

Willbanks relates how this warning was understood but dismissed by the Nixon administration, which was driven by the same misplaced sense of confidence that characterized the entire American war effort in Southeast Asia. Subsequently, as Abrams had anticipated, domestic political pressure pushed the troop withdrawals to the speed of an avalanche, limiting the options available to U.S. policy makers attempting to redeem its pledges to its ally. Efforts to strengthen the internal fabric of the Republic of Vietnam were derailed by its own leaders, whose misplaced confidence in continued U.S. support led them to reject any reform that might come at the expense of their own power. The parallel attempt to rebuild the republic's armed forces also foundered as the U.S. military sought to recast them in its own image but without its resources. Willbanks shows that Abrams and Richard M. Nixon were driven to conceal these failures of Vietnamization by selling the at best mixed results of the battles of An Loc and Lam Son 719 as unalloyed testaments to its success. When its further failures could no longer be concealed, administration officials shifted the blame for its inability to sustain the existence of the Republic of Vietnam onto the shoulders of its Vietnamese ally, the American news media, the administration's antiwar critics, and a war-weary Congress. Vietnamization could not save the Republic of Vietnam, but it did provide a plethora of scapegoats that diverted responsibility for the loss of America's longest war away from Nixon himself.

Abandoning Vietnam is a reliable, painstakingly thorough, yet eminently readable narrative account of the American decisions that led to the abandonment of its Vietnamese ally. Only in its concluding section does it err by offering several if-only counterfactual observations better left unsaid. For example, why suggest that Vietnamization might have had a better chance of success if Nguyen Van Thieu had introduced internal reforms earlier when those he did introduce were inadequate and when history tells us that authoritarian regimes such as his rarely address the concerns of the masses until the peasants are at the gate. *Abandoning Vietnam* is nonetheless the finest account to date of American military and political policy from the aftermath of the Tet Offensive to the

"fall" of Saigon. As such, this book should be considered required reading by all students of the American War in Vietnam, whether they are in the classroom, the newsroom, the sitting room, or the war room.

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The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War. By Greg Grandin. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. xviii, 311 pp. Cloth, \$57.00, ISBN 0-226-30571-6. Paper, \$22.00, ISBN 0-226-30572-4.)

The names of José Angel Icó, Alfredo Cucul, and Mamá Maquin do not readily come to mind when one imagines the Cold War in Latin America. *The Last Colonial Massacre* places these indigenous Guatemalans on the front lines of a very real and violent local articulation of what too many have seen as an abstract or cold duel pitting global ideologies against each other. Its author, Greg Grandin, boldly and compellingly reinterprets the Cold War as "the politicization and internationalization of everyday life and familiar encounters" (p. 17).

Guatemala's Cold War highlighted how forays into social solidarity exposed the contradictions of the liberal state. To be sure, conflicts over land had always existed. But mid-century modernization ideology, and especially the immediate post-World War II discrediting of dictators, encouraged peasant and working-class activists to seek justice and security through an open state modeled somewhat after U.S. democracy. In Guatemala, the decade following 1944 brought to power elected reformers Juan José Arévalo and Jacobo Arbenz, and Q'eqchi'-Mayans took a risk by siding with these governments against local planters. The gamble did not pay off. After the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) led a counterrevolution in 1954, a military-planter-Washington alliance reversed all reforms, and the Guatemalan state went on to massacre over two hundred thousand people in the next forty years.

"Cold War terror," Grandin notes, "broke the link between freedom and equality" (p. xiv). Operation Cleanup in 1966, designed by

U.S. officials, permanently turned the Guatemalan state into a tool of social control. The massacre in the village of Panzós in 1978 was a turning point in this process. The killing of at least thirty-five Q'eqchi's sapped all life from the belief that the state would be an arbiter of justice. Reformist movements once run by Marxist-nationalist students and intellectuals turned into identity-based movements that sought to overthrow the liberal state and its fair-skinned, Spanish-speaking leadership.

The Last Colonial Massacre counters post-Cold War—and especially post-9/11—triumphalism. It builds upon impressive work done on the Guatemala revolution by Piero Gleijeses and many others, on peasant resistance by Jeffrey Gould, and on the U.S. role in priming the pump for Latin American violence by Martha Huggins.

For his contribution, Grandin impressively mined Guatemala's notoriously frustrating archives and interviewed more than seventy-five individuals. The scarcity of documents on peasants prevents the telling of comprehensive stories, but the author carefully parses through the conjectures, contradictions, and inaccuracies of his interviewees.

Those expecting a geographically and thematically balanced synthesis of Latin America during the Cold War will be disappointed by the focus on Guatemala, indigenous activism, and state violence. The introduction and conclusion do place Guatemala within broader patterns such as U.S. counterinsurgency training and red-baiting by local politicians. In addition, the book does not always convince that Guatemala was typical of the Cold War—its ethnic division, grinding poverty, and dependence on Washington, among others, were unusually sharp. Nevertheless, *The Last Colonial Massacre* paints a richly detailed, humane, and passionately subversive portrait of inspiring reformers tragically redefined by the Cold War as enemies of the state.

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Race for Sanctions: African Americans against Apartheid, 1946–1994. By Francis Njubi Nesbitt. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press,

2004. xiv, 217 pp. \$39.95, ISBN 0-253-34232-5.)

Francis Njubi Nesbitt's *Race for Sanctions* details a most significant chapter in the long-standing transnational relationship between African Americans and black South Africans that began in the nineteenth century. It is an important study primarily because it is the first comprehensive published account of the successful mobilization of African Americans to move an anti-apartheid agenda from the margins of American foreign policy in the 1940s to its very center by the mid-1980s. Its central focus on African Americans distinguishes the book from Robert Massie's exhaustive *Loosing the Bonds* (1997), which preoccupied itself primarily with predominantly white institutions and individuals.

Nesbitt aims to show that the American anti-apartheid movement

emerged from the black internationalist politics of the 1940s, survived the anticommunist crusades and the decline of white liberal support in the 1950s and 1960s, and reemerged as a black-led interracial movement in the 1980s. (p. vii)

He begins with the central role of the leftist, anticolonial Council on African Affairs (CAA) in inaugurating the American anti-apartheid movement and ends with the persistent, increasingly effective efforts of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and TransAfrica, the premier black lobby for Africa and the Caribbean. These two organizations eventually spearheaded the free South Africa movement, a diverse consortium of anti-apartheid organizations and individuals that eventually succeeded in its main objectives of punitive economic sanctions against South Africa and the divestment of American corporations and universities from the South African economy. This unprecedented ground swell of activity, in conjunction with similar movements in many other countries, complemented the fierce internal domestic resistance of black South Africans themselves and eventually led to South Africa's first democratically elected government in 1994.

We are indebted to Nesbitt for illuminating this powerful story, but the study has some lim-

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