

Journal of Peace Research

<http://jpr.sagepub.com>

Robinson, William I. & Kent Norsworthy 1987. David and Goliath. The US War against Nicaragua. New York: Monthly Review Press. 400 pp. US\$ 11
Journal of Peace Research 1988; 25; 202
DOI: 10.1177/002234338802500214

The online version of this article can be found at:
<http://jpr.sagepub.com>

Published by:
 SAGE Publications

<http://www.sagepublications.com>

On behalf of:



[International Peace Research Institute, Oslo](#)

Additional services and information for *Journal of Peace Research* can be found at:

Email Alerts: <http://jpr.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

Subscriptions: <http://jpr.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

Reprints: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

Permissions: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

Verlag, edition suhrkamp, Neue Folge 1312, pb. DM 28, 649 pp.

For more than ten years, Dieter Senghaas has been trying to derive practical consequences for Third World latecoming countries from the criticism of conventional development theory (that is, modernization theory). The strategic alternative has always been presented as *autocentric development*. But his views on the conditions for such development have changed. Starting from dependencia theory, he focused on the relation to world markets, whether countries associated or dissociated. In his widely acclaimed *The European Experience* (reviewed in *Journal of Peace Research* 1/1986), however, he found that some of the European nineteenth-century latecomers had achieved autocentric development through various strategies of association. In this new collection of essays, these lessons are brought to bear on the present Third World. The main typology is no longer based on the notions of association and dissociation, but on initial social structures and institutional frameworks (pp. 49–51). Other essays deal with the processes of differentiation in the Third World, Third World action in international organizations, military conflicts in the Third World, as well as the question of armaments and development. In one important essay, the authors offer an operationalization (in the form of a composite indicator) of threshold countries, mainly derived from an analysis of present 'Newly Industrializing Countries'. Still, it would be false to criticize Senghaas for having converted to modernization theory. Rather, his systematic research efforts have brought him into the comparative tradition where typologies and contrasts are more important than general conclusions. — Ulrich Menzel has contributed a number of important monographs in connection with Senghaas's research projects. His large and prestigious German doctoral thesis — written before the essays contained in *Europas Entwicklung* — has been made available in Suhrkamp's inexpensive series of paperbacks. It analyses in depth the development experiences of Switzerland 1780–1850, Denmark 1870–1940, Sweden 1800–1913 and Canada 1846–1930, and is well-documented as only a German *Habitulationschrift* can be . . .

LM

Robinson, William I. & Kent Norsworthy 1987. *David and Goliath. The US War against Nicaragua*. New York: Monthly Review Press. 400 pp. US\$ 11,-.

The war in Nicaragua is becoming history and a great variety of books have been published on the topic in the last couple of years in the US. The authors of this book are US citizens who have lived and worked in Nicaragua since 1982. Their access to primary sources, both in the US and in Nicaragua, has made their book a very well documented contribution to the understanding of the Reagan administration's logic as well as the Sandinista reaction in the various phases of the 'low intensity war'. The central theme through the entire book is the low intensity war strategy imposed by the US where political, economic, and psychological warfare are essential, with the military aspect being a distant fourth in many cases. The book reveals interesting perspectives on events taking place in the US, Central America, and Nicaragua simultaneously and explains why the CIA, Department of Defense, National Security Council and other US institutions have never managed to turn the 'contras' into a significant military force. The authors do not pretend to be objective. They have taken a solid stand in the conflict. Their conclusions are very encouraging from the Nicaraguan point of view as the year 1985 is seen as an important turning point of the war in favour of the Sandinistas. Militarily, politically and psychologically, the US and their 'contras' are on the defensive. This is a condensed fact-book which will surprise even those who thought they knew a lot about Central America.

HPB

Schultz, Lars. 1987. *National Security and United States Policy toward Latin America*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 377 pp. USD 13.95.

US policy toward Latin America has reflected a consensus among decisions makers regarding the relationship between instability and US national security. From the 1950s until the 1970s, policy makers disagreed on the causes of instability in Latin America but agreed that once it had occurred, it represented a threat to the United States. Regardless of its cause, instability offered an opportunity for the expansion of communism. Since the 1970s, new voices have challenged this shared conviction, arguing that instability is the necessary cost of progressive change, and that such change is in the long-term best interests of the United States. The emergence of this new group, which has great potential but little actual power, represents a fundamental challenge to traditional US policy. The bulk of Schultz's book