

# WORLD POLITICS

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## CONTENTS

- Iran's Islamic Revolution  
in Comparative Perspective *Said Amir Arjomand* 383
- Revolutionary Change in the  
Third World: Recent Soviet  
Reassessments *Elizabeth K. Valkenier* 415
- The U.S.S.R. and Third-World  
Conflicts: Domestic Debate  
and Soviet Policy in the  
Middle East, 1967-1973 *Dina Rome Spechler* 435
- Economic Performance and  
Communist Legitimacy *Stephen White* 462
- REVIEW ARTICLE
- Explaining U.S. Policy toward  
the Caribbean Basin: Fixed  
and Emerging Images *Robert A. Pastor* 483
- The Contributors ii
- Abstracts iii

## THE CONTRIBUTORS

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## ABSTRACTS

### IRAN'S ISLAMIC REVOLUTION IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

By S. A. ARJOMAND

The Islamic Revolution in Iran is analyzed as the latest of the "great revolutions" in a comparative perspective ranging from the early modern European revolutions to fascism. The analysis highlights the neglected importance of reactive elements, communal solidarities, and tradition in a wide variety of revolutions and revolutionary movements. Comparative inferences bring out the serious deficiency of the Marxian theory of revolution as well as of those structural theories of revolution that focus exclusively on the state. By contrast, these inferences underline the significance of ideology, religion, and culture. Finally it is argued that the emergence of a distinct Islamic revolutionary ideology can only be understood as a part of the process of crystallization of the revolutionary ideology in Western Europe and its spread to the rest of the world.

### REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE IN THE THIRD WORLD:

#### RECENT SOVIET REASSESSMENTS

By E. K. VALKENIER

A reexamination of revolutionary processes in the developing countries indicates mounting doubts among Soviet academic specialists that radical third-world policies will redound to the U.S.S.R.'s advantage. The author investigates the following topics: the relationship of socialist orientation to socialism; shortcomings of the vanguard parties; correct foreign and domestic economic policies; the suitability of the Marxist model for Eastern societies; and the evolution of the non-aligned movement. The congruence between these academic discussions and fresh official formulations could give Western analysts and policy makers valuable insights into new Soviet proposals for reducing East-West tensions over events in the third world.

### THE U.S.S.R. AND THIRD-WORLD CONFLICTS:

#### DOMESTIC DEBATE AND SOVIET POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST, 1967-1973

By D. R. SPECHLER

Soviet foreign policy underwent a significant change in orientation in the early 1970s. Emphasis on the pursuit of a new, more constructive relationship with the United States gave way to a primary focus on competition with the U.S. for influence and strategic presence in the third world, and there was a notable reduction of traditional restraints on the conduct of that competition. The article focuses on Soviet policy in the region and the period in which this redirection of policy was first manifested—the Middle East between the June 1967 and the October 1973 wars; it explains this major change by an analysis of the divergent images of the United States and of U.S.-Soviet relations that were held by Soviet elites, and the outcome of conflict among holders of the respective images.

### ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNIST LEGITIMACY

By S. WHITE

Unlike liberal democracies where the legitimacy of government inheres mostly in the process of competitive elections, communist regimes are widely believed to be legitimated mostly by their socioeconomic performance. The marked slowdown in the economic growth of the communist countries, particularly since the late 1970s, has suggested to many scholars that regimes of this kind are likely to experience a "legitimacy crisis" in the relatively near future. Prognoses of this kind are held to be premature and probably misconceived; they overlook the ability of the regimes concerned to maneuver politically and to generate additional support by the development of their consultative capacities. Four such "mechanisms of adaptation" are examined in detail: the electoral mechanism; incorporation into the ruling party; associational incorporation; and letters to party and state bodies and to the press.

# EXPLAINING U.S. POLICY TOWARD THE CARIBBEAN BASIN:

## FIXED AND EMERGING IMAGES

By R. A. PASTOR

To understand the complex developments in the Caribbean Basin and the U.S. response to them, one needs an image, an interpretive framework. A review of the current literature suggests two clear and coherent images: the security thesis, best articulated by the Reagan administration, views the crisis in the region as orchestrated by the Soviet Union, and the U.S. as playing a beneficial role historically and currently; and the neodependency antithesis, more prevalent in the literature, views the U.S. as the major historical and contemporary problem for the region. Scholars, questioning assumptions that underlie the two theses, have contributed insights on the impact of local actors and middle powers on U.S. policy. A new "interactive perspective" is constructed from these insights; it differs from both the other images in viewing the region as composed of actors, not passive objects. Though U.S. power is disproportionate, local actors have other means of leverage, which makes their actions crucial in understanding the patterns and possibilities of U.S. policy.

# Princeton

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