THEME OF THE QUARTER

a closer look at . . .

THE UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND AND LATIN AMERICAN SECURITY ASSISTANCE

This issue of the Newsletter is the first of a series in which we will highlight the responsibilities, areas of concern, and functions of various security assistance management activities. Leading off the series is an overview of the unified commands, the first of which is directed to the United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), followed by the European Command (EUCOM) and the Pacific Command (PACOM) in the upcoming Newsletter Winter and Spring issues, respectively.

In the treatment of USSOUTHCOM we are especially indebted to its "Latin American Military Affairs Directorate" for the rapid and enthusiastic response to our request for area photographs and an article which is featured in this issue.

USSOUTHCOM's security assistance management activities are reviewed along with some of the many other interesting aspects of its overall mission. Of the sources available to provide a background and current related information about USSOUTHCOM's Latin American Security Assistance Program, we have included the aforementioned USSOUTHCOM article, extractions from published statements and documents of the Executive Branch, as well as the personal viewpoints of one of the guest lecturers who participates in our Latin American Regional Seminar Program. Additionally, we will describe the approach, methods of instruction, and resulting experiences of the seminar.

UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND[1]

With a headquarters less than one-third the size of its European counterpart, the United States Southern Command is responsible for U.S. military activities in the land area of Central and South America lying south of Mexico. This represents a land mass more than twice the size of the continental United States. With vast deposits of valuable natural resources and a total population of over 310 million, Latin America is rapidly developing. It is the "region of the future." The presence of the U.S. Southern Command in Panama has been instrumental in ensuring that U.S. strategic interests in the region are fostered.

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[1] Article submitted by the Latin American Military Affairs Directorate, USSOUTHCOM

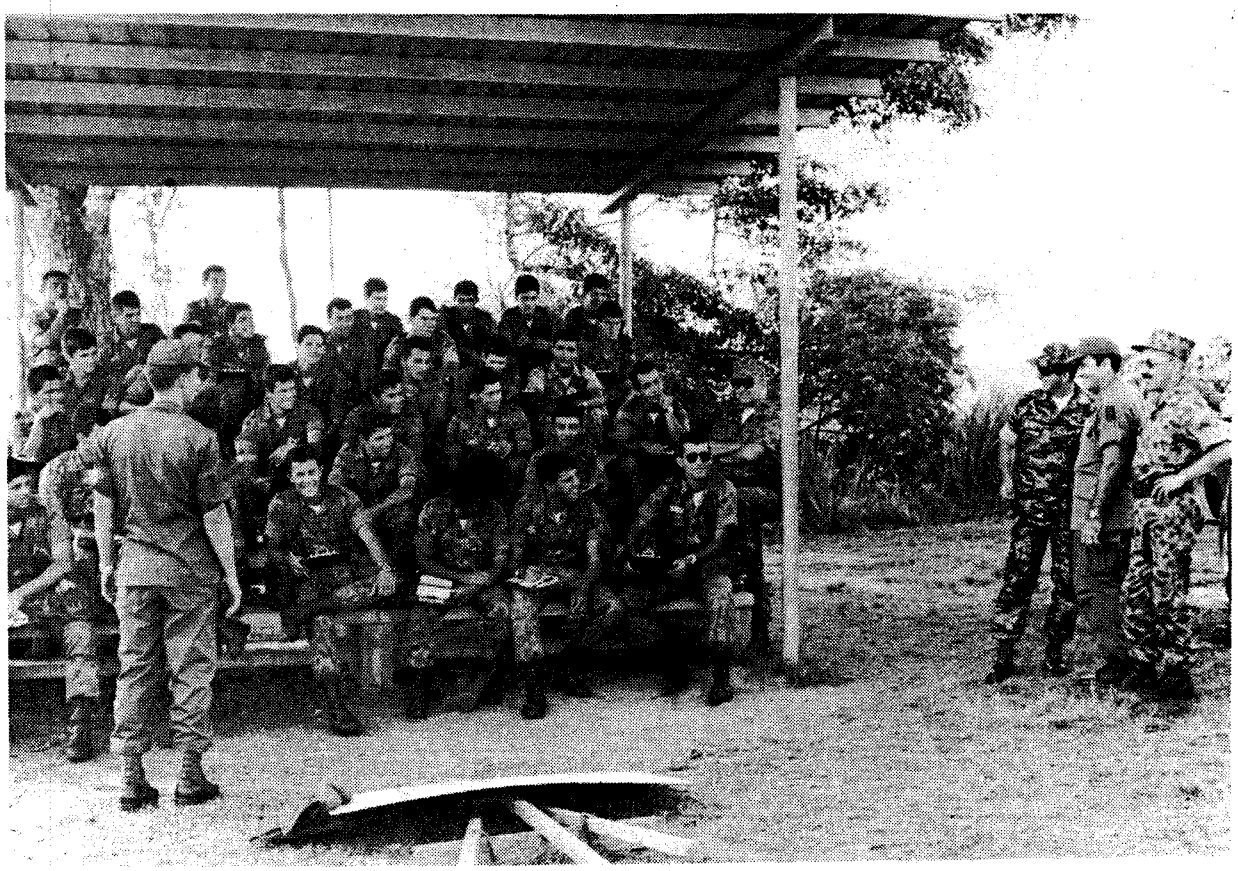
SOUTHCOM's most important mission is defense of the Panama Canal. This mission has taken on new dimensions as the United States approaches the era of the treaties with Panama, which will go into effect on 1 October 1979. Inherent in the defense mission is the requirement to ensure a smooth period of transition during treaty implementation. SOUTHCOM will be heavily involved in all aspects of treaty implementation, primarily through two organizations: the Combined Board and the Joint Committee. The Combined Board is concerned with protection and defense of the canal. Operating under the combined supervision of USSOUTHCOM J-3 and the Panamanian National Guard G-3, it will coordinate combined planning, training, and operations. The Joint Committee has responsibility for all matters pertaining to the U.S. military community in Panama other than defense. Its mission, which will continue throughout the entire period of the treaties, is to implement the status of forces agreement.

The Panama Canal treaties establish a concept of combined defense with the U.S. and Panamanian forces operating cooperatively to defend the canal. The U.S. will have the primary responsibility for the canal's defense through 1999, but Panama will gradually assume an ever-increasing role. Beginning in 2000, Panama will assume the mission of defense of the Panama Canal. Both IMET and FMS will play a vital role as Panama prepares for its canal defense responsibilities.

SOUTHCOM's second most important mission is supervision of security assistance in Latin America. The command monitors the security assistance programs in eighteen hemispheric nations. In sixteen of these countries, SOUTHCOM has small military organizations to manage the security assistance program. In Mexico and Haiti, the defense attaches administer security assistance matters.

Latin America's security assistance programs are small but are extremely useful in furthering U.S. interests in the region. Proposed FY 80 funding levels are $30.1M in FMS financing and $8.45M in IMET. The FMS level only represents about 1.5% of the worldwide total, while the IMET level is almost 26% of the total. U.S. military training is highly prized by all participating countries.

A unique part of SOUTHCOM is the Panama Canal Area Military Schools (PCAMS) system. Formerly known as the Canal Zone Military Schools, PCAMS consists of three training schools, each sponsored by a service component of SOUTHCOM. All instruction is conducted in Spanish. The largest is the U.S. Army's School of the Americas (USARSA). Since its founding in 1946, USARSA has graduated more than 37,000 students from the Latin American countries. The school offers a wide selection of officer, cadet, and some enlisted courses, including a 42-week copy of the Fort Leavenworth Command and Staff Course. Its cadet courses serve as the military academy of a number of nations, such as Bolivia and the Dominican Republic. The emphasis at USARSA is primarily professional military development.



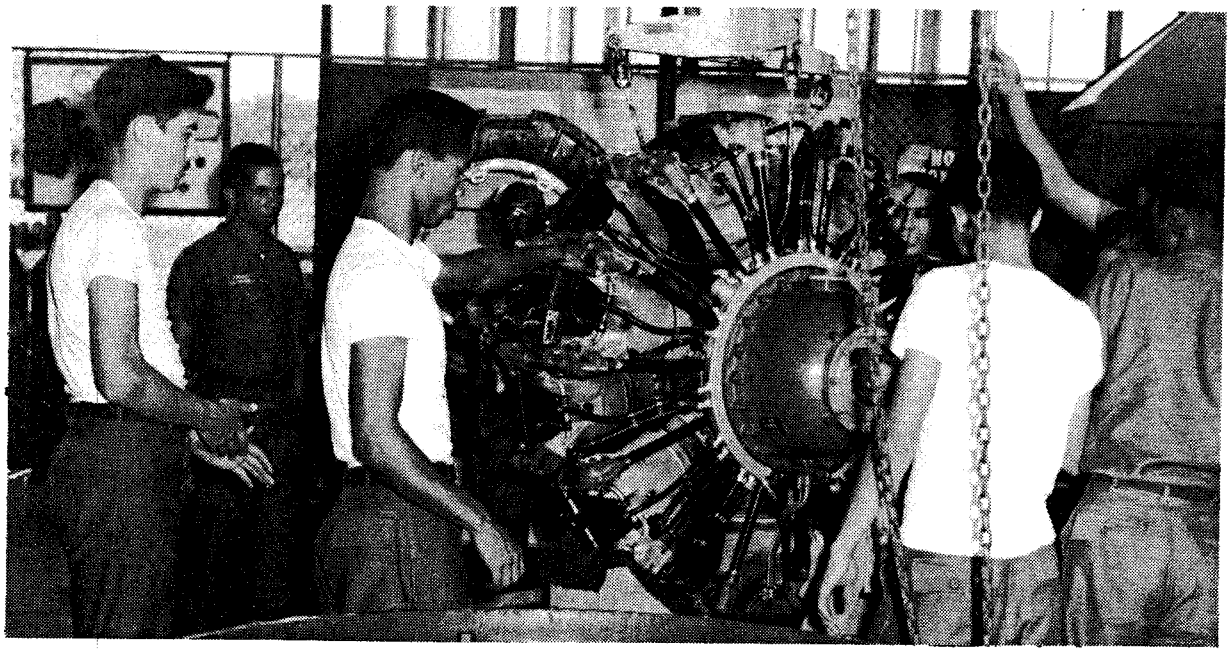
Colombian cadets from the Small Unit Infantry Tactics Course receiving instruction on Artillery. [Photograph courtesy of USSOUTHCOM]

The Air Force's contributions to PCAMS is the Inter-American Air Forces Academy (IAAFA). Founded in 1943, IAAFA offers 24 courses, most of which deal with the maintenance and repair of aircraft. Almost 15,000 students have studied at IAAFA.

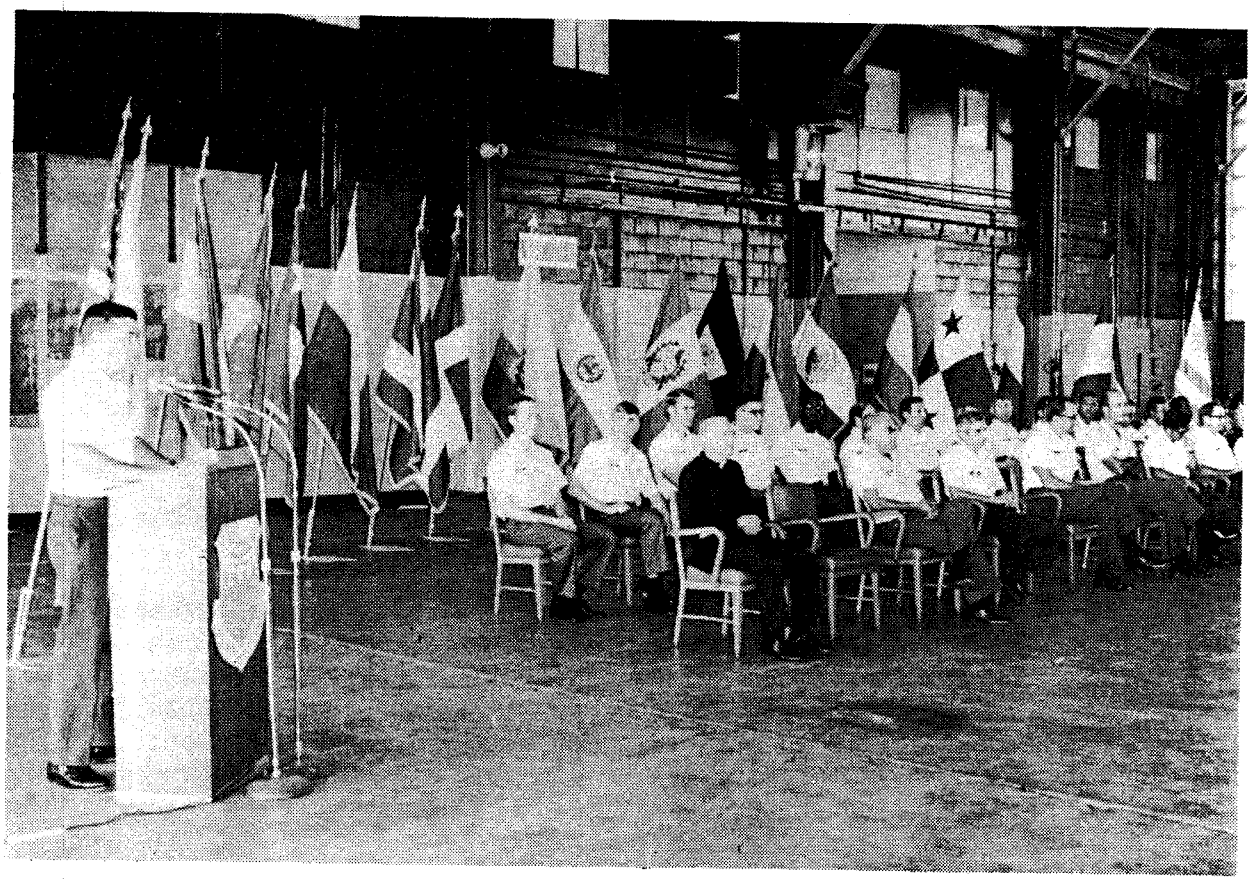
The third part of PCAMS, the Small Craft Instruction and Technical Team (SCIATT), is managed by the U.S. Navy. Specializing in the repair and maintenance of patrol craft, SCIATT has graduated more than 1400 students.

Since all instruction is in Spanish, PCAMS represents an important source of valuable, relevant military education for our Latin American neighbors. Rising FMS training costs have further increased the value of IMET funds, especially for training at PCAMS. Numerous PCAMS graduates presently occupy key positions in their respective governments, including heads of state, ministers of defense, and chiefs of service.

Instructor for the O-3 Course gives an explanation to a group of students during a map training exercise at USARSA [Photograph courtesy of USSOUTHCOM]



Students from various Latin American countries perform maintenance and receive "hands-on" training in Aircraft Engine Course. [Photograph courtesy of USSOUTHCOM]



Col Ronald E. Nickerson, Commandant, IAAFA, addresses pre-graduation ceremonies (Class 78C). Front row occupied by members of the Diplomatic Corps in Panama, Guest Instructors and IAAFA staff. [Photograph courtesy of USSOUTHCOM]

SOUTHCOM's other missions include representation, support of emergency search and rescue, and disaster relief. Representation is accomplished by the commander-in-chief and the three component commanders. Their visits to countries within the region and continuing dialogues with Latin American military leaders complement the security assistance program and provide an effective means of evaluating regional developments and problems.

Search and rescue support comes primarily from USAF aircraft and USA helicopters. Disaster relief support has varied from operations which required a one-time airlift to those which involved massive movements of people, supplies, and equipment. Almost every element of SOUTHCOM was involved in the relief effort after the Guatemalan earthquate in 1976. In 1978, SOUTHCOM directed the massive evacuation operation in Jonestown, Guyana.

SOUTHCOM also supports joint and combined training exercises. The most extensive of these is the combined South American/U.S. Navy exercise known as UNITAS, which enables elements of the U.S. Navy to operate with various South American navies. Another example of regional military cooperation is the OAS peacekeeping force in Honduras and El Salvador. SOUTHCOM has supported this important OAS activity with helicopters, crews, and observer personnel since 1969.

The U.S. Southern Command is getting the job done in Latin America. The United States has important political, economic, social, and cultural interests in the region. SOUTHCOM has the experience, capability, and wealth of good relationships to protect these interests, and to help substantially in achieving and maintaining security and stability in our hemisphere.

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LATIN AMERICAN SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Supplementary to the above article we examined a number of executive branch documents. During our research we found several bits of interesting information which have been extracted for your review. The extracts only highlight some of the key and current issues and are not to be construed as a comprehensive policy statement of a very complex subject. However, we feel they do provide the reader with a greater insight of the extant Latin American security assistance program.

CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATION DOCUMENT (CPD)

The Congressional Presentation for Security Assistance Programs, FY 1980 is a primary source document that depicts worldwide security assistance programs for the oncoming fiscal year. Major regions covered include East Asia and the Pacific, Near East and South Asia, Europe, Africa, and of our immediate interest, the American Republics. For your information and comparison, the following extracts are offered:

Proposed/Estimated in FY 1980

Program	American Republics	Worldwide
Military Assistance Program	-- (Note A)	$144.6 million
International Military Education and Training Program	$8.45 million (Note B)	$ 32.9 million
Security Supporting Assistance	--	$1,995 million
Foreign Military Sales Financing	$30.1 million	$2,063 million
Foreign Military Sales Agreements (Cash and Financed Combined)	$139.2 million (Note C)	$14,000 million
Commercial Exports Licensed under Arms Export Control Act	$179.2 million (Note D)	$2,179.3 million

NOTES

A. No new FY 1980 program funds proposed for American Republics. Supply operations funds proposed for eight countries with prior year programs.

B. Includes Panama Canal Area Military Schools and Latin American Regional Program.

C. Estimate only, since offers to sell are made only in response to requests by foreign governments, which are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

D. Estimate only.

The Congressional Presentation has an annex on "Arms Control Considerations." Those paragraphs pertaining to Latin America state that:

"U.S. arms sales policy in Latin America has been traditionally restrictive, and arms purchases by Latin American countries have been a relatively small percentage of overall U.S. sales. The nations of Latin America imported about 6 percent of the armaments delivered internationally from all sources in 1977 but accounted for only some 3 percent of the total U.S. deliveries worldwide. Although at one time the primary supplier to this region, the U.S. has fallen behind other suppliers such as the Soviet Union, France, Great Britain, Italy and Israel whose sales have rapidly increased due to aggressive sales techniques. Also, U.S. arms restraint and human rights policies have affected U.S. sales to the region.

In the past, we have witnessed the beginning of recipient-initiated regional arms control efforts. Latin interest and activity in the field are supportive of U.S. policy objectives for global arms restraint. In the last twelve months, two separate initiatives have been supported by the Latins. One, related to the UN Special Session on Disarmament, was a reaffirmation by the Latin countries of the principles of the 1974 Declaration of Ayacucho whose objective was to limit arms purchases in certain Latin American states. The second effort was organized by Mexico and led to a meeting in Mexico City in the summer of 1978 of Latin countries to discuss conventional arms control. It concluded with a decision to hold a second meeting in 1979 after further study of the issues."

DEPARTMENT OF STATE: FISCAL YEAR 1980 PROPOSALS

The Department of State Bulletin, April 1979, published an article by the Honorable Lucy Wilson Benson, Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance, Science and Technology. The article, titled "Security Assistance: FY 1980 Proposals," is based on a statement presented to Senate Foreign Relations Committee, by Secretary Benson, 28 February 1979. An extract follows:

"Latin America is the most lightly armed region in the world, historically the most peaceful, and spends the least on military material. Currently, military spending in the region averages around 3% of GNP.

Our very limited FY 1980 FMS financing request --$30.1 million -- is the smallest in history. It is designed to assist the eligible nations of the hemisphere to purchase minimum amounts of necessary equipment and services. No major equipment purchases are anticipated. Most purchases are expected to be for replacement of aging equipment, support and maintenance, or spares.

We believe that the proposed Latin American programs are at the absolute minimum levels that will permit us to maintain traditional military links to the region through security assistance and training. We continue to believe that our military ties to the region are of importance, particularly because 15 governments are either headed by or heavily influenced by the military."

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, in his "Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1980," submitted to the Congress in January 1979, included the following statement.

"Assistance to countries in Latin America is restricted to IMET and FMS financing. These modest programs will assist selected recipient countries to modernize their defense forces. Latin American regional FMS financing is being significantly reduced. Efforts to exercise arms restraint and improve human rights have been factors in this reduction. Twelve countries in Latin America will participate in IMET programs in FY 1980.

Where U.S. arms transfers accounted for more than 70 percent of total arms acquisitions by Latin American countries over a 16 year span following World War II, the U.S. portion during the decade 1967-1976 was less than 20 percent."

U.S. ARMS TRANSFER POLICY IN LATIN AMERICA

In July 1978, the Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, released a two-page statement titled "U.S. Arms Transfer Policy in Latin America" in GIST, a quick reference bulletin on U.S. foreign relations. GIST, limited to Government use, is not intended as a comprehensive U.S. policy statement. Informal confirmation by State personnel held that although the article may be slightly dated, it essentially reflects current policy. The following selected excerpts are offered for your examination:

"1. Background: Latin American nations traditionally have displayed a cautious attitude toward arms purchases, and tend to give priority to economic development. Most do not feel threatened sufficiently to justify priority for external defense requirements. The desire to modernize military establishments derives primarily from internal considerations and the need to maintain dependent military forces as a manifestation of sovereignty.

In most Latin American countries, all military expenditures account for less than 2% of GNP. Some countries have concentrated their military purchases in low-cost, multi-use items (e.g., trucks and bulldozers), primarily for nation-building activities. Others have adopted a deliberate policy of austerity in their armed forces.

2. US policy: Our Latin American arms policy is part of the global policy enunciated in President Carter's May 1977 statement on arms transfers.

-- We utilize arms transfers to promote our security and that of our close friends, but the burden of persuasion is on those who favor a particular sale, rather than those who oppose it.

-- We will not be the first supplier to introduce into the region advanced weapons systems that would create a new or significantly higher combat capability.

-- The State Department carefully monitors the travel and activities in the hemisphere of promoters of US arms sales.

-- We assess the economic impact of arms transfers, particularly on recipients of US economic aid.

-- We carefully consider the human rights situation in proposed recipient countries.

-- We encourage regional agreements among purchasers to limit arms acquisitions.

-- Where sales are approved, we emphasize that the sales agreement prohibits third party transfers except with prior US approval...

3. US transfers: Security assistance and arms transfers to Latin America reflect a US political and security interest. They have helped maintain cooperative relations with military establishments which have in some cases a potentially significant role to play in hemispheric defense. For a period following

World War II, surplus US equipment dominated the small Latin American arms market, but more recently other nations have sold more weapons in Latin America than the US. About 24% of our Foreign Military Sales to the region are for major items such as aircraft, ships, artillery, and ammunition. The balance is for spare parts, supporting non-combat equipment, and supporting services -- including training...."

PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE: DR. CAESAR D. SERESERES

In addition to the above extracts from official U.S. Government statements and documents, we feel that it is appropriate to include the personal observations of one of the guest speakers who has made occasional appearances in the DISAM Latin American Studies Seminar. In this regard, it is our privilege to introduce Dr. Caesar D. Sereseres to our readers.

Dr. Sereseres received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. from the University of California. He is currently an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of California (Irvine). His professional affiliations include the American Political Science Association, the Western Political Science Association, the Latin American Studies Association, and the Inter-University Seminar on the Armed Forces and Society. He is frequently called upon to address Department of Defense audiences and in February 1979 was a featured speaker at the USSOUTHCOM MILGP Commanders' Conference.

The article which follows represents an excerpt from a paper currently under development by Dr. Sereseres. The paper is entitled "The Changing Strategic Context of Latin America and U.S. Options for the 1980s." We are most grateful to Dr. Sereseres for giving approval to DISAM to reproduce portions of his paper.

The excerpt is presented to offer another interesting perspective of the Latin American security assistance climate. The reader is reminded that the content of these writings reflect the personal views of Dr. Sereseres and that inclusion in the DISAM Newsletter should not be construed as official endorsement or approval by the U.S. Government, Department of Defense or the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management.

The Inter-American Security System

Following World War II and throughout the Cold War era, U.S. military policies were intended to operate in tandem with broader U.S. policies to fashion an inter-American security system for hemispheric defense and peacekeeping. A multilateral framework and bilateral ties were developed through the establishment of the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) in 1942, formulation of the Rio Pact in 1947 against extra-hemispheric agression, and of the Pact of Bogota in 1948 for peaceful settlement of disputes within the inter-American system. The inclusion of Latin America as a Mutual Security Act grant aid recipient in 1951 led to a series of bilateral Mutual Security

Treaties. Through the Military Assistance Program (MAP), U.S. advisory missions and training efforts spread throughout the hemisphere during the 1950s. Significant developments during the 1960s include creation of the Inter-American Defense College, establishment of the Central American Defense Council (CONDECA), an increase in the size and significance of the regional U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) headquartered in the Panama Canal Zone, the periodic convening of regional conferences of the chief commanders of each service branch, frequent joint maneuvers and exercises such as the navies' "Operation UNITAS" for anti-submarine warfare, and the creation of Inter-American radio nets.

Throughout this time Latin American governments kept the Organization of American States (OAS) essentially free of military organs. The IADB was specifically excluded from the formal OAS structure. A strong reaction by Latin America to the U.S.-dominated Inter-American Peace Force that intervened in the Dominican Republic in 1965 largely prevented permanent institutionalization of that entity. Measures taken successfully through the OAS since 1969 to help resolve the Honduras-El Salvador "soccer war" dispute have been largely diplomatic, though military observers were stationed along the border. A Special Consultative Committee on Security was established to monitor Cuban subversion during the 1960s, but it was disbanded in 1975. Furthermore, the Rockefeller Commission did not receive a favorable response to its proposal in 1969 for establishing a Western Hemisphere Security Council linked to the OAS.

It appears in retrospect that U.S. arms transfer policies were more successful in supporting bilateral security relations with individual countries, than in promoting or supporting U.S. goals for complex multilateral collaboration. During the 1940s and 1950s, "hemispheric defense" proved to be a practical rationale for U.S.-Latin American security cooperation and U.S. arms assistance. However, the U.S. goal of weapons standardization, long considered essential to joint military action, could not be realized. The diversity of interests and national characteristics rules out the possibilities for "standardization" of materiel, doctrine, organization, or activities under U.S. leadership. During the 1960s, when "international security" became the dominant rationale for U.S. arms assistance, the Latin American governments demonstrated considerable capacity for dealing with local guerrilla threats, without requiring a significant expansion or strengthening of the collective security apparatus. Bilateral U.S. assistance, advisory, and training programs meanwhile helped to secure U.S. access to local decisionmakers and to build U.S. contacts with several generations of officer corps in Latin America.

U.S. restrictions on arms transfers that took effect after the mid-1960s were a contributing factor to the subsequent deterioration of U.S.-Latin cooperation in sustaining an inter-American security system. Nonetheless, this deterioration is owed to numerous complex factors involving global as well as regional changes that have made the system anachronistic. It is by no means clear that U.S. arms policies were a decisive factor. Indeed, a more responsive U.S. arms transfer policy in this period might well not have made much difference in this area.

While most of the institutional apparatus of the inter-American security a system has remained intact since its establishment in the 1940s-1960s, events in the past few years reveal a degree of deterioration that requires new attention and fresh ideas. The prior U.S.-sponsored emphases on defense against an extra-hemispheric threat and subsequently against Cuban/Communist subversion have given way to new, locally-sponsored concepts. In 1975 during the OAS meeting in San Jose, Costa Rica, members voted to incorporate the principle of "ideological pluralism" into the Rio Pact. A further prominent proposal, essentially referring to certain activities of the United States and multinational corporations, has called for a concept of "collective economic security" and defense against "economic aggression" to be written into the OAS Charter, if not also the Rio Pact. Meanwhile, Cuban military assistance to Angola, the Guatemala-Belize dispute, Peru-Chile border tensions, and Soviet arms sales to Peru have served to stimulate traditional concerns about preventing conventional military conflicts from developing within the region.

For the past several years, OAS members have been working to draft a new OAS Charter. They aim to respond to the changes in the context of inter-American relations wrought by the emergence of detente and the growing capacity of the Latin governments to influence each other and the foreign powers. In addition, regional meetings of military commanders have continued to consider proposals for revising or reforming the inter-American security system. A proposal to make the IADB into the centerpiece has not met with success. Part of the problem is lack of agreement over the definition of the "threat." For example, at the eleventh meeting of the Armies of the Americas in 1975, there was a sharp split over whether the greater danger came from the Left or the Right, from pro-communist or pro-capitalist extremists, and over whether military training schools should teach anti-subversive tactics against the Right as well as the Left. The army commanders also discussed the issue of economic aggression by foreign powers and companies. Despite all this activity and searching, redefinition of the Inter-American security system is far from settled.

The Uncertainties of U.S.-Latin American Security Relations

The seemingly entrenched focus on Latin America as a region has given it a unique role in discussions about arms transfers. No other region -- whether Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, or Southeast Asia -- has been so subject to critical U.S. treatment and legislation as a region. Historically, the presumed homogeneity of nations and comparatively low threats to U.S. interests in Latin America have made it easy to generalize and skip exceptions and distinctions that have stood out elsewhere in the world. Thus anti-democratic developments in Latin America have tended to arouse moral outrage, commonly paternalistic, in ways that have often taken the form of congressional legislation. As a result of these processes, one of the special themes of U.S.-Latin American relations, particularly in regard to arms transfer issues, is that Latin America, because of its distinctive regional characteristics, has periodically become a "dumping ground" for restrictive and discriminatory U.S. legislation that expresses principles wounded more seriously elsewhere in the world -- but too difficult to apply without compromise because of the Soviet threat or some other compelling U.S. national interest.

The experiences of the 1960s and 1970s demonstrate that restrictive U.S. policies toward arms transfers can cost the United States political goodwill in Latin America without furthering the advance of democratic aspirations or curtailing the acquisition of modern military weapons. What will be the long-term (ten to fifteen years) consequences of reducing the U.S. military and security profile in the Latin American region? What should we expect as a result of terminating grant assistance, placing ever increasing legislative restrictions on the transfer of military hardware and services, drastically reducing the number and role of U.S. military representatives, curtailing military training programs? Are U.S. security interests affected if U.S. advisors, military training, and military equipment are replaced by European and non-Western sources? One can only speculate at this time.

One thing is for certain, until other major suppliers cooperate with the United States in its efforts toward arms restraint in the region, the U.S. will not reduce the flow of arms to Latin America -- only shift the sales, supply, and training agreements to other countries. The United States at this point in time appears on the road to cutting itself out as an active player in the politico-military affairs of the Hemisphere. Although in a very begrudging fashion, some Administration officials have come to the frank realization that restrictive arms sales policies have very definite political and security costs. If this is indeed the case, and if we believe that it is in our own security interests to be able to use arms sales (and other forms of military relations) to dialogue with Latin American governments beyond just

the human rights issue, then Congress should be prepared to closely examine the restrictive aspects of the International Security Assistance and Arms Export Act, and if need be, change the legislation to conform more with such U.S. security concerns as preventing Soviet arms sales, Cuban military ventures, and border conflicts in the Western Hemisphere.

However, it must be further understood that large sales programs do not necessarily allow a more effective pursuit of U.S. security interests. Relatively small programs could generate and sustain traditional military relations between the United States and Latin America, be an effective instrument in protecting U.S. security interests in the area, permit the U.S. to stay as an active player in security and military related matters in the hemisphere, and allow the United States to pursue its objective of arms restraint in the region.

Any conflict between two or more Latin American nations will become a security concern of the United States. Indeed, from the very onset of the Carter administration, one of the highest priorities for the region of Latin America has been to determine the possible role of the United States in the settlement of existing disputes between nations of the Hemisphere. Indirectly, this also has reflected a concern for keeping Soviet and other "non-Western" suppliers out of the region (and thereby out of the dispute), and for minimizing the activities of Western arms suppliers whose primary motivation is economic. U.S. arms sales policies and practices have resulted in just the opposite outcomes. We are essentially cutting ourselves out of the diplomacy of arms restraint and conflict resolution, by cutting ourselves out as an active (or at least a more positive) arms supplier for the area. As improbable as it may sound, from a U.S. security perspective, the sale of arms may be just as important a part of peaceful balancing as is the placing of restrictions on the transfer of arms.

Considerably more attention should be paid to the "non-hardware" aspects of the U.S.-Latin American security relationship. Such non-hardware relations include the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, officer exchange programs, orientation tours, military groups, joint military exercises, and consultative boards. U.S. security interests in Latin America during the 1980s will require a balance between hardware and non-hardware relations within the context of an overall arms restraint framework. Such a framework, to be effective, would have to consider not only the security interests of the United States in the region, but also the legitimate national interests and defense concerns of Latin American nations.

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