

A Bias for Hope: Essays on Development and Latin America by Albert O. Hirschman

(Yale University Press; 374 pp.; \$12.50/\$3.45)

Richard O'Mara

Albert O. Hirschman makes a strong case for a separateness, of coexistence rather than unity, between the United States and the nations of Latin America: "The difficult stage of development through which they are passing may require that their position toward us be distant and reserved and that the solutions to their problems be emphatically different from ours."

This position is interesting because it was originally set forth by Dr. Hirschman in a 1960 paper. The trumpets had not yet been blown heralding the Alliance for Progress. A half decade of deep United States involvement in Latin America was at hand. The scholar could not have known what was to come. In fact, he was declaring himself opposed to the policy enunciated two years earlier by the then Vice-President Nixon. After that tumultuous trip through Latin America, Nixon advised that the United States "have an *abrazo* for democratic leaders but a formal handshake for dictators."

Mr. Nixon left public life soon afterwards. The Democrats came in to power and seized upon that Nixonian slogan as the point of departure for their policy toward Latin America. It brought us all nothing but disappointment, disillusionment. And now the once bright Alliance lies unglittering in the dust. Mr. Nixon is back. His Latin policy is best defined as one of benign neglect, or even-handed treatment for both dictator and democrat. Who said an old dog can't learn new tricks?

"*Abrazo Versus Coexistence*" is only one of sixteen Hirschman essays in this volume on Latin America and its development. They range through the years from 1954, when he wrote some of his reflections on the pecu-

liar problems economists have in defining the development process (with his experience in Colombia as the solid base from which to spin out his generalizations), to 1970 when, in a piece called "The Search for Paradigms as a Hindrance to Understanding," he counseled against the scholar's tendency to try to explain all—the life, economy, society of a given country—by a single theory or pattern.

The latter essay is a sort of critical review of two books. The first is John Womack's *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution*. The second is James L. Payne's *Patterns of Conflict in Colombia*. Dr. Hirschman prefers the first, and the reason for the preference is important. Womack approached his subject more humbly, sought only to "tell the story" of the Zapatista revolution in Morelos. In telling that story, Dr. Hirschman found that Womack offered deep insight into peasant revolutions everywhere. Payne, on the other hand, "presents us triumphantly (in the first few pages) with the key to the full and complete understanding of the Colombian political system." In the end, Dr. Hirschman concludes, Payne's sense of superiority gets in his way; he saw little, and learned little of Colombia. He has little to teach.

Anyone who has explored the bibliography on Latin American affairs can only sigh in agreement with Dr. Hirschman. There is too much of the Payne scholarship, too much grand theorizing, arrogant presumptuousness, and not enough of the Womack storytelling. Still, it is an interesting position for Dr. Hirschman to be taking. He is, himself, a theorizer. What else is an economist but a creator of patterns?

Latin America is abundant with theorizers in all areas of science. (After all, it costs a lot of money to do experimental work.) What Latin America doesn't have, of course, are enough engineers, physicians, soil specialists, even qualified bus-drivers. These are the people who make development occur. Too often the economist's contribution is to condone what is already occurring, or to complain about shortages for this sector or that.

The economist knows that rational development requires bringing the industrial and agricultural sectors along more or less at an even pace. But though he knows it, he can't stop the inevitable drift of the people to the cities, a migration which gives rise to developmental imbalance. Even the military can't stop it, and in most Latin American countries the military is the most organized, cohesive single force. Economists, especially in Latin America, are much like a group of physicians poring over the body of a dwarf. All are aware of what makes it stunted, but none is able to make it grow. This is not to denigrate economists or their work. It is especially not to denigrate Dr. Hirschman, for he seems possessed of some of that quality he so much admired in Womack: humility. Besides, it is important to know what the problem is, even if for the moment it is impossible to get anything done about it.

Economics is one of the principal preoccupations of development-minded—even patriotic—Latin Americans. Perhaps because it is such an arcane discipline it suggests the promise of a secret key that will change the status quo, a way out of the region's dilemma. So far, it has produced no keys, and with the relentless advance of the area's population running neck and neck with its economic development, the search has grown more desperate.

Despite the desperation, there persists in Latin America a reluctance to accept foreign economic ideologies. Most of the Northern Hemisphere industrial countries gained their economic eminence because

they believed in and adhered to Adam Smith's dictum that "little else is requisite to carry a state to the highest degree of opulence from the lowest barbarism but peace, easy taxes and a tolerable administration of justice." Still, the Southern underdeveloped countries are not now, and never have been, ready to try it.

The statist and centralized tradition could never accommodate real free enterprising, and this has been the cause of a great amount of friction between the Latin states and many an entrepreneur from the United States. Sadly, however, statism has never functioned efficiently nor furthered development in Latin America as it has in, say, the Soviet Union. And herein lies one of the region's major problems. The real failure has been in the political sphere. Leaders have been unable to mobilize the population, to direct it toward rational economic goals and keep the people mobilized over an extended period of time. It almost happened in Peron's Argentina, but there it failed because of the flaws inherent in the regime. Development may proceed in Cuba, but that is by no means certain—if only because of the outside pressures working against it. Chile? That experiment is only beginning.

A Bias for Hope is not a book for beginners or those with a casual interest in Latin America. It proceeds with a heavy tread. Dr. Hirschman is not a sprightly writer. As scholars will, he writes for his colleagues, and most of the essays in this collection are fairly technical. Not all, however. "Second Thoughts on the Alliance for Progress" was written in 1961 for *The Reporter* (a general interest news magazine now extinct) and is a lucid, optimistic piece about the prospects for the Alliance.

This, it will be noted, was written not long after "Abrazo Versus Co-existence," wherein Dr. Hirschman counseled against deep involvement in Latin American social reform. It shows that even this scholar, with his objectivity, was influenced by the general enthusiasm that surrounded the launching of the Alliance.

The Patient as Person by Paul Ramsey

(Yale University Press; 283 pp.; \$10.00)

Peter B. Miller

The Patient as Person, based on Ramsey's Lyman Beecher Lectures on Medical Ethics at Yale University in 1969, contains seven chapters on some of the issues arising from new options made possible by medical progress: the meaning of consent in human experimentation; the confusion regarding the meaning of death; the ethical limits upon caring for the dying in the context of increasing technical ability to save life; the giving and taking of vital organs; the distinction between heart transplantation as an experimental and a therapeutic treatment; and the problem of choosing patients to receive scarce and vital resources.

The Patient as Person, Ramsey says, is a book about ethics written by a Christian ethicist. Yet the issues I have listed are hardly the traditional concerns of religious ethics. The vocabulary of *hesed*, *agape* and *caritas* does not quite fit. Aware of the dissonance, Ramsey offers the theologian's apology that he "will not be embarrassed to use as an interpretive principle the Biblical norm of *fidelity to covenant*, with the meaning it gives to *righteousness* between man and man."

That Ramsey knows that others will *expect* him to be embarrassed is informative, revealing the political dimension of Ramsey's book. Regard for patients as persons, a particular case of regard for men as ends in themselves, is a central tenet of all ethics, not some new discovery. Ramsey focuses on this theme, not to refine or develop an ethical theory but to bring the regard for human beings into the world of modern life where it is too often lost amid complexity.

Though the theologian may talk of men sharing a common ethics, when he enters the world of the physician such ethical community is not

always evident. When Ramsey searches medical issues for that common ethical ground of treating men as ends and not means, he discerns the distinction between therapeutic treatment and research, which primarily benefits persons other than the patient himself—but he finds that distinction losing significance.

Ramsey would be bound to doubt the commonality of ethics after hearing Dr. Christian Barnard declare, when only four attempts to transplant the human heart had been made, that "on the basis of our experimental work and the work of other investigators, we decided that we must now consider heart transplantation as a therapeutic procedure." And if Ramsey were not accustomed to this sort of confrontation, he might be moved to outrage by Dr. Denton Cooley's statement, after the death of one of his patients, that "the happiness and contentment we were able to give her for a period of six to eight weeks justified the operation as therapy."

Ramsey, however, suggests that the task of ethics is not best fulfilled by moral outrage. "Whether performance falls below the stated principles cannot itself be measured except in terms of those same principles of medical ethics stated and generally agreed to." What is important here is more than the respectful and methodological care to venture no comment until informed about how physicians and medical investigators themselves analyze the decisions they face. The ethical concerns Ramsey wishes to keep from receding before the physician are those concerns which the physician has already acknowledged. Ramsey fills out a whole ethic which he traces in the tradition of medicine itself: It is not a consequence-ethics alone, not even