

Venezuela's Movimiento al Socialismo: From Guerrilla Defeat to Innovative Politics

Steve Ellner

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Venezuela's Movimiento al Socialismo: From Guerrilla Defeat to Innovative Politics Steve Ellner Teodoro Petkoff and the other members of the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) in Venezuela had aroused the ire of the orthodox communist leaders by claiming to be both authentic communists and true nationalists, not bound by the dictates of either the Moscow or Maoist/Beijing wings of the party. To infuriate the traditionalists even further, Petkoff and his associates succeeded in being more than isolated critics, as MAS quickly eclipsed the traditional Venezuelan Communist Party and became that country's leading leftist group.

The author places MAS in its international national, and historical contexts in order to determine the extent to which it is a unique communist party, as it claims to be. He traces the theory of "national democratic revolution, "which MAS rejects, back to Lenin, and discusses the Latin American left's reevaluation of that thesis. Ellner examines the guerrilla movement in Venezuela, the student movement of the late 1960s, and the emergence of the "New Left" in other countries, especially noting their influence on the formation of MAS. He also discusses the group's role in Venezuelan elections and it's relations with the other parties.



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