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## Op-Ed

### Too Little Ambition: Canada in the Hemisphere

Peter Hakim

What is wrong with Canadian policy in the hemisphere? Is Canada neglecting Latin America and the Caribbean? Has Ottawa lost its influence in the region? Does Canada need to revitalize its relationships in the Americas? A recent conference held jointly by the Canadian Institute for International Affairs and FOCAL suggested that these questions all warranted affirmative answers.

Yet, from the US perspective, Canada's challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean appear benign. While anti-Americanism is rife, it is hard to find any anti-Canadian sentiment in the region. To the contrary, Canada is widely appreciated and trusted. Most Latin Americans welcome Canadian involvement in regional affairs. And, whatever problems it faces in Latin America and the Caribbean, Ottawa has the resources and time to devote to them. It is not consumed by a stalemated war and myriad collateral issues—nor does its domestic politics stymie virtually any substantial policy change. In dealing with Latin America, Canada has far greater freedom of choice and action than does the United States.

Moreover, Canada is doing a lot of things right. Disputes with Brazil over beef imports and unfair competition in the airplane business have been largely resolved. Canadian trade and investment is expanding at a healthy pace. For some time now, Canada has sustained a significant, highly regarded aid program in the Americas. It is hard not to be impressed by the quality of Canada's representatives in inter-American organizations and its ambassadors in Latin America and the Caribbean. What then are Canadians worried about?

Although Ottawa is not the culprit, the discouraging trends in hemispheric affairs are a reason for concern. The recent uptick aside, Latin America's economies have been listless for many years. Social and political tensions have worsened in many countries, and democratic progress may be at jeopardy in some. Key Canadian priorities on the hemispheric agenda have been put on ice. Negotiations toward the Free Trade Area of the America are paralyzed—and the inter-American Democratic Charter, approved in 2001, has been shelved. Last year's Summit of the Americas in Argentina was singularly unproductive.

Compounding these setbacks, US-Latin America ties are at a low point. Relations among Latin American nations are also strained. South America's two free trade areas—the Andean Community and the Mercosur—are foundering. Hugo Chávez' virulent campaign against Washington has aggravated hemispheric conflicts and complicated the operations of regional organizations. How different the environment

was in April 2001, at the Quebec City Summit, which many consider a high water mark of inter-American relations.

Still, even if it is not to blame, Canada could surely be doing more to remedy these unhappy developments. Too little ambition may be the core of Ottawa's problem in Latin America and the Caribbean.

At the conference, former Prime Minister Joe Clark highlighted two critical sources of Canadian influence in the hemisphere: (1) the country's close US ties, which gives Ottawa continuing access to Washington officials and elevates its importance in Latin America and the Caribbean and (2) Canada's ability and willingness to act on its own, in accord with its own interests and principles, even in opposition to Washington. The Prime Minister also emphasized how much Canada has at stake in Latin America—not only economically and politically, but in terms of its national identity as a country committed to sustained and effective participation in global and regional affairs.

Under current circumstances, no one should expect Canada even minimally to reshape US decision-making in Latin America. Bush and his advisors are focused elsewhere and, even if they were inclined to act, US domestic politics stand in the way of change (on issues like migration, agricultural protection, anti-drug policy, and Cuba). Canada's contribution has to come mainly from its own initiative. And if Canadians want to have a greater influence on inter-American affairs, they will have to work harder at it and invest more of their resources in the effort.

Canada already plays a central role in the Organization of American States and other regional institutions—but it could do a great deal more. After all, aside from Canada, multilateralism does not today have many powerful friends in the hemisphere. The tensions in inter-American relations make multilateral action all the more important, but at the same time they make it far more difficult. With its widely recognized talent for multilateral initiative, Ottawa surely does not need anyone's advice on what it could do to exert greater authority and influence in regional institutions. But taking on some senior leadership roles in those institutions would surely help.

It is vital that Canada stick with the substantial commitment it has made to Haiti. Nothing will be accomplished in Haiti unless (1) the international community stays engaged over the long term (*i.e.*, some 20 years or more) and (2) international efforts are directed to the full range of Haiti's needs: fostering economic development, providing security, and strengthening both public institutions and the private sector. Canada is contributing on all counts, and may help pave the way for Washington to re-engage more forcefully as well. Haiti provides an example of what Canada can accomplish in hemispheric affairs when it makes a decisive effort, and puts its resources and political energies behind it.

It would be natural for Canada to enhance its involvement in the English speaking Caribbean, where its ties are deep and longstanding. This is a vulnerable region that is under enormous stress. It is searching for ways to adjust to global economic changes, and deal with multiple and growing crime

and security problems. It will almost surely require added financing, but Canada could play a valuable role in a set of countries that has become wary and distrustful of the United States.

Beyond Haiti and other Caribbean states, several Latin American countries would also welcome Canadian security assistance—particularly those countries (like Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico) where US security aid has been curtailed because they refused to waive the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court for US nationals. Like any security related activity, it would be expensive, but it would also have a high payoff, for Canada and the region. And it is a good bet that Washington would embrace this initiative. Most countries in the hemisphere are also eager to forge free trade arrangements with Canada, but Ottawa, puzzlingly, has not signed a free trade deal for nearly five years.

Canadian authorities could also do a good deal more to strengthen links with political leaders and senior officials in such troubled countries as Venezuela, Bolivia, and Cuba. While the three countries represent markedly different challenges, all of them are sources of division and conflict in hemispheric relation. US communication with all three is limited, much of it by legal restrictions. Canada cannot represent or substitute for the United States. But, it can put itself in position to play a constructive part in addressing some of the hemisphere's most difficult and potentially dangerous situations.

These are only some of the initiatives that might emerge from a more robust Canadian foreign policy in the hemisphere. None of them requires a sharp change in direction. But they will require more resources, a clearer strategy, and more concerted attention. And a more ambitious agenda. ■

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Peter Hakim is President of the Inter-American Dialogue.

## Op-Ed Beyond *El Muro*

Carlos A. Rosales

Congressional approval of initiatives that severely tighten immigration laws in the US threaten to distance that country from traditional Latin American allies. Moreover, the Republican-sponsored proposals have sparked massive mobilizations that risk important GOP gains among Hispanic voters.

The Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act, sponsored by Rep. James Sensenbrenner, R-WI, was approved by the House of Representatives in December. Provisions include making all illegal immigrants felons, criminalizing all those who hire or help undocumented migrants, and building a 1,200 km fence along the US-Mexico border.

Much of the attention focused on the construction of the wall—or *El Muro*—along the border. Proponents argue that it will stop the flood of illegal migrants into US territory. Critics denounced it as an act of hypocrisy. They contend that while Washington preaches its neighbours on the virtues of open markets and regional cooperation, US lawmakers want to erect walls along the border.

### CANADA

Canada's Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced a deal with the United States on softwood lumber exports on April 27, 2006. This deal, supported by British Columbia, Quebec and Ontario—the major softwood lumber producing provinces—aims to put an end to a longstanding trade dispute between the two countries and the most important irritant in the bilateral relationship between Canada and the US in recent years. This seven-year deal could be renewed if both parties deem it convenient.

Under this deal Canadian softwood lumber producers will have access to the US market with no restrictions imposed neither by the quota system nor by the tariffs in effect until now, insofar as prices remain at the current level. However, it also stipulates that if prices drop, Canadian producers will have to pay an export tax that can go up to 15% depending on the relevance of the price variation. Producers refusing to pay the tax will have to reduce the volume of exports. Canada also negotiated the return of US\$4 billion (of the US\$5 billion) in unfair duties collected by the US from Canadian producers.

The Liberal Party (LP) and the New Democratic Party (NDP) called the deal a bad one. They stated that it benefits American producers to the detriment of Canadian ones and expressed concern over the disregard to existing trade agreements and rulings in favour of Canada.

Not surprisingly, the issue generated a heated debate in and outside the United States. Since the House of Representatives approved the Sensenbrenner Bill, pro-immigrant groups have staged major demonstrations in more than 100 US cities.

The Washington, D.C.-based Latino Coalition and other Hispanic groups around the country strongly rejected the legislation. They dismiss it as “a cheap display of partisan politics,” and as an effort to appease anti-immigration hardliners in the Republican Party.

The Senate began debating immigration reform last month. At stake is a compromise bill that would provide a means for many of the estimated 12 million undocumented migrants in the US to become citizens. Senate leaders have stated so far that final legislation will not include the felony provision.

### Giving Diplomacy a Chance

Passage of the Sensenbrenner Bill touched a nerve in several Latin American capitals. It became a tough foreign policy challenge—a newer twist on the old issue of illegal immigration. It unified several countries against it, and galvanized a common front of distinct actors across the political spectrum within each nation.

Everywhere, opposition forces adopted a fiery anti-American rhetoric to criticize the anti-immigration measures in the US. In some cases, sitting governments had to do the same out of political necessity. For the most part, however, Latin American governments acted with prudence and engaged the US on this issue diplomatically.

Officials from eleven countries (Mexico, Dominican Republic, Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, and Ecuador) met several times to seek common ground to influence US lawmakers. High-level delegations have already lobbied the State Department, Capitol Hill and the White House, hoping to raise awareness of the sensitive nature of the issue.

Latin American leaders would rather look beyond *El Muro* and convince Washington of the importance of immigrant labour for the US economy. Demand for undocumented labour, they argue, is what compels migrants to cross the border into the US.

Rather than building walls, they contend, dealing with illegal immigration requires comprehensive reform. This must include temporary guest-worker programs and allowing illegal immigrants already there to regularize their status.

Latin officials worry about the potential economic impact of dwindling resources coming from the US as remittances, should massive deportations occur. Migrants send over US\$32 billion annually to their relatives south of the border. They also fear likely social strains and its implications for their young democracies.

### Enter “Latino Power”

The Latino Coalition warned in January that if Republicans allowed an “extremist group to control the debate over immigration reform and put partisan rhetoric over real commonsense legislation, [they] will eliminate all the progress achieved by President [George W.] Bush in attracting Hispanics into the GOP.”

What began as open support by the White House of draconian measures on immigration has slowly mutated into timid support for temporary guest-worker programs and legalization. No doubt, this change of heart is related to electoral politics.

A recent Washington Post/ABC-News poll revealed that 61% of Americans preferred the legalization of undocumented workers than their deportation. Even more revealing, a Manhattan Institute poll showed that 58% of Republican voters felt the same way.

Electoral politics dictates that perceived anti-immigration fervour—bordering on racism—by Republicans, could have a serious backlash at the ballot box in congressional elections later this year—and in advance of 2008.■

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## Bridging the Ideological Divide: Cuban Doctors for Caribbean Recognition

Anthony P. Maingot

Since its independence in 1902, Cuba's relations with the rest of the Caribbean have been varied and occasionally off-and-on. While all the Central American republics recognized the new Republic of Cuba in 1902 and Haiti in 1904, the first English-speaking countries to follow were Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados in 1972. It was fundamentally a symbolic gesture intended to assert the sovereign independence of the newly minted nations. The context included the very evident pressures and hostilities on the part of the US. There were virtually no trade or other material interests involved. Other Caribbean countries came much later: St. Lucia and Grenada in 1979, St. Vincent in 1992, Belize in 1994, Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts & Nevis after 1994.

During the Cold War years, Cuba's involvement tended to be more party-to-party than state-to-state. In Jamaica the relations were with Michael Manley's People's National Party (PNP) and in Grenada with Maurice Bishops New Jewel Movement (NJM). Predictably, when both parties were defeated, relations came to an end (in 1982 and 1983, respectively). Jamaica restored relations in 1990 and Grenada in 1999.

Given this very recent and turbulent history of diplomatic relations, one has to note with no small amount of amazement the recent level of Cuban-Caribbean relations. Just as Jamaica has regular meetings with the US on issues of illegal narcotics, people smuggling, money laundering and terrorism, so it has also with Cuba. Yet there is only minimal increase in Cuban-Caribbean trade. What explains the increased prominence of recent Cuban-Caribbean relations?

The explanation lies in the area Joseph S. Nye, Jr. calls “soft power,” specifically Cuba's export of education and health services. Cuban exchanges and medical scholarships have expanded considerably since 2001-2002 (see Table 1). Two specific cases provide greater focus to Cuban

technical/medical assistance in the Caribbean. Most dramatic by far is the case of Haiti, a country which in 2002 had 2.5 doctors per 10,000 inhabitants compared to Cuba's 59.6. There were 554 Haitians on scholarships in Cuba, 313 of which were studying at the Latin American School of Medicine. Even the French government, eager to see the last of the Jean-Bertrand Aristide regime was at pains to discuss the retention of the Cuban "Health Brigade" (Interview, Patrick Paoli, French Under-Secretary for Caribbean Affairs, 19/01/2005). There is nothing surprising about this given the presence in Haiti of 332 Cuban doctors and 193 "health assistants" who, according to President-Elect René Prével, operate in areas "where even Haitians dare not go" (cited in *Granma Internacional*, 19/04/2006). Cuba's Minister of Foreign Affairs informed the Council of Ministers of the Association of Caribbean States on February 12, 2004 on the achievements for the years 1999-2003:

- 5 million medical appointments
- 45,000 deliveries
- 59,000 surgeries
- 370,000 children immunized
- 2,169 medical devices repaired
- 247 Haitian medical students in classes taught by Cuban professors in Haiti
- 20 veterinarians working with Haitian staff

Most dramatic, perhaps, has been the Cuban participation in the fight against HIV-AIDS in Haiti. AIDS is the number one cause of all adult deaths in Haiti, the island with the highest incidence of AIDS in the hemisphere. Because AIDS is "generalized" and heterosexually transmitted, its legacies are decreasing life expectancies, massive numbers of orphans as well as an epidemic of opportunistic ailments such as tuberculosis. Cuba, with the lowest incidence of HIV-AIDS in the hemisphere, brought its considerable experience with domestically produced generic anti-retroviral drugs, screening of blood donations and public education to the Haitian campaign ("The Fight Against AIDS in Cuba and Haiti," *MEDIC Review*, viii, March-April 2006, pp. 26-30).

It is not yet clear just how much of a dent the Cuban intervention has made in this Haitian pandemic but the political payoff is evident. "In Haiti," said René Prével, "they say that after God, there are the Cuban doctors." (AFP, 14/04/2006). It is a plausible assumption that since Prével initiated the Cuban-Haitian medical program during his first administration (1996-2001), that this contributed substantially to his election to a second term in 2006.

In April 2006 Prével paid an official visit to Cuba and as would be repeated time and again with other Caribbean missions, he was accompanied by 60 Haitians on scholarships to the Latin American School of Medicine and 40 patients under the auspices of "Operation Miracle" (see *FOCAL POINT*, March 2006) going to Cuba's Pando Ferrer Ophthalmologic Institute.

The second case involves Dominica, an island with much better health and economic standards than Haiti. Where life expectancy in Haiti in 2000 was 56 years, in Dominica it was 80, the same as in Cuba. In 2004, the Dominica Guild of Cuban Graduates celebrated 25 years of Cuban scholarships. Prime

Minister Roosevelt Skerrit—who, like Prime Minister Patrick Manning of Trinidad & Tobago, goes to Cuba for his medical attention—noted that Cuba "has done more than any other to establish and strengthen the bonds of friendship and cooperation, so vitally necessary for the maintenance of regional cooperation and integration" (Dominica Guild of Cuban Graduates, *25 Years of Cuban Scholarships*, Roseau, 2004). The Guild had two economists make an approximate calculation of the economic impact of the Cuban scholarship program: a total of US\$19 million to graduate 50 medical doctors from a 6-year program.

Aside from the large number of CARICOM students in Cuba, in 2002 1,192 Cuban doctors were serving in those countries. Cuba appears to be well equipped to sustain this level of medical "internationalism." It has a hemisphere high of 6 doctors per 1,000 population and they are all, in the strictest sense of the word, state employees. Starting in 1984 Cuba initiated the system of family medicine, with doctors and nurses living in the neighbourhoods they serve. It is calculated that 30,000 (*i.e.*, 45.6% of all doctors on the island) are now neighbourhood doctors. Their fundamental mission is to practice "preventive medicine" (A. Ramírez Márquez y G. Mesa Ridel, "El Proceso de Desarrollo del Sistema Nacional de Salud de Cuba," *Revista Bimestre Cubana*, No. 16, enero-junio, 2002, pp. 152-161).

## Conclusion

Contrary to the era of the Cold War when Cuba tended to have mostly party-to-party relations with radical regimes in the Caribbean, no such ideological prerequisites under-gird the Cuba-Caribbean relations today. There are no significant movements in the Caribbean advocating a Cuban-type system and certainly none of them could require—as Cuba does—that their doctors refrain from private practice. A Cuban-style health sector is inconceivable in free enterprise-oriented CARICOM.

What exists is an exchange which is hardly symmetrical (given what it costs Cuba) but which appears to satisfy all parties involved: the CARICOM countries (especially Haiti) receive invaluable assistance in the health field; Cuba

secures some relief from the isolation it has suffered for so long. The Cuban contribution to this exchange is substantial, CARICOM's is modest. No serious Caribbean statesman believes that these small states can do more than make a moral and geopolitical point about today's realities.

In a way, these exchanges have brought the type of asymmetric cooperation that exists elsewhere in the world (*viz.*, US-China, US-Vietnam) to the Caribbean region. And, the exchanges will certainly continue. As this is being written, a large delegation composed of Ministers, students and patients

under "Operation Miracle" from Antigua and Barbuda was heading towards Cuba (*Antigua Sun*, 20/04/2006).■

Anthony P. Maingot is Professor Emeritus,  
Florida International University

Table 1

Foreign Scholarships Offered by Cuba for Academic Year 2001/2002

Country/SCS Sub-groups	MINPUH		LASM	Prep.	MINTED		NISR INSPESES	MINED		MINCULT		Total
	Tert. Level	Sec. Level			Centres	Sec. Level		Pre- Univ.	Tert. Level	Sec. Level		
CARICOM Mbrs.												
Antigua & Barbuda	30			5	53	1	8		0	0	0	97
Bahamas	69	3		0	82	0	0	3		0	0	157
Barbados	11			0	56	0	10	1		0	0	78
Belize	9	2	40	0	73	0	1	1		0	0	126
Dominica	63	3		3	212	6	2	1		0	0	290
Grenada	28			2	57	0	9	4		0	0	100
Guyana	11			4	31	0	5			0	0	51
Haiti	8	6	313	1	178	9	39			0	0	554
Jamaica	106	19		15	171	0	25	1	4	0	0	341
St. Kitts & Nevis	22			0	46	0	2			0	0	70
St. Lucia	71	1		9	165	2	6	1		0	0	255
St. Vincent & Grenadines	25			6	87	1		3		0	0	122
Suriname	3			0	11	0				0	0	14
Trinidad & Tobago	7			4	16	0	8			0	0	35
Total CARICOM	463	34	353	49	1238	19	115	15	4	0	0	2290

Legend:

Tert. Level = Tertiary Level  
Sec. Level = Secondary Level  
Prep. = Preparatory  
Pre-Univ. = Pre-University

MINPUH = Ministry of Public Health  
LASM = Latin American School of Medicine  
MINTED = Ministry of Tertiary Education  
NISR = National Institute for Sport and Recreation

INSPESES = International School for Physical Education and Sport  
MINED = Ministry of Education  
MINCULT = Ministry of Culture

Source: Norman Girvan, "Cuba, The Caribbean and the ACS: A Note," (Wilton Park, UK, Conference Paper, October 18-20, 2002).

## Op-Ed

### The Problem is not Nationalization: It's How Morales Did It

Vladimir Torres

When Evo Morales announced on May 1 that his government was nationalizing Bolivia's hydrocarbons, no one was more surprised than the leaders of Brazil, Argentina and Spain. If the differences within what is still grouped as the "Left" were brushed aside by many analysts, well, think again: Morales' hardcore old-fashioned State-ism has alienated his friends, first and foremost.

Bolivia faces huge challenges, directly or indirectly derived from its social inequalities and economic predicaments, and certainly the immediate increased share of revenue—estimated at US\$300-400 million for this year—obtained through the nationalization decree, could help, but, at what cost?

#### BOLIVIA

On May 1, President Evo Morales announced the nationalization of Bolivia's oil and gas resources. According to Decree 28701, all companies, refineries and pipelines on the country's territory will henceforth have to belong to the state company Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales Bolivianos (YPFB) at a minimum of 51%. The Bolivian state also plans to increase the share of taxes and royalties to 82% of the sector's total revenue from the 50% in effect this past year.

Morales described the nationalization measure as "nationalization without confiscation." The President nonetheless backed his announcement by deploying troops to the main production sites. According to a 2004 referendum, over 92 % of Bolivians supported nationalization, an important segment of which has been in support of a more radical "confiscation without compensation."

Morales gave 180 days to the 26 foreign companies directly affected by the decree to make arrangements with the Bolivian government or leave the country. Petrobras (Brazil) and Repsol YPF (Spain), each controlling 25% of gas reserves in Bolivia, are the most affected by the takeover and have initiated talks with the Morales government.

The decree has triggered speculations about foreign investments to Bolivia in a context of high energy prices and demand coming from the United States, China and India.

The Bolivian government has the sovereign right to nationalize the country's natural resources. But the sad paradox of one of the poorest populations in Latin America sitting on top of the second largest reserves of natural gas in South America is very likely to remain as such, given the chosen course of action. In the short term, Bolivia has neither the technological, managerial nor financial capacity to run such a complex industry. So, where is the assistance on those three areas to come from?

The main foreign investors in the energy sector in Bolivia are Brazil's Petrobras and Spain's Repsol-YPF (with Argentine participation). Their substantial investments so far have contributed to doubling the amount of proven Bolivian reserves, while ensuring the supply to the main markets of Southern Brazil and Argentina. For further development of the industry to occur and markets to be diversified, massive investments in infrastructure are required.

The energy picture in South America is rather complicated. Brazil relies on Bolivian gas, but has recently reached oil self-sufficiency (ANBA, 21/04/2006), and within two years could be exploiting its own gas reserves, lessening the dependence on Bolivia. Argentina buys Bolivian gas mostly to compensate for the decrease in its own reserves and as a substitute for other fuels (fuel oil and coal), but also to resell to Chile—a country in much need of imported gas, but with no diplomatic ties with Bolivia. Peru also has considerable unexploited natural gas reserves, yet another reason to closely monitor its current political uncertainties.

Bolivia has no direct way of exporting its natural gas without going through its neighbours. Access to the Pacific would be essential: gaining it through Chile—albeit the shortest and most reasonable route from an economic viability perspective—is unlikely given the political implications; a projected gas pipeline to the southern port of Ilo in Peru, that would also demand considerable investments in the port's infrastructure, was in the early stages of planning, with the participation of Repsol-YPF, among others, as the main stakeholders in a joint venture.

Even if the nationalized Bolivian industry would find the way to carry out a project of such scale, gaining the coveted maritime access critical for opening markets, these could not be taken for granted. One of the issues that triggered the mobilizations that ended former Bolivian President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada's tenure was his announced plans to sell natural gas to Mexico and the US.

During his electoral campaign Morales promised his most radical constituents that he would indeed nationalize the hydrocarbons—and all the natural resources—whilst reassuring foreign companies and the markets that he would negotiate in good faith. On a pre-election trip to Brasilia by invitation from President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who takes pride in being a shrewd negotiator, Morales committed not to touch Petrobras' interests. Soon after being elected, on a visit to Madrid, he gave similar reassurances to the Spanish government.

With his unexpected unilateral announcement and the military occupation of oil facilities on May 1, Morales single-handedly wiped aside not only the hard-to-win trust of foreign investors, but the hope of negotiations within a clear framework based on the rule of law. His actions all but closed the door on the many potential business models that could ensure both Bolivia's sovereign designs for its natural resources and an attractive and profitable investment climate for foreign companies. Future joint ventures for infrastructure-investments, new schemes for profit sharing, commercialization and new markets initiatives, are all part of a long list of options that will not make it to the discussion tables.

An emergency "Energy Summit" held on May 4 between the Brazilian, Argentine, Bolivian and Venezuelan Presidents ended with a rather vague declaration "accepting" Bolivia's sovereign decision and guaranteeing supplies, while leaving all further details (including pricing) to be negotiated bilaterally. Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez announced that Bolivia would now become part of the "Gas Pipe of the South," a Pharaoh-scale US\$20 billion project, with a 12,000 kilometres extension. But, the fact is that in the absence of mutually beneficial economic agreements between South American countries, political affinities alone will not deliver the touted integration anytime soon.

What is at stake in the Bolivian nationalization goes far beyond the dichotomy between national and foreign interests, as these, if intelligently managed, could be one and the same. What seems to be prevailing in the current situation is an ideological stance. The revolutionary intransigence shown by Morales, might please the likes of Chávez and Castro, but represents a head-on collision with the economic long-term rationale that could help Bolivia truly manage its own destiny. ■

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## Abstracts

### Strengthening of the Ibero-American Conference: Likely Impact on the Inter-American System and Canada's influence in the Americas

*Florencia Jubany*

This paper explores potential implications of the reinvigoration of the Ibero-American Conference for the Inter-American system and Canada's projection in the region.

### Spain's Policy and Strategies Towards Latin America

*Carlos Malamud*

This paper analyzes Spanish policy towards Latin America, highlighting the existence of a tendency to put relations with the region as a whole ahead of bilateral relations.

### The Ibero-American Conference: Prospects for Future Development

*Joaquín Roy*

This paper explores the evolution of the Ibero-American Conference and argues that its success will depend on the acceptance of Latin American countries to the process.

### Spanish Investment in Latin America

*Pablo Toral*

This paper examines the behaviour of Spanish investment in Latin America since the 1990s, particularly in the banking, telecommunications, public utilities and oil and gas sectors.

### A Study on the Relationship between Canadian Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian State

*Julieta Uribe*

This paper explores the history of and prospects for the relationship between Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian government.

### Where are We Going? Canada and Mexico Looking Beyond 2006. Conference Report

*Olga Abizaid*

The report presents the proceedings of discussions on the Canada-Mexico relationship. The report also includes information on the political platforms of Mexico's main political parties.

## Upcoming Events

### Conference of Montreal

The 12<sup>th</sup> Conference of Montreal will be held on June 5-8 2006. For this year's event of the International Economic Forum of the Americas, FOCAL is co-organizing the final day plenary session, under the title of: *The Impact of "Populism" on Social, Political, and Economic Development in the Hemisphere*. FOCAL Executive Director Eduardo del Buey will chair the session, and confirmed panelists include Former Bolivian President Jorge Quiroga, UN-ECLAC Director Inés Bustillo, and Inter-American Dialogue President Peter Hakim.

For more information visit [www.conferenceofmontreal.com](http://www.conferenceofmontreal.com)

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