The army then had a fairly large democratic wing and it opposed the dictatorship that preceded Stroessner's. The dictator was Hecto Morinigo. I returned to James quickly. The first sentence of his Paraguay chapter impressed me so much I recalled it verbatim except for a single word in telling Jerry about it.

U.S. policy was not anti-Morinigo, alas, as it was not anti-Stroessner.

I think students can learn much about Paraguay and Paraguayans from that chapter. Some of its history is close to unique.

Best wishes, Harold Weisberg

*Harold*