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# International Organization in the Western Hemisphere

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Clarke, Robin. *The Silent Weapons*. New York: McKay, 1968. 270p.

The author of *The Silent Weapons* acknowledges that his writing is essentially a synthesis of previously published materials, but he has actually attempted far more than this. As editor of the distinguished British publication *Science Journal*, Mr. Robin Clarke is adept at constructing a literary piece but less adept at pleading a cause—the abolishment of chemical and biological weapons. Early in this book Mr. Clarke points out that the military trend in this nuclear age has been referred to as the “escalation of brutality,” but that the end point has not yet been reached. Looming over the horizon, he writes, are chemical and biological weapons—weapons unique (particularly in the case of the biological variety) in that they have been invented for the single purpose of annihilating civilian populations. World War I propaganda stirred nations into a frenzy of indignation when gas warfare was first used in 1915, and until perhaps 10 years ago the idea of using toxic chemicals and disease-producing organisms to win battles was regarded by most as the worst form of military brutality that could be employed on the battlefield. Now military officials are using the argument that these weapons could be the most humane ever invented. Mr. Clarke argues that the United States, while energetically conducting research to overcome the technical impediments to CBW, is chipping away at the psychological barrier to CBW by the repeated use of riot gases and chemical defoliants in Vietnam. While there can be times when it is more humane to use a relatively harmless chemical weapon than conventional arms, the author feels that it is only a small step from tear gas to mustard gas; from nerve gas to botulinum toxin; from toxin to plague. “Because of the dangers of opening Pandora’s box, the only safe course is to use neither chemi-

cal nor biological weapons at all during war.”

By and large, *The Silent Weapons* can perhaps best be described as a useful primer on the political, scientific, and strategic aspects of CBW. For the reader who is looking for a very “readable” presentation of historical fact, chemical and biological technology, and problems encountered in the control of CBW, it is highly recommended. For the person looking for a solution to the often publicized problem of control of CBW, *The Silent Weapons* will be of no help. Mr. Clarke’s solution, described by him as a “long-shot,” offers an insight into the dilemma that the author still faces upon completion of a year of research, study, and discussion:

By denying their support to any defensive or offensive work on either kind of weapon system, they [the scientific community] could effectively remove the threat of massive chemical or biological war in the future. They could do it quickly. They could do it tomorrow. They could do it finally. For let there be no mistake about this. No government can develop further weapons in this field without the help of scientists. A denial of their willingness to cooperate would put an end to chemical and biological escalation and there would be nothing that any democratically elected government could do about it.

H.C. ATWOOD, JR.  
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Maxwell Institute on the United Nations, 3d, 1966. *International Organization in the Western Hemisphere*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1968. 262p.

In a series of four documented monographs written by professional observers of the inter-American scene, this volume incisively identifies the pressing problems confronting the inter-American system and explores their roots and effects on relations between the states of Latin America on the one hand, and between the Latin-American states and the United States

on the other. In the opening article, John C. Dreier, former U.S. Ambassador to the Organization of American States, traces the history of the development of international organization in the Western Hemisphere and relates the unique experiences of that development to the problems which beset the OAS today. Gordon Connell-Smith, a British historian, and Miguel Wionczek, a Mexican economist, treat the specific problems posed by the maintenance of peace and security and economic development respectively. Michael K. O'Leary, in the concluding article, specifies the thread of commonality in all the problems of the Western Hemisphere—the special nature of the relationship of the United States to Latin America.

Generally, the articles associate major problems of hemispheric relations with faults in the organizational structure of the OAS. These structural faults are the result of the disinclination of the United States or the Latin American states to surrender prerogatives in areas which they consider to be a matter of national interest. This is true of all international organizations. It takes on special significance in the Western

Hemisphere where the Latin-American countries look to the United States for leadership and direction, and the United States, in her turn, often ignores the problems of Latin America until her interests are affected. Predictably, the outlook for restructuring is pessimistic, and, again predictably, the 1965 Dominican Republic incident is universally used as the take-off point in the downturn of the effective inter-American organization. It would seem that the better view is that the Dominican Republic situation was a symptom of one of the many organizational ills which beset an alliance where the flexibility to respond to new threats or the willingness to break with old concepts in order to set out in new directions is lacking. An understanding of the history of the Western Hemisphere and concepts related in this volume is basic to any appreciation of the problems of United States-Latin American relations. It is highly recommended reading as introductory material to international politics of the Western Hemisphere.

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The business of a naval officer is one which above all others, needs daring and decision.

*William S. Sims, 1858-1936*