Report to the United States Congress: IMET Human Rights Training

By

The Defense Security Assistance Agency

[In response to the U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Committee Report, Number 102-585, 18 June 1992, page 103, that accompanied H.R. 5368, Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Appropriations Bill, 1993 (eventually enacted into law as P.L. 102-391 on 6 October 1992), the following report was submitted by the Defense Security Assistance Agency on 1 December 1992 to the Chairmen of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees.]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Defense Security Assistance Agency (DSAA) has made a concerted effort to develop additional military justice/human rights training programs and other initiatives to be responsive to Congressional direction. This report provides information about these programs and initiatives, and addresses our plans for future initiatives. DSAA intends to continue these efforts so that the IMET program contains a substantial human rights component.

The key to our success in exposing foreign students to the American way of life, which includes recognition of our democratic values and understanding our commitment to internationally recognized human rights, is to avoid any hint of obvious indoctrination, or self-serving propaganda, that would turn the students off and negate the otherwise favorable impressions we strive to create during this training experience in the United States.

DSAA is working with the military departments to revise and develop new foreign-only training courses and programs that include significant blocks of instruction on military justice/human rights, particularly for Latin American students. These include specific military justice/human rights courses recently developed by the U.S. Navy Justice School, English language training at the Defense Language Institute English Language Center, Army professional military and operations courses at the School of the Americas, foreign preparatory courses for the command and staff colleges, and other programs. In addition, DSAA has taken direct action to bolster the Informational Program (IP) by heightening the awareness of the U.S. International Military Student Officers concerning the importance of ensuring that the U.S. perspective on human rights is presented to foreign students during IP activities.

We believe that tremendous progress has been made as described above in the human rights area; however, we remain strongly opposed to suggestions that human rights training be a mandatory component of all IMET training courses for several compelling reasons. The great majority of courses attended by foreign students are designed for U.S. students; establishing mandatory and repetitive human rights instruction for all IMET students would require a massive effort by the military departments to dramatically revise and restructure their existing training curricula, something that would be virtually impossible under the current military downsizing. In addition, the lack of relevance to the training would be particularly striking and out of place in technical areas such as maintenance, electronics, and other technical disciplines. DSAA will continue to seek new initiatives to promote human rights training for IMET students.

MILITARY JUSTICE/HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVES

U.S. Navy Justice School (NJS)

At DSAA direction, the NJS established an Expanded IMET Department to develop and implement training programs in human rights, civilian control of the military, and effective military justice systems. The principal focus of these training programs is to promote an understanding of internationally recognized human rights and to demonstrate how effective military justice systems can ensure that members of a country's armed forces are held accountable for the protection of basic human rights and are sanctioned in instances when those rights are not protected.

The NJS has developed a three-phase executive seminar on human rights, civilian control of the military, and effective military justice systems that is specifically tailored to individual countries based on the particular military justice/human rights situation in the country. During the first phase, a survey team visits the country to meet U.S. Embassy and host country military, government and non-government personnel to understand the in-country human rights situation and to identify areas of emphasis that should be addressed during follow-on instruction in Phase III. The second phase consists of a visit by host country military and civilian personnel to NJS to further develop the specific curriculum to be taught in-country. During the third phase, a team of 3-4 instructors deploy to the country to present a one-week seminar to relatively high-ranking military and civilian government officials.

A good example of how this program includes a substantial number of civilian government employees and indigenous human rights groups is our experience in Guatemala during FY92. Phase I included sessions with Guatemalan attorneys for the Presidential Commission on Human Rights, personnel from the Human Rights Office of the Archbishop of Guatemala, the Attorney General of Guatemala, the President of the Guatemalan Journalists Association, the Human Rights Ombudsman, and Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) personnel from *Groupo de Apoyo Mutuo* (GAM), *Casa Alianza* Crisis Center, and *Conavigua.* The President's Advisor on Human Rights and a civilian attorney from the Presidential Commission on Human Rights participated in Phase II in the United States. Phase III is scheduled in Guatemala in January 1993 as part of the FY 93 IMET program for Guatemala.

NJS also conducted Phase III Seminars in Sri Lanka and Papua New Guinea during FY92 in which a total of 57 host country personnel participated, including 15 government civilians.

DSAA will continue to emphasize the inclusion of civilians in all military justice/human rights training programs under the IMET program.

Defense Language Institute English Language Center (DLIELC)

DSAA has conducted seminars for the instructors, faculty, and staff of DLIELC on the expanded IMET program and appropriate Expanded IMET themes that could be emphasized during English language training for foreign students. DLIELC has made extensive revisions to the General English and Specialized English Terminology curricula. The principal objective of this initiative is to provide foreign students with a better understanding of our democratic values and commitment to human rights while they are developing English language proficiency. This will be done in a manner that is consistent with the course material yet is designed to heighten their awareness of these fundamental concepts that are ingrained in U.S. society. In addition, DLIELC has initiated a program of guest speakers who are recruited to provide lectures on expanded IMET themes to various courses. Reent lectures have included "The Constitution and the Bill of Rights," "The U.S. Government System of Checks and Balances," "Political Parties

and the Election Process," and "The American Civil Liberties Union." Approximately 625 foreign students attended these lectures. Selected student questionnaires on the American Civil Liberties Union lecture demonstrate that DLIELC students are getting the human rights message: "We learned a lot of fundamental human rights . . . .we have discussions, sometimes arguments dealing with human rights now in my country;" "one of the most important things for Americans, enforced from the Bill of Rights, is the complete freedom to speak about anything and even to criticize the government;" "Civil Rights of the individual are well protected in this country. . . . given the chance to compare the enforcement of civil rights between this country and my country."

Foreign Preparatory Courses for Senior Professional Military Education (PME)

DSAA is working with the military departments to establish a human rights module in the foreign preparatory courses preceding the Command and Staff and War College courses that would be based on the NJS resident curriculum. We do not believe it would be appropriate, nor would the military departments agree, to revise the U.S. instruction during the senior PME courses, as U.S military officers at this level and stage of their careers do not require human rights training. Revising the foreign preparatory courses enables us to target the foreign audience without adversely affecting the training of the U.S. students.

U.S. Naval Postgraduate School MS Program

DSAA has worked with the Naval Postgraduate School to develop a new Expanded IMET postgraduate curriculum in Resource Planning and Management for International Defense that includes specific courses in the role of international law, the law of war, and civil-military relations.

U.S. International Military Student Officer (IMSO) Seminars

The military services assign IMSOs to each training installation to manage and administer foreign students. IMSOs are also responsible for conducting Informational Programs (IPs) to assist foreign students in acquiring an understanding of our democratic values, political institutions, the American way of life, and our commitment to the basic principles of internationally recognized human rights. During FY92, DSAA and the NJS conducted fifteen seminar sessions for approximately 300 IMSOs to reinforce the Expanded IMET themes of military justice/human rights and the proper role of a military in a democracy. A 32-page handbook was prepared and published for use by IMSOs in accomplishing these objectives.

Defense Resource Management Institute (DRMI)

The DRMI Mobile Education Team (MET) two-week programs that are taught in approximately ten countries each year for approximately 400 military and civilian officials have provided a unique opportunity for a military-civilian interface in-country. These high-level officials come from many different ministries and agencies and in many cases may not have previously had a basis to address issues in the same forum. While human rights issues are not specifically planned as part of the curriculum, the dialogue and discussions during this forum serve to bring together these often disparate elements of the government and establish a means of communications that often leads to a provocative and productive exchange of ideas in other areas. The DRMI faculty members that serve on the METs are prepared to carry these discussion into human rights areas as appropriate. In many cases, the concept of people as a resource prompts the participants to address the protection of human rights as a method of effective management of available resources.

DSAA Dialogue with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO)

DSAA has made an effort to engage the Washington area NGOs to discuss DoD's plans and programs concerning IMET human rights training. DSAA participated on a panel that had wide-ranging discussions with representatives from the Lawyers Committee on Human Rights, the Washington Office on Latin America, Amnesty International, Americas Watch, and other personnel involved with human rights programs. DSAA clearly understands the concerns of these groups and recognizes the importance of IMET human rights training.