respected the cultural integrity of the world's varied peoples. To dismiss arbitrarily certain culturally honored practices as inhumane is to cast in a new mold the old imperial bias of "civilization" against "the barbarians."
other power that tries to undermine its economic and political independence," and saw no difference between the "noxious Yankee domination" and a "no less noxious 'Soviet' domination."

Ramos Latour, then, had to choose between advancing the larger goals of radical change and the risk of turning power over to those who, like Ché, believed that Marxism-Leninism was the proper path for the Latin American future. He chose the "common ideal."

Cantillo, Ramos Latour, and many others chose honorably but in ways that in the long run undermined their most deeply held beliefs. It cost Ramos Latour his life during the revolutionary struggle; it cost Cantillo years in prison. Their stories illustrate the importance of moral and political choices for all of us, and they illustrate, ably and tragically, the path not taken by Cubans in the 1950s.

**POWER AND THE PEOPLE: EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC OPINION IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, 1897-1921**

**by Robert C. Hilderbrand**

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**Bruce Miroff**

Presidential mastery of public opinion in foreign policy matters usually has been regarded as a characteristic of the cold war era. Robert C. Hilderbrand, an historian at the University of South Dakota, contends that the techniques were developed in the closing years of the nineteenth century, when technological change, overseas expansion, and Progressive ideology compelled presidents to secure broad popular support.

"As the president's interest in popular attitudes increased, so did his efforts to guide and influence them, and one outcome was a clear decline in the public's independence. To an extent unimaginable before the end of the nineteenth century, the executive became a dominant force in the leadership of public opinion; it now exercised subtle control over the efforts of Washington correspondents and employed increasingly sophisticated techniques for directing the public's view of international affairs."

The first major protagonist is William McKinley, whom Hilderbrand portrays as a subtle strategist carefully orchestrating public responses to his administration's plans for conflict with Spain and retention of the Philippines. He devotes considerable attention to McKinley's innovations in handling the press, such as the extensive use of press releases and the establishment of an office for reporters within the White House. Though the portly president's stiff demeanor and drab character never engaged the press and the public as did Teddy Roosevelt's ebullient persona, McKinley comes off, in Hilderbrand's account, as the more important figure in establishing executive sway over the public mind.

Hilderbrand's portrait of McKinley, extensively documented from manuscript sources, is impressive. However, at times he attributes too great omnipotence to McKinley's strategy. When one of McKinley's cabinet members expresses doubts about Spanish guilt in the Maine explosion and a second cabinet member contradicts him the next day, Hilderbrand sees neither disagreement nor disarray within the cabinet. Rather, he explains, the first statement expresses the president's anxiety to downplay the threat of war and the second expresses his concern lest the public become too disposed to absolve the Spaniards.

Theodore Roosevelt and Taft receive briefer treatment than McKinley. The single chapter on Roosevelt is perceptive, although one wishes for fuller coverage of this master self-dramatist. Hilderbrand depicts the Roosevelt administration, despite its brilliance at grabbing headlines, as a step backward in presidential news management. Whereas McKinley moved to routinize and bureaucratize the flow of information from the White House, Roosevelt personalized his relationship with the press in a fashion more typical of nineteenth-century executives. The criticism is odd both conceptually and historically. Important aspects of the presidency have always remained personalized, and the presidents who have handled the press most effectively—e.g., the two Roosevelts and Kennedy—have relied heavily on a personal approach.

William Howard Taft is the aberration in Hilderbrand's narrative. His character and convictions led him to eschew the manipulation of public opinion, and his handling of publicity in such areas as "dollar diplomacy" and the English and French arbitration treaties was so lackluster that his most important foreign policy ventures remained obscure to the public. But Hilderbrand's critical view of Taft suggests an underlying ambivalence in the author's own position. While his narrative focuses on the dangers of successful executive management, Hilderbrand chastises Taft for not managing public opinion so as to win support for a policy (the arbitration treaties) that the author evidently finds admirable. Taft's case raises a question that Hilderbrand never squarely confronts in this book: Are there executive modes of shaping public opinion that can be characterized as genuine leadership rather than management and manipulation?

The fascinating case of Woodrow Wilson draws Hilderbrand's most extensive narrative and analysis. Wilson's dealings with the press take up half the volume. Even before coming to the White House, Wilson had revealed in the possibilities for executive mastery, writing of the president in 1908 that "he is the only national voice in affairs." In a flush of Progressive enthusiasm as he took office he pledged an open administration of "pitiless publicity." Yet in Hilderbrand's portrayal, Wilson's press relations reflect less pitiless exposure of presidential behavior than pitiless manipulation of the American public.

The most visible innovation of the Wilson presidency was the regularly scheduled press conference. Though moderately successful in this forum, Wilson chafed at the journalists' pointed questions and stopped the sessions in 1915. Privately, he envisioned a more controlled flow of information through a "publicity bureau," by means of which, as Hilderbrand observes, Wilson "hoped to put an end to misunderstandings about the nature of the 'real facts' and to see to it that newspapers had no excuse for failing to print news as they received it." The onset of the world war finally established the necessary conditions for Wilson's "publicity bureau." Hilderbrand offers a detailed picture of the Committee on Public Information, the remarkable wartime propaganda apparatus that George Creel constructed under Wilson's aegis.

After so many successful efforts to dominate public opinion, executive management failed Wilson at the decisive moment. Preoccupied in Paris with the details of the peace settlement and an ocean away from the secretar—