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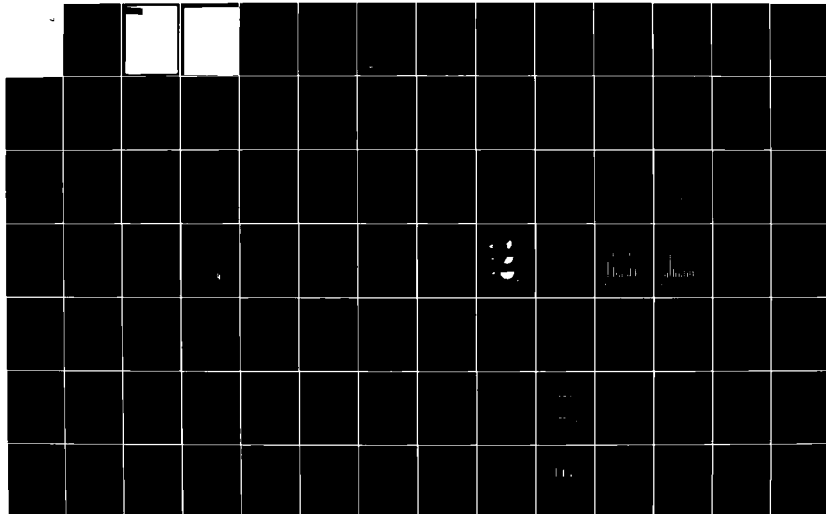
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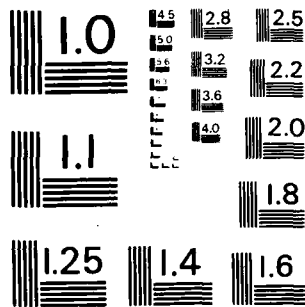
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**A RAND NOTE**

PROFILES OF THE CARIBBEAN BASIN IN 1960/1980:  
CHANGING GEOPOLITICAL AND GEOSTRATEGIC DIMENSIONS

Joseph H. Stodder, Kevin F. McCarthy

December 1983

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## PREFACE

This Note surveys changes that occurred in the various geopolitical and geostrategic dimensions of the Caribbean Basin in two time periods: 1960 and 1980. Although different parts of the data base have appeared in several sources, the Note for the first time synthesizes and assesses this information in ways that readily identify major changes and trends in the Basin--often dramatic--that took place during the two decades before the Central American crisis and increased U.S. involvement in that part of the Basin.

The principal author of the Note is Joseph Stodder, a Rand consultant. Kevin McCarthy, senior demographer at Rand, wrote the section dealing with changes in the Caribbean Basin's foreign trade and investments, economic performance, and demographic patterns. Jennifer Edwards helped in the collection and tabulation of various data.

This work is one of several related studies supported by Project AIR FORCE. Together, they constitute a Rand research project on U.S. national security interests and USAF requirements in the Caribbean Basin in the 1980s.

The other Caribbean Basin studies are:

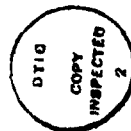
Edward Gonzalez, *A Strategy for Dealing with Cuba in the 1980s*, R-2954-DOS/AF, September 1982.

David F. Ronfeldt, *Geopolitics, Security, and U.S. Strategy in the Caribbean Basin*, R-2997-AF/RC, forthcoming.

David J. Myers, *Venezuela's Pursuit of Caribbean Basin Interests: Implications for U.S. National Security*, R-2994-AF, forthcoming.

Caesar D. Sereseres, *Military Politics, Internal Warfare, and U.S. Policy in Guatemala*, R-2996-AF, forthcoming.

Adriana Bosch, *Nicaragua: The Internationalization of Conflict and Politics in Central America*, R-2998-AF, forthcoming.



Since its initial drafting, the Note has benefited from a Department of State Conference, held April 14 and 15, 1983, that examined Caribbean Basin security issues. The Note was then completed before the U.S. military action in Grenada the following October.



## SUMMARY

The Cuban Revolution, the 1962 missile crisis, and the more recent Nicaraguan Revolution and Central American insurgencies have all drawn worldwide attention to the Caribbean Basin.<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless the region has undergone fundamental transformations that may be far less dramatic but are no less important for the United States. The extent and permanency of these changes can be suggested in three examples that show how the Basin looked in 1960, a year after Fidel Castro took power, and again some 20 years later:

- Just over 93 million persons resided in the Basin in 1960. By 1980, nearly another 70 million had been added to the population, bringing the total to an estimated 163 million persons.
- In 1960, the region had only 12 sovereign states--unchanged since 1903--as the European colonial presence still remained in the Basin. By 1981, an additional 14 sovereign states, many of them tiny island entities, had emerged owing to the withdrawal of the French, the Dutch, and especially the British from the Caribbean and Central America.
- In 1960, the Soviet presence was nonexistent, and Cuba had but a small and poorly equipped army backed by a popular militia. By 1980-81, Cuba had not only emerged as a base for projecting Soviet influence into the region, but the Cuban armed forces themselves had also acquired new offensive military capabilities.

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<sup>1</sup>Throughout this study the term "Caribbean Basin" will be defined as the geographic area of the Caribbean Sea, including all the rim islands, all littoral states (from Mexico to Venezuela), and three countries not geographically contiguous to the Caribbean: El Salvador in Central America, and Guyana and Suriname on the Atlantic (see map facing p.1). Thus used, "Caribbean Basin" denotes a specific *geostrategic* region that has special importance for the United States. This differs from the reference used in the Caribbean Basin Initiative, which has an economic focus on the smaller, less-developed countries of the region, thereby excluding Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela.

This study surveys many of the multiple changes that have occurred in the Basin. It does so by taking two time-slices--in 1960 and again in or around 1980--to develop three different profiles of the Basin a full generation apart. The first profile is of the Basin's *geopolitical* dimension, surveying important political, economic, demographic, and military changes that have occurred in the region (excluding Cuba) between 1960 and 1980. Next, the Basin's *geostrategic* dimension is brought into sharp focus by profiling the increases in Soviet and Cuban military capabilities between 1960 and 1980/81. Finally, changes in the *U.S. military presence* are examined, not only in these two time periods but in 1968-69 as well.

The study thus compares two benchmark years in the Basin--1960, following the Cuban Revolution but before the Soviet presence on the island, and 1980, a year after the Sandinista victory in Nicaragua but before the increasing U.S. involvement in Central America.

#### U.S. INTERESTS IN THE BASIN ARE GROWING

As in the past, the Caribbean sea lines of communication (SLOCs) constitute the vital arteries of U.S. shipping, both commercial and military, from major U.S. ports on the East, West, and Gulf Coasts to every area of the globe. In wartime, these would carry half of the supplies required by NATO forces. Beyond the critical roles--both peacetime and wartime--performed by the Caribbean SLOCs over the past two decades, the Basin has acquired additional importance for broader U.S. national interests, as well as for specific security interests, since the 1960s:

- With the discovery of new oil and gas fields in the mid-1970s, Mexico's demonstrated petroleum and natural gas reserves are estimated at 45 billion barrels, equivalent to those in Iraq (47.5 billion) and Abu Dhabi (45.9 billion). Already Mexico supplies some 10 percent of U.S. crude oil imports.
- Over 40 percent of current U.S. crude oil imports come from Caribbean states, while 56 percent of U.S. refined petroleum imports come from Basin refineries, accounting for almost half of total U.S. daily consumption.

- The volume of U.S. trade with the Basin had grown considerably since 1960: By 1979 the value of U.S. imports had increased by 218 percent, whereas U.S. exports had risen by 251 percent, with Mexico accounting for a substantial share of the increases.
- The Basin's population is rapidly expanding: By the year 2000, the population could grow to 278 million, some 11 million more than are projected for the United States.
- The Basin's rapid population growth, coupled with slowly growing economies and strife-ridden polities, directly affects U.S. society through increased immigration flows. During the 1960s, the Basin's *legal* immigration to the United States amounted to 1,025,480, rising to 1,365,116 during the 1970s. By the late 1970s the *illegal* immigration from Mexico alone was widely estimated at more than 350,000 per year.

This human linkage with the Basin is becoming all the greater as the United States increasingly appears as the country of first asylum for the region's economic and political refugees. Legal immigration from the Basin is expected to double again to over 2.6 billion by the early 2000s.

The potential for larger legal and illegal immigration flows derives in large part from the the young age structure and high fertility rates of many Basin countries. Seven countries that currently account for 62 percent of the Basin's population--almost 98 million in 1979--can be expected to have their populations double in less than 25 years. Among the seven, Mexico's population growth poses the most severe problem:

- Mexico, which now has over 11 million in the 20-29-year-old age group, can expect an additional 10 million potential workers in their 20s by the year 2000.

- The present 22 million Mexican children under 10 will also be augmented by an additional 18 million children by the turn of the century.

These population increases among young Mexicans in particular are likely to result in an even heavier influx of Mexican immigrants into the United States in the years ahead.

#### POTENTIAL THREATS TO U.S. INTERESTS IN THE BASIN

Although U.S. interests in the region have grown over the past two decades, they have also become more vulnerable. Trends and forces emanating from within as well as from outside the Basin pose a long-term threat to its stability:

- Overall, the economies of the Basin have expanded between 1960 and 1980. With few exceptions, however, otherwise modestly good economic growth rates have been absorbed by high population increases in every country.
- The majority of Basin income levels therefore remained very low--less than 20 percent of U.S. levels.

In turn, inadequate economic performance and high population pressures have resulted in increased unemployment, rural violence, and migration flows, while placing still greater stresses on often fragile political systems in the region, not only in Central America but in Mexico as well.

Changes in the Basin's military balance could present more direct security problems for the United States. The imbalance stems from the relative weakness of the military forces possessed by other Basin countries compared with Cuba's growing military strength and increased Soviet presence in the region.

*Basin Military Capabilities.* During the 1960-80 period, the military capabilities of Venezuela and Mexico as regional powers, and of other lesser states as well, fell far behind the levels attained by the Cuban armed forces:

- Since 1960, the numerical growth of the military organizations of most major Basin countries have generally been moderately paced. But increases in personnel strength lagged behind overall population increases, reflecting an average decline from 0.37 percent of the populations of the ten leading countries (other than Cuba) in 1960, to 0.23 percent for these nations in 1981.
- The upgrading of weapon systems has been equally modest. Only minimal modernization of the Basin's armed forces has generally occurred: as of 1981, for instance, the air forces of the Basin countries (other than Cuba) continued to rely on WWII and post-WWII vintage aircraft, among them F-51s, F-86s, and Vampire fighter-bombers.

The inability of Venezuela and Mexico to project a military presence into the Basin has thus remained virtually unchanged since 1960. Although each has recently ordered more advanced jet fighters (F-16s and F-5s, respectively), these will not be in service in even modest numbers until later in the mid-1980s. In the meantime, the capacity of these two regional powers and other Basin states (other than Cuba) to assume credible defense roles within the region remains severely constrained.

*Cuban Military Capabilities.* While the military of other Basin nations were maintaining low profiles, Cuba's armed forces were expanding dynamically in personnel strength, in training and utilization of personnel, and in numbers and sophistication of weaponry:

- From an already high level of 0.7 percent of the population in 1960 (45,970 total personnel), Cuba's armed forces swelled to 1.3 percent (109,500 personnel) in 1970. At the end of 1981,

it had more than doubled again to 227,000 regular and ready reserve personnel, 2.3 percent of Cuba's total population of 9.8 million.

- During the 1970s, the Cuban armed forces received increasingly more advanced military training from their Soviet advisors. They also gained combat experience in large-scale military campaigns that were conducted overseas in Angola and Ethiopia with the support of the USSR.
- Particularly after the mid-1970s, Cuba greatly increased and upgraded its weapons inventories in all branches of the armed forces. With its primary mission of island defense, the Army expanded its tank force by more than tenfold, while adding anti-tank guided weapons and other sophisticated equipment. In the meantime, the Air Defense Force had grown to 24 surface-to-air (SAM) battalions.
- The arms buildup also provided Cuba with a new offensive capability within the Basin second only to that of the United States. By 1981, the Air Force had expanded to over 200 MiG interceptors, including MiG-23s. The Navy, which had no major combat vessels in 1960, had acquired two Foxtrot and one Whiskey class submarines, a Koni-class frigate, and 24 fast-attack missile craft (12 Osa, 12 Komar, with Styx SSMs) in addition to numerous patrol craft.

In contrast to 1960, therefore, the Cuba of 1980/81 did not represent merely a revolutionary power of marginal military importance. On the contrary, with its new offensive capabilities, the Cuban military possessed a sufficiently credible threat to tie down substantial numbers of U.S. forces in the event of a major crisis with the Soviet Union.

*Soviet Military Presence.* The Soviet presence in the Caribbean has also been increasing since 1970. Although not reaching the levels attained during the missile crisis of 1962, it has grown incrementally over the past decade, with Cuba being used as a staging base to support expanded military operations in the area:

- Soviet reconnaissance aircraft regularly deploy to and from Cuban bases; the naval ship visit program, begun in 1969, continues to send task groups into the Caribbean, making port calls in Cuba (over 20 calls since 1969).
- A Soviet intelligence-collecting station--the largest outside the USSR--continually monitors U.S. telecommunications traffic.
- A special Soviet brigade, consisting of 2600 to 3000 personnel, continues to be billeted near Havana. In all, between 10,600 and 13,000 Soviet personnel--military and civilian--augment Cuban military and political activities.

After 1979 the emergence of Nicaragua and Grenada as potential allies of Cuba and the Soviet Union was seen as an additional threat to U.S. security. If linked militarily to Cuba, they could form a "hostile triangle" spanning the length and breadth of the Basin, an alliance that could endanger neighboring states, not only through conventional military power but also through subversion.

Although possessing overwhelming military and economic power in the Basin, the United States confronts a region that is less secure than in 1960. The military presence of hostile powers has increased, vastly so in the Cuban case.

#### DECLINING U.S. PRESENCE IN THE BASIN

While Cuban and Soviet influence have been increasing, the U.S. presence in the Basin has experienced a corresponding decline, particularly since the late 1960s. This decline has been manifested in numerous ways, but perhaps most prominently in the areas of economic and military ties with the Basin.

*Lagging U.S. Investments and Trade.* As the economies of the Basin have grown overall between 1960 and 1980, so have U.S. investments and trade as measured in constant dollars. These are important to the United States, but their relative importance to the Basin countries has been declining. In fact, the growth rate of U.S. investments in the Basin has been marginal, and the Basin's relative share of U.S. trade has dropped since 1960:

- Direct U.S. investments in the region increased only marginally, from \$15.5 billion in 1960 to \$18.5 billion in 1980 (in constant 1980 U.S. dollars), which reflects a growth rate of less than 1 percent per year.
- Much of the increase in U.S. investments was concentrated in Mexico, which more than doubled its share of U.S. investments in the Basin from 14 to 32 percent during the 1960-80 period.
- In trade with the Basin, U.S. imports grew more than threefold-- from \$7.4 billion to nearly \$26 billion (in constant U.S. dollars)--but the Basin's share of total U.S. imports declined from 19 to 12 percent between 1960-80, despite increases in U.S.-Mexican trade.
- Although U.S. exports to the Basin increased from \$8 billion to \$26 billion, the Basin's share remained virtually constant, at 12 and 12.5 percent, respectively, as a *proportion* of total U.S. imports; this stabilizing of percentage was the result of a sharp rise in U.S. exports to Mexico.
- Again, Mexico accounted for much of the increase in the volume of trade, as its share of the Basin's exports to the United States increased from 16 to 38 percent, and its share of imports from the United States rose from 32 to 50 percent in the 1960-80 period.

Save for its ties with Mexico, therefore, U.S. investments in and trade with the Basin have either grown only marginally or have declined proportionately. Since 1960, in turn, Western Europe and Japan have assumed larger shares of the Basin's investment and trade.

*Decline in U.S. Military Presence.* Between 1960 and 1980, the U.S. military presence declined even more dramatically throughout the Basin. This is apparent in the U.S. reduction of its personnel strength, military facilities, and security assistance in the Basin:



- After reaching a peak strength of over 25,000 in 1968, total numbers of U.S. personnel stationed in the Basin plummeted to only 15,688 as of 1981. The latter figure represents more than 6000 fewer personnel than the 22,073 that were stationed in the Basin in 1960.
- The largest declines resulted from the downgrading or closing of installations at various locations in the Basin. The most important of these were in Puerto Rico (Ramey Air Force Base and Fort Brooke), the Panama Canal Area, and Guantanamo.
- Sharp declines also took place in U.S. security assistance. The Military Assistance Program (MAP) declined from a 1968 high of over \$37 million to only \$665,000 in 1980. The International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, which had amounted to more than \$13 million in 1968, dropped to less than \$2 million in 1968 (all figures in constant 1980 U.S. dollars).
- A similar decline occurred with Foreign Military Sales (FMS) in the Basin: FMS deliveries to the Basin decreased from over 30 percent of total global deliveries in 1968 to less than 10 percent in 1980.

Coupled with the relative weakening of U.S. economic ties, the erosion of the U.S. military presence in the Basin after the late-1960s affected U.S. ability to influence the course of events, and particularly influenced the attitudes of civilian and military elites in the region. The downgrading or closing of installations could also have the long-term effect of weakening the U.S. security triangle anchored in Panama-Puerto Rico-Guantanamo. This would probably occur in the event that a Soviet-supported "hostile triangle" emerges in the form of a militarized axis of Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada.

The proximity of the United States to the nations of the Caribbean Basin is thus more than simply geographic. A closeness is also apparent in the extent of economic interdependence, immigration flows, and shared security concerns between the United States and other Basin countries.

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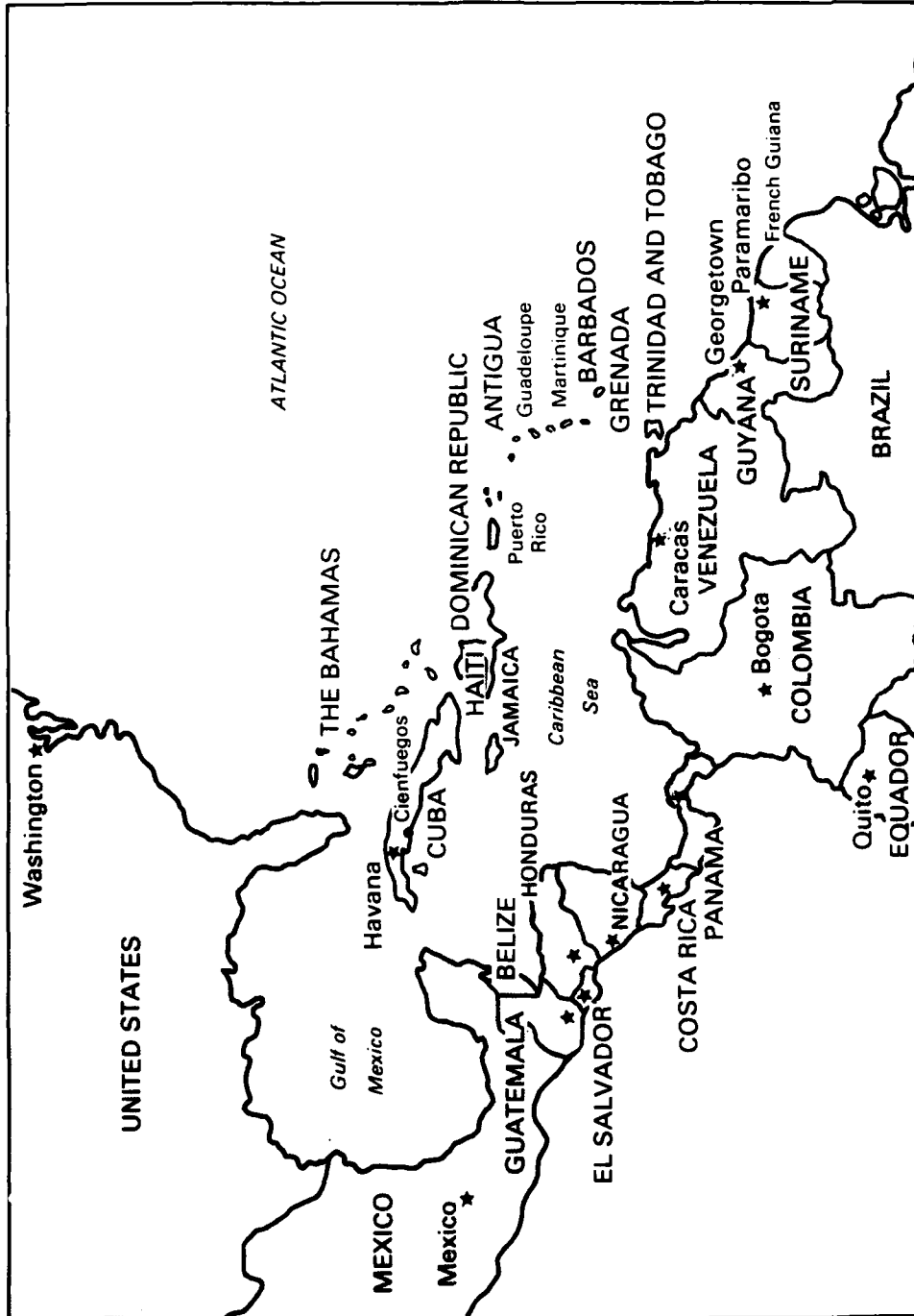
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Frontispiece: The Caribbean Basin

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the 19th century, proximity and history have linked the United States with the Caribbean Basin.<sup>1</sup> Yet, unlike Western Europe or, more recently, the Middle East, defense planners and the American public at large have generally considered the Basin as a region of fairly low priority for U.S. security interests--except, as in the October 1962 missile crisis, when those interests were directly endangered. This assessment stems in large part from the historical dominance that the United States has exercised in the region; it rests particularly on the overwhelming military capability that the United States can bring to bear in the nearby Basin.

Is this perception of the Basin's low priority, which may have had validity a decade or two ago, still supportable in the 1980s? What kinds of changes has the Basin undergone in its political, economic, and social spheres since the Cuban Revolution in 1959? Has the military balance among Basin countries changed greatly since the early 1960s? What differences are there in the political or military presence of external powers in the region? What changes have taken place in the military presence of the United States itself?

The following analysis offers a detailed portrayal of important changes that have taken place in the geopolitical environment and strategic value of the Caribbean Basin, comparing the 1960 environment with that of 1980 (or approximate representative years when necessary). These "time slices" have been chosen because each marks the emergence of a new revolutionary regime in the Basin, and the spread of new fears about violent unrest and extra-hemispheric interference:

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<sup>1</sup>Throughout this study the term "Caribbean Basin" will be defined as the geographic area of the Caribbean Sea, including all the rim islands, all littoral states (from Mexico to Venezuela), and three countries not geographically contiguous to the Caribbean: El Salvador in Central America, and Guyana and Suriname on the Atlantic (see frontispiece). Thus used, "Caribbean Basin" denotes a specific *geostrategic* region that has special importance for the United States and differs from the term as used in the Caribbean Basin Initiative, which has an economic focus on the smaller, less developed countries of the region, and thus excludes Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela.

- In 1960 the Cuban revolution was moving toward alignment with the Soviet Union, and otherwise shattering the once peaceful complexion of the area. A year later the United States would support the Bay of Pigs invasion and two years later would confront the Soviets in the Cuban missile crisis.
- In 1980, the consolidation of the Nicaraguan revolution marked a new watershed--the overthrow of the Somoza dynasty in 1979, the first guerrilla success since Castro's rise to power, and the realignment of Nicaragua with Cuba. El Salvador had also become consumed by internal violence, while guerrilla struggles continued in Guatemala.

The changes that have taken place in Basin countries--social, economic, and political-military--are of all the more concern for the United States once they are viewed against changes in the international environment. Since the 1960s, the USSR has steadily expanded its capacity to project Soviet power on a global scale and in recent years has achieved strategic parity with the United States. The United States no longer exercises the same level of political, economic, and military supremacy it did some two decades ago. The Middle East, upon which much of the industrialized West remains critically dependent for petroleum imports, has become more conflict ridden; the Soviets have invaded Afghanistan and are in a position to undertake new direct or indirect forms of aggression in the region. As a result of these and other adverse global trends, the Basin has become more important for U.S. security interests owing to its mineral and energy resources, and to the critical sea lines of communication (SLOCs) that transit the region.

The United States depends on Caribbean Basin suppliers for some of its strategic minerals, as well as for much of its refined petroleum products and crude oil. This resource availability in the Basin could become critical if an international crisis interrupts other supply sources. Large quantities of bauxite, alumina, and fluorispar come from the Basin. For example, Jamaica, the world's second largest producer of bauxite (after Australia), together with the Dominican Republic, Guyana, and Suriname, supplies the United States with 85 percent of its imported bauxite and almost 40 percent of its imported alumina.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>See U.S. Congress, Joint Economic Committee, *Special Study on*

Even more critical are the petroleum reserves of the region, the estimates of which have been greatly increased since the mid-1970s. Precise estimates vary, but Mexico's reserves are now ranked with those of leading world producers. In a January 1981 survey analyzing the known recovery of petroleum liquids worldwide (crude oil and natural gas liquids), Mexico's demonstrated reserves were estimated at 45 billion bbl, thus placing it generally in the same group as Iraq (47.5 billion bbl), Abu Dhabi (45.9 billion bbl), and several other primary world producers.<sup>3</sup> Over 40 percent of the crude oil imported by the United States as of spring 1983 comes from three Caribbean countries: Mexico (33 percent), Venezuela (5 percent), and Trinidad and Tobago (3 percent). In addition, 56 percent of refined petroleum products imported by the United States come from Basin refineries. Total imports from the Basin thus amount to almost half of total U.S. daily consumption.<sup>4</sup> Although these mid-1983 figures include an abnormally high volume of Mexican oil, Caribbean imports consistently account for a substantial proportion of U.S. petroleum consumption.

The Caribbean SLOCs are vital arteries of U.S. shipping, both commercial and military, from East, West, and Gulf Coast ports to every area of the globe. In peacetime, this traffic includes almost half the crude oil and other foreign cargo shipped to the United States (see Fig. 1). In wartime, it would include, as an example, half of the supplies that NATO forces would require.<sup>5</sup> The U.S. ability to respond militarily

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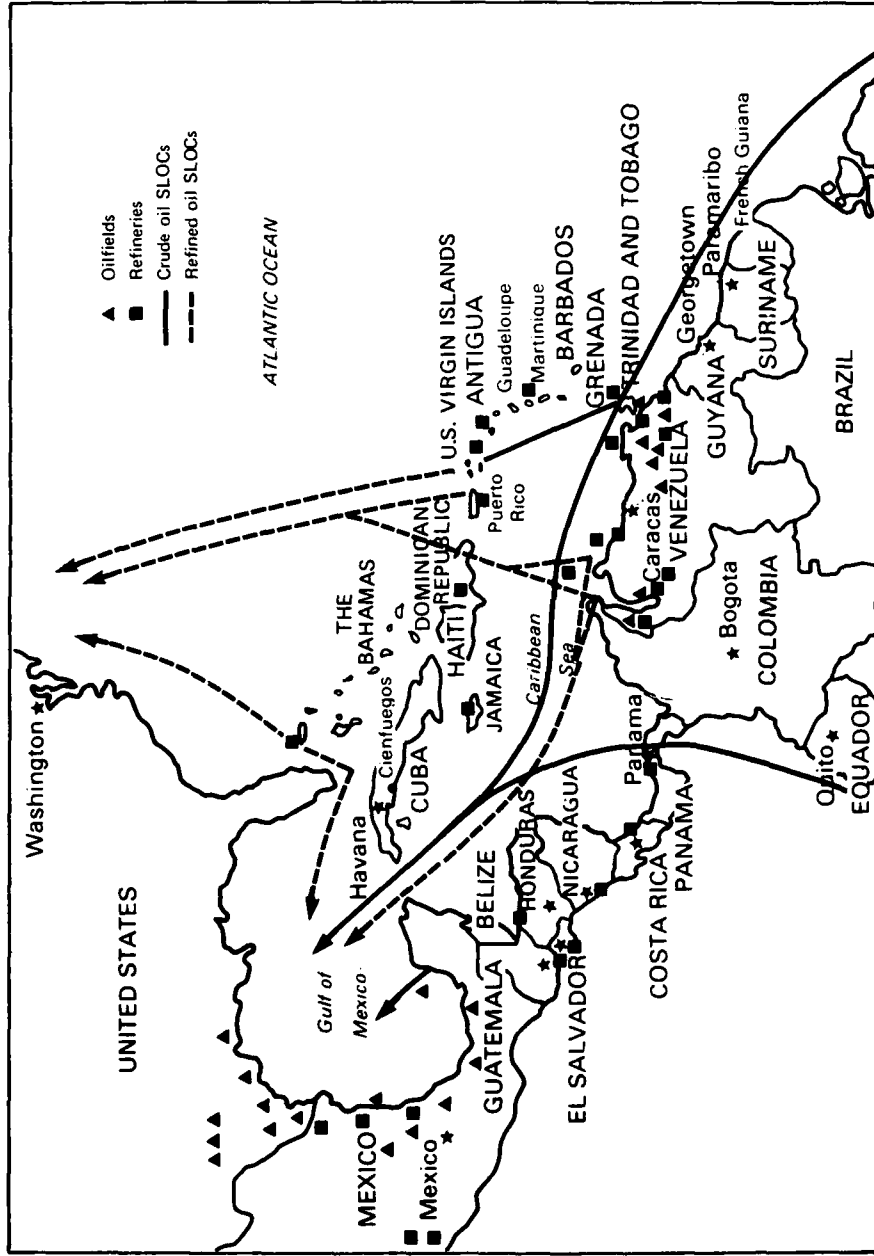
*Economic Change, Volume 2: Energy and Materials: A Shortage of Resources or Commitment?* 96th Congress, 2nd Session, Washington, D.C., December 1, 1980, p. 218.

<sup>3</sup>See R. Nehring, "Prospects for Conventional World Oil Resources," *Annual Review of Energy*, Jack M. Hollander et al. (eds.), 1982, p. 179. This estimate incorporates both proved and probable reserves of crude oil and natural gas liquids. It is based on Pemex's estimate of proved reserves of 47.2 billion bbl as of December 31, 1980, less 11.2 of the 12.2 billion bbl in Chicontepec, plus 9 billion bbl probable (mostly offshore in Campeche).

<sup>4</sup>*Petroleum Supply Monthly*, Energy Information Administration, Washington, D.C., May 1983, p. 49.

<sup>5</sup>See *The Security Threat in the Caribbean and Central America*, Testimony by the Honorable Fred C. Ikle, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Before the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 15 December, 1981, p. 5.





Source: Richard Sim and James Anderson, "The Caribbean Strategic Vacuum," *Conflict Studies*, The Institute for the Study of Conflict, August 1980.

Fig. 1 — Oil fields, refineries, and SLOCs in the Caribbean Basin

to a major Middle East crisis would also depend in large measure upon secure transit through the Basin. To help guard these vital seaways, as well as the Basin's petroleum reserves and refineries, the United States maintains facilities at Guantanamo in Cuba, and in Puerto Rico and Panama. Together, these basing facilities form a security triangle that would oppose a "hostile triangle" now emerging as a result of the Cuban-Nicaraguan-Grenadan nexus that straddles the primary Caribbean and South Atlantic SLOCs.

The following profiles are divided into three major categories of analysis--geopolitical, geostrategic, and U.S. military presence--for the 1960 and 1980 periods. Each category examines the principal dimensions of change within the Basin that are affecting or could affect U.S. security interests and U.S. society directly. The *geopolitical* section profiles some of the changing political environment of the Basin, patterns of foreign trade and investment, the economic performance of certain Basin countries, primary population and migration trends, and military postures of selected countries. The *geostrategic* section then shows some of the changes occurring within this environment as a result of the continuing expansion of Cuban and Soviet influence throughout the region. Finally, the section dealing with the U.S. military presence outlines the reduction in U.S. military installations, numbers of personnel assigned, and dollar amounts of security assistance being provided to Basin nations.

In combination, the sections that follow will show that the Basin has changed far more than common public images recognize and more than is recognized by many strategists who may be preoccupied with U.S. security problems elsewhere in the world. They will also show that the linkages between the United States and the Caribbean Basin have assumed new importance for U.S. national interests, and that the United States may face new security concerns as a result of these developments and trends in the Basin.

The approach used in this study seeks to systematically inventory the conditions prevailing in the Caribbean Basin in the two time sequences, rather than to suggest specific policy or to recommend action. Therefore, the objective has been to develop relevant

contextual profiles--based on aggregate statistical data--that would be useful to the U.S. policymaking community. More in-depth analyses and recommendations concerning policy and security issues affecting the Basin can be found in studies that examine specific countries or strategic concerns.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>See Edward Gonzalez, *A Strategy for Dealing with Cuba in the 1980s*, R-2954-DOS/AF, September 1982. The following Rand studies should also be of interest: David J. Myers, *Venezuela's Pursuit of Caribbean Basin Interests: Implications for U.S. National Security*, R-2994-/AF, forthcoming; Caesar D. Sereseres, *Military Politics, Internal Warfare, and U.S. Policy in Guatemala*, R-2996-/AF, forthcoming; Adriana Bosch-Lemus, *Nicaragua: The Internationalization of Conflict and Politics in Central America*, R-2998-AF, forthcoming; and David F. Ronfeldt, *Geopolitics, Security, and U.S. Strategy in the Caribbean Basin*, R-2997-AF, forthcoming.

## II. GEOPOLITICAL PROFILES: 1960 AND 1980

The social, economic, and political-military landscape of the Caribbean Basin has altered considerably over the past two decades. The geopolitical profiles that follow will examine the contrasting patterns of this landscape as they appeared in 1960 and in 1980. Five specific conditions will be highlighted in this comparison:

1. *Political*: Emergence of independent nations, changes in European influence, decline of U.S. presence
2. *Foreign Trade and Investment*: U.S.-Latin American interdependent commercial relationship, changes in direct investment ratios, decline in U.S. shares of import-export trade
3. *Economic Performance*: Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth, GDP per capita ratios, relation of economic growth to population growth
4. *Population and Migration*: Population growth throughout the region, increases in density (islands, mainland, cities), doubling of population, increases in numbers of young (0-14), social and political implications, migration trends
5. *Military*: Individual nation strength: Total armed forces, annual defense budgets, personnel and weapons inventories of selected countries, size and importance of paramilitary forces.

### POLITICAL

In 1960, the islands of the Caribbean from the Gulf of Mexico to the coast of South America--from Jamaica to Trinidad--were, with few exceptions, European or U.S. possessions. The exceptions were Hispaniola, containing the sovereign countries of the Dominican Republic and Haiti, and Cuba, the largest of the islands. Cuba was in the second year of its revolution; the rest of the Caribbean, to outward appearances, was tranquil. In 1962, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago were granted their independence by the United Kingdom. The next decade

witnessed the withdrawal of the primary European countries--England and the Netherlands--from many of their Caribbean possessions, and the emergence of ten new island and littoral nations.

The history of political independence in the Caribbean can be graphically divided into two periods of activity, separated by a 60-year hiatus (Fig. 2). Each of the periods represents the emergence of 12 independent nations, although they differ in size and importance. The dramatic difference between the two periods is that although the first group of nations evolved over a full century, the second group came about in a concentrated surge of activity spanning only the past 20 or so years.

This record of national evolution begins in the 19th century with the emergence of Haiti as a sovereign entity in 1804. The next hundred years saw the breaking of colonial bonds in the principal states of Central America (1821-1841), and in the Dominican Republic (1844) and Cuba (1898), ending with the declaration of the independence of Panama in 1903. Both Cuban and Panamanian independence followed the first occurrences of U.S. intervention in Latin America. With Panama's emergence as a republic, the first stage of national evolution in the Caribbean came to a close.

The events of main importance during the ensuing 60 years were partly regional--for example, revolutions in Mexico at the beginning and in Cuba at the end of the period--but largely extraregional, owing to two world wars and their profound international repercussions. One singular phenomenon in the wake of World War II was the dissolution, worldwide, of old colonial ties--in Africa, in Asia, and ultimately throughout most of the Caribbean Basin. After Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago had established their independence from the United Kingdom in 1962, other British island and rim territories followed: Barbados (1966), Guyana (1966), Bahamas (1973), Grenada (1974), Dominica (1978), Saint Lucia (1979), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (1979), Antigua and Barbuda (1981), and Belize (1981). The Netherlands granted Suriname its independence in 1975. Of the 11 political possessions remaining in the Caribbean today, some will surely gain independence and others will presumably seek alternative methods of accommodating the general tendency toward national liberation.

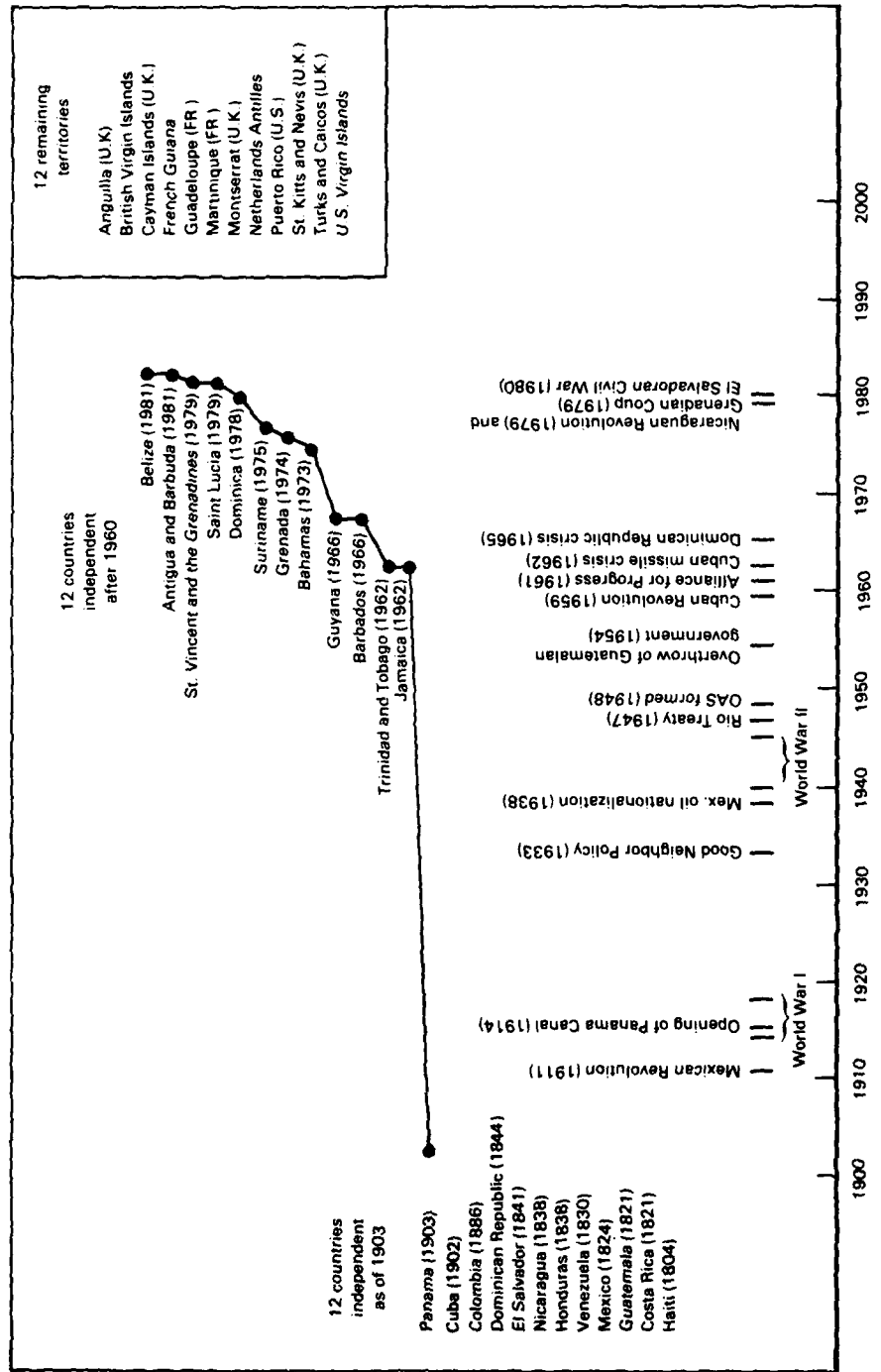


Fig. 2 - Geopolitical changes and critical events in the Caribbean Basin in the 20th century

By 1982, therefore, the colonial influence of England, France, and the Netherlands had been largely dissipated in the region, although each still retains certain islands in the Eastern Caribbean. Another type of European influence has been introduced, in the form of strong commercial competition and, more recently, of political support for revolutionary movements in the area, particularly in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

In the meantime, U.S. political influence in the Basin had also declined. The United States found itself in 1982 confronted with a vastly altered Caribbean environment. Although it remains the primary actor in the region, it now shares its influence not only with its European allies as in the old relationship, but also with Mexico and Venezuela as newly emergent regional powers. More critically, the United States is being contested by the Soviet Union and by Cuba, which has become a major Soviet client with a military capability dwarfing all other Basin actors except the United States.

#### **ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN THE BASIN 1960-1980**

Between 1960 and 1980, the Caribbean Basin underwent rapid and often very dramatic economic and demographic change. The broad outlines of those changes are currently visible, but their implications both for the countries in the Basin and for the United States will be felt throughout the coming decade. The most important of these changes can be summarized briefly:

- Despite some notable exceptions, the Basin experienced extremely rapid economic growth. For example, the total gross domestic product of the Basin grew at an average annual rate of almost 7 percent--approximately two-thirds faster than the U.S. economy during the same period.
- The Basin's trade with other regions expanded at a similar clip, often at the expense of the United States, traditionally the dominant trading partner with the region. For example, although the constant dollar value of trade between the United States and the Basin increased substantially--imports up 218 percent and exports up 251 percent--this trade was a smaller

share of total trade both for the United States and for the Basin countries than was the case in 1960.

- Finally, the population living in the Basin soared from a 1960 total of a little less than 94 million to almost 160 million, or an average growth of almost 3 percent per year. (See Table 1.) This rapid growth generated considerable pressure on the economic resources in many Basin countries and in the process spawned a threefold increase in legal immigration into the United States from the Basin.

Should these trends continue, they will have several important consequences both for the countries in the Basin and for U.S. relations with those countries, including:

- The pressures of rapidly growing populations will pose an increasing challenge to the efforts of many of the Basin's countries to satisfy the rising expectations of their populations and to sustain real economic growth.
- The likelihood that Basin countries will differ substantially in their success in slowing population growth and accelerating economic development could increase political tensions among Basin countries and correspondingly complicate U.S. relations with the Basin.
- Concurrent with the increasing problems facing Basin countries and U.S. relations with these countries, the traditional source of U.S. leverage in the Basin, our dominant economic power, will be increasingly challenged by competition from outside the region.

#### **ECONOMIC GROWTH AND INCOME TRENDS**

A major characteristic of the 1960 to 1980 period in the Caribbean Basin is the very rapid economic growth that most of the countries in the region enjoyed. The gross domestic product (GDP) of the average country in the Basin grew about 5 percent per year, compared with a U.S. figure of only a little more than 3 percent. However, the pattern of economic growth in the region was uneven with many of the largest



Table 1

POPULATION GROWTH IN CARIBBEAN BASIN, 1960 TO 1979

Country	Total Population Size <sup>a</sup>		Population Change 1960 to 1979	
	1960	1979	Absolute <sup>a</sup>	Annual Growth Rate (%)
Antigua	55	74	19	1.6
Bahamas	112	236	124	4.0
Barbados	232	279	47	1.0
Belize	92	152	60	2.7
British Virgin Islands	7	12	5	2.9
Cayman Islands	8	17	9	4.0
Colombia	15,953	26,205	10,252	2.6
Costa Rica	1,248	2,184	936	3.0
Cuba	7,027	9,824	2,797	1.8
Dominica	60	78	18	1.4
Dominican Republic	3,159	5,551	2,392	3.0
El Salvador	2,574	4,662	2,088	3.2
French Guiana	32	63	31	3.6
Grenada	90	106	16	0.9
Guadeloupe	273	312	39	0.7
Guatemala	3,969	6,849	2,880	2.9
Guyana	571	832	261	2.0
Haiti	3,723	5,670	1,947	2.2
Honduras	1,952	3,645	1,693	3.3
Jamaica	1,632	2,215	583	1.6
Martinique	283	310	27	0.5
Mexico	36,182	65,770	29,588	3.2
Montserrat	12	11	-1	-0.5
Netherland Antilles	194	240	46	1.1
Nicaragua	1,438	2,365	927	2.7
Panama	1,112	1,876	764	2.8
Puerto Rico	2,358	3,395	1,037	1.9
St. Chris-Nevis-Anguilla	57	57	-0-	-0-
St. Lucia	88	121	33	1.7
St. Vincent & Grenadines	81	111	30	1.7
Suriname	285	404	119	1.9
Trinidad & Tobago	840	1,150	310	1.7
Turks & Caicos	6	7	1	0.8
Venezuela	7,632	14,539	6,907	3.5
U.S. Virgin Islands	33	99	66	6.0
All countries	93,370	159,421	66,051	2.9

SOURCE: Bureau of Census, World Population 1979, USGPO, Washington, D.C.

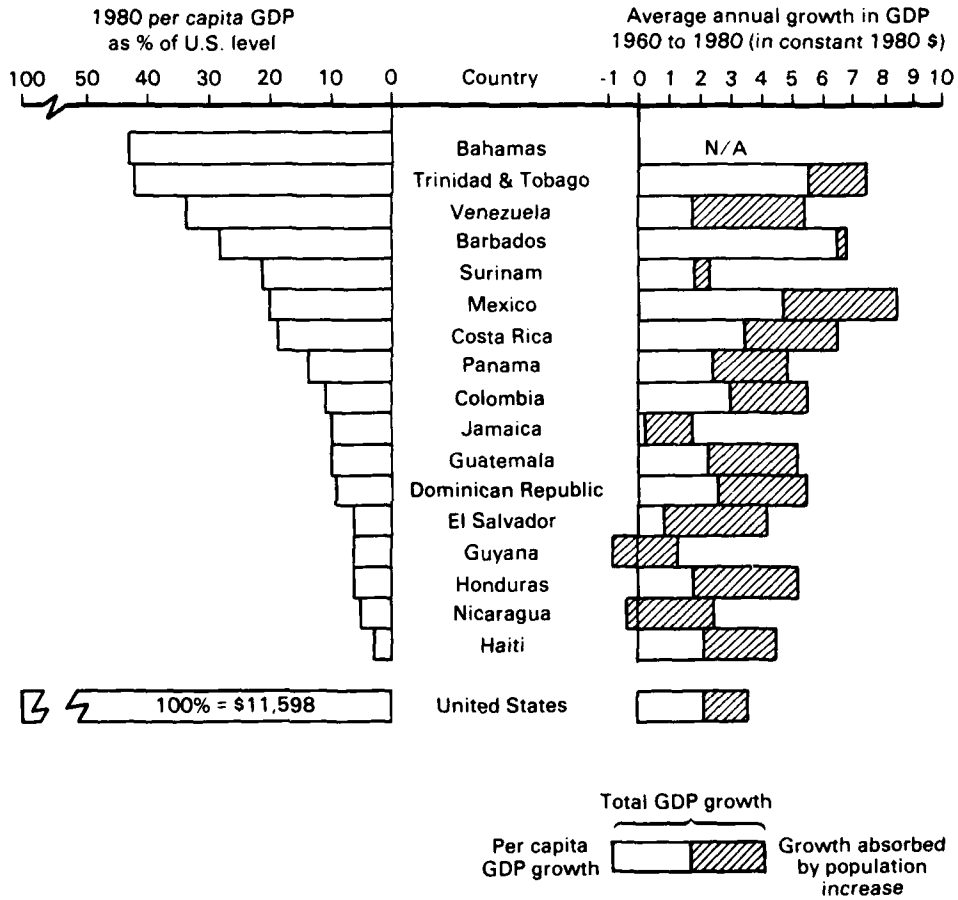
<sup>a</sup>Reported in thousands.

countries enjoying even more rapid growth. Mexico, for example, the largest economy in the Basin, averaged an annual growth of over 8 percent in its GDP; Venezuela, the second largest economy in the Basin, experienced a growth rate of almost 5.5 percent. As a result, the GDP of the Basin as a whole grew an average of 6.9 percent per year. All but four of the Basin's economies grew at average annual rates that exceeded that of the United States (see Fig. 3).

Many factors contributed to the rapid economic growth in the Basin, including:

- The discovery and development of large oil reserves in several countries, including Mexico and Venezuela, and the establishment and expansion of large refining facilities in such countries as Trinidad and Tobago and the Bahamas.
- The persistent and massive inflows of U.S. capital into the region. Between 1960 and 1980, for example, the American government and U.S. businesses poured almost \$340 billion into the economies of Caribbean Basin countries.
- Throughout this period, the Basin countries experienced a veritable explosion of trade with the rest of the world. For example, the constant dollar volume of the Basin's exports to the United States increased from approximately \$8 billion per year to over \$25 billion--yet the U.S. share of total Basin exports declined from 19 percent to 12 percent, owing to the rise in Basin exports to Western Europe, Japan, Canada and other trading partners. A similar phenomenon occurred with respect to U.S. exports to the Basin.

Although this economic growth produced noticeable improvements in the standards of living in many Basin countries during the two decades (see Table 2), it certainly did not solve the basic economic problems confronting many of the Basin countries or eliminate the income gap between the United States and the Basin. Income levels in every country in the Basin, for example, fell far below U.S. standards, as is depicted in the left side of Fig. 3. This includes even the highest income



Source: Business International Corporation, *BI/DATA Time Series* (based on data from the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the International Labour Organisation and the World Bank), New York, 1982.

Fig. 3 – Income and economic growth in major Basin countries

Table 2

COMPARISON OF SELECTED HEALTH AND NUTRITION INDICATORS IN  
MAJOR CARIBBEAN BASIN COUNTRIES, 1960 AND 1979

Country	Indicator by Year							
	Life Expectancy (in years)		Infant Mortality Rate <sup>a</sup>		Population per Physician		Calories per Capita <sup>b</sup>	
	1960	1979	1960	1979	1960	1979	1960	1979
Bahamas	62.6	69.0	52.0	25.0	1,700	1,480	93	100
Barbados	62.7	71.0	60.0	28.0	2,800 <sup>c</sup>	1,468	110	133
Colombia	53.0	62.0	N/A	98.0 <sup>d</sup>	2,400	1,820	94	94
Costa Rica	62.0	70.0	85.0 <sup>e</sup>	37.6	2,600	1,550	98 <sup>c</sup>	113
Cuba	64.0	72.0	N/A	N/A	1,200	1,110	115 <sup>c</sup>	117
Dominican Republic	51.0	60.0	N/A	96.0 <sup>f</sup>	2,100 <sup>c</sup>	1,870 <sup>d</sup>	92	98
El Salvador	50.0	63.0	N/A	108.0 <sup>d</sup>	5,400	3,459 <sup>g</sup>	82	84
Grenada	62.9	69.0	77.9	23.5	4,500 <sup>h</sup>	3,820	79	89
Guatemala	47.0	57.0	87.1 <sup>h</sup>	77.0	4,200 <sup>h</sup>	2,500	86	91
Guyana	59.3	70.0	N/A	50.0 <sup>i</sup>	8,100	3,270	101	104
Haiti	42.0	51.0	N/A	150.0 <sup>f</sup>	10,600	11,170	81	90
Honduras	46.0	57.0	130.0	103.0	N/A	3,300	84	90
Jamaica	64.0	69.5	63.0	22.0 <sup>d</sup>	2,60	3,510	91	119
Mexico	58.0	64.7	78.0	74.0 <sup>d</sup>	1,700	1,440	107	117
Nicaragua	47.0	55.0	N/A	122.0 <sup>j</sup>	2,700	1,540	93	106
Panama	62.0	70.0	90.0	47.0	2,700	1,270	102	105
Suriname	58.7	68.0	N/A	39.0 <sup>c</sup>	2,400 <sup>e</sup>	2,030	84	105
Trinidad & Tobago	63.0	69.5	45.0	26.9	2,550	1,960	100	105
Venezuela	59.0	66.4	72.0	51.0 <sup>d</sup>	1,500	870	90	98

SOURCE: World Bank, World Tables, 1980, Tables 2 and 4.

N/A = not available.

<sup>a</sup>Per 1000 live births.

<sup>b</sup>Percentage of minimum requirements.

<sup>c</sup>1970.

<sup>d</sup>1973.

<sup>e</sup>1963.

<sup>f</sup>1965-1970.

<sup>g</sup>1978.

<sup>h</sup>1962.

<sup>i</sup>1972.

<sup>j</sup>1970-1975.

countries in the Basin, the Bahamas, and Trinidad and Tobago, where, despite rapid economic growth, income levels remained at less than half those in the United States. In the majority of the Basin countries, income levels remained at less than 20 percent of those in the United States by 1980. Despite economic growth rates that far exceeded those in the United States, the standard of living in most Basin countries remained well below any reasonable standard of poverty in the United States

### **Population Growth and Immigration Trends**

One important reason for the disparity between the rate of economic growth and level of living standards is the rapid pace of population growth in the Basin. The effect of population growth on the efforts of the Basin's countries to translate growth in their economies into higher income levels for their populations is depicted in the right side of the Fig. 3, which decomposes the average annual growth in GDP between 1960 and 1980 into per capita income growth and economic growth absorbed by population increase. In all but a few countries, at least half of the average annual increase in economic output was needed simply to keep pace with a rapidly expanding population; and in Guyana and Nicaragua, the population actually grew faster than the economy, resulting in a decline in real incomes. Only four of the Basin's 16 major countries experienced economic growth rates that were below those in the United States, but of those with higher rates, only seven countries were able to translate that economic growth into real income gains versus the United States.

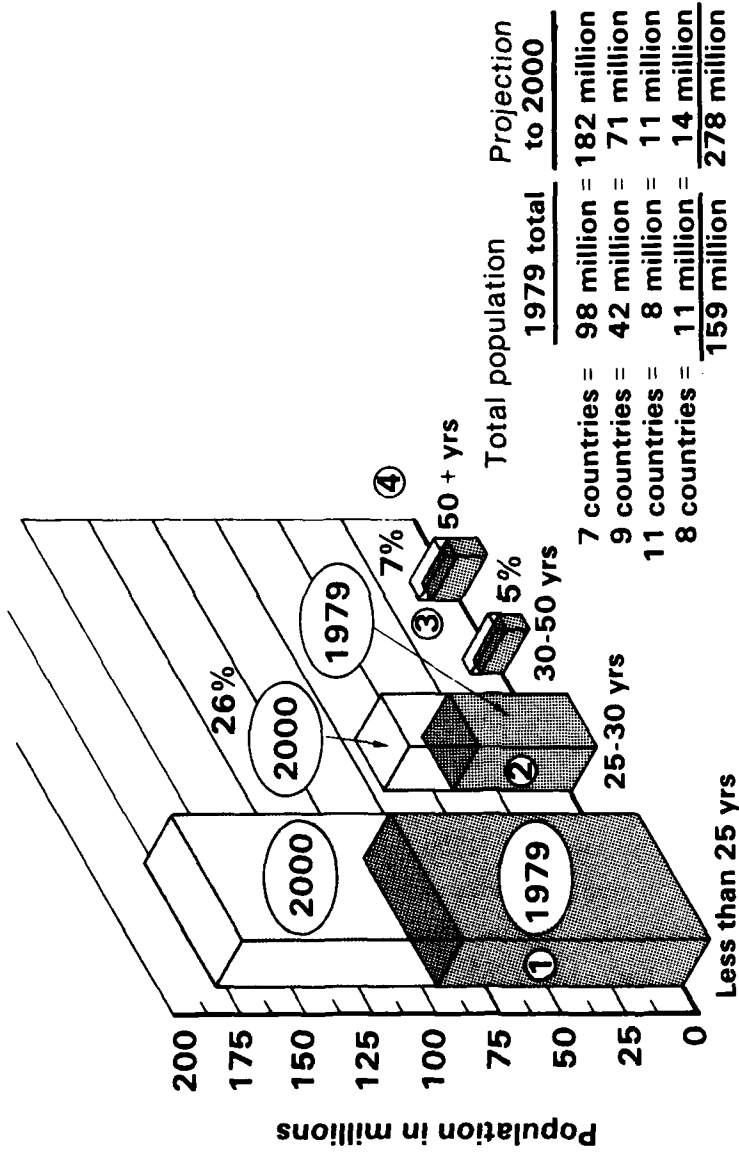
Unless this rate of population growth is severely curtailed, the prospects of meeting what are certain to be rising expectations on the part of a growing and increasingly important middle class are almost certain to be frustrated. Such recent economic events as the falling price of oil and the growing difficulties Basin countries face in trying to repay a mounting foreign debt further suggest that many of these countries will be unable to sustain rates of economic growth that approach those of the last 20 years. Mexico, for example, which experienced the fastest economic growth of any country in the Basin

between 1960 and 1980, is now confronting the prospect of negative economic growth for the next two years. Nonetheless, its population continues to grow at approximately 2.5 percent per year.

The dimension of the problem that population growth poses for these countries is illustrated by Fig. 4, which shows the volume and pace of population growth in the Basin. It indicates the distribution of the Basin's countries' population by the time required for their populations to double and their projected populations in the year 2000 at their current rates of growth. Currently, 62 percent of the Basin's population (or 98 million persons) live in countries whose populations are expected to double in less than 25 years. If these countries continue to grow at present rates, their populations will soar from a current total of nearly 100 million to almost 180 million by the year 2000. Moreover, an additional 26 percent of the Basin's population, or approximately 42 million persons, live in countries whose populations will double in 25 to 30 years and thus would add another 30 million persons to the Basin by the year 2000. In sum, approximately 90 percent of the Basin's population lives in countries whose population will double in about 30 years. The doubling time of the U.S. population, by contrast, is almost 90 years. If these trends continue, the Basin's current population of 160 million people, which is 66 million fewer than that in the United States, could reach 278 million, or 11 million more than the United States, by the year 2000.

The political and economic importance of these differentials arises not only from the differences in the absolute number of people to be added to the population but also from the sources of that population increase. In the United States, for example, a considerable fraction of current population growth, and an even larger share of future growth, will be attributable to immigrants. Throughout the Basin, by contrast, the lion's share of current growth and almost all of the future population growth will result from *natural* increase.

This distinction is important because natural increase and immigration affect a country's economic and social development in very different ways. Immigration principally increases a country's population by adding young adults who, because they come to work, can add immediately to the economic wealth of their new countries.



Source: *World Population 1979*, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C., 1980.

Fig. 4 — Distribution of Basin population by doubling time at current annual rate of population growth

Moreover, because their schooling and initial training have been acquired at the expense of the countries from which they emigrate, they often minimize the training costs the host country must bear. Natural increase, by contrast, augments a population with infants who must be raised, educated, and trained before they can be expected to add to the local economy. In economies that are already hard pressed to supply jobs for their current labor force entrants, providing the services necessary to train, much less gainfully employ, such new entrants can be a real burden to what are already overburdened economies. See Table 3 for the 1960 and 1980 age structure.

The dimensions of the problems rapid natural increase can impose on a developing economy are suggested by Fig. 5, which shows the current and projected age structures of Mexico. Currently, there are approximately 22 million Mexicans under 10 years old. If Mexico's rate of natural increase were to decline to U.S. levels in ten years--a highly unlikely prospect--Mexico would still need to provide training and jobs for twice as many 20-year-olds as there are today. Moreover, if the Mexican population continues to grow at its current rate, the current population of 22 million Mexicans under 10 today would swell to 40 million by the year 2000. Similar problems exist throughout the Basin.

Clearly, such rapid growth must be curtailed if Mexico and other demographically similar countries are to have a reasonable chance to solve their current economic problems, meet the rising expectations of their burgeoning middle classes, and confront the longer-term problems of economic development. Alternatively, the potential for economic and political problems within each country and the likelihood of conflicts among bordering states are almost certain to mushroom.

The consequences of this emerging population crisis will be felt immediately by the Basin countries themselves as they attempt to cope with the economic, social, and political problems engendered by rapid growth. In addition, policymakers in these countries will face increasingly difficult choices about where to target their economic development efforts and whose interests to satisfy. Should they emphasize the more industrialized urban sector and in the process seek



Table 3

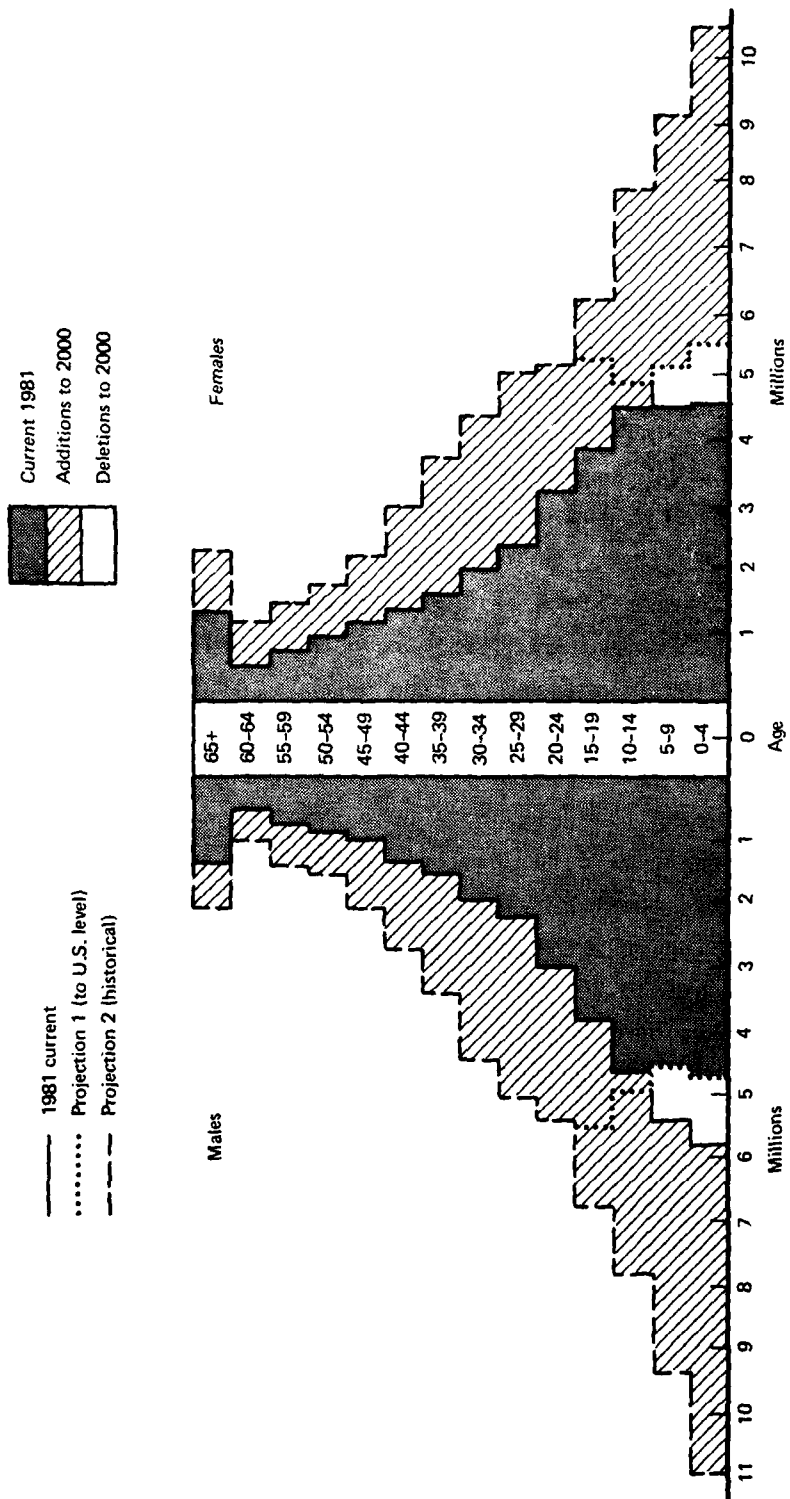
AGE STRUCTURE OF CARIBBEAN BASIN COUNTRIES, 1960 AND 1980

Country	Distribution of Population by Age (%) and Year					
	0-14 Years		15-64 Years		65 Years and Over	
	1960	MRE	1960	MRE	1960	MRE
Antigua & Barbuda	34.4	44.0	60.2	50.7	5.4	5.0
Bahamas	44.1	41.0	52.3	55.0	3.6	4.0
Barbados	38.3	32.0	55.3	58.8	6.4	9.2
Belize	N/A	49.3 <sup>a</sup>	N/A	46.4 <sup>a</sup>	N/A	4.3 <sup>a</sup>
British Virgin Islands	N/A	39.2	N/A	55.6	N/A	5.2
Cayman Islands	N/A	37.1	N/A	51.9	N/A	7.2
Colombia	46.0	38.0	51.0	59.0	3.0	3.0
Costa Rica	47.6	41.0	49.3	56.0	3.1	3.0
Cuba	35.5	37.0	60.6	57.0	3.9	6.0
Dominica	44.7	N/A	49.8	N/A	5.5	N/A
Dominican Republic	46.8	47.0	50.3	50.0	2.9	3.0
El Salvador	45.8	46.0	51.0	51.0	3.2	3.0
Grenada	47.6	44.0	47.2	50.0	5.2	6.0
Guadeloupe	41.6	N/A	53.9	N/A	4.5	N/A
Guatemala	45.7	43.3	51.5	53.6	2.8	3.1
Guyana	46.6	41.0	50.2	55.0	3.2	4.0
Haiti	39.0	40.0	58.0	56.0	3.0	4.0
Honduras	45.5	47.0	52.0	50.0	2.5	3.0
Jamaica	41.7	44.0	54.0	50.0	4.3	6.0
Martinique	41.4	N/A	53.8	N/A	4.7	N/A
Mexico	45.6	45.9	51.0	50.6	3.4	3.5
Montserrat	N/A	39.8	N/A	49.5	N/A	10.8
Netherland Antilles	40.8	38.0	55.4	56.6	3.9	5.4
Nicaragua	47.8	48.4	49.7	49.2	2.5	2.4
Panama	43.7	42.2	52.3	54.0	4.0	3.8
Puerto Rico	42.7	36.5 <sup>a</sup>	52.1	57.0 <sup>a</sup>	5.2	6.5 <sup>a</sup>
St. Chris. & Nevis	N/A	42.3	N/A	49.9	N/A	7.8
St. Lucia	44.2	49.6 <sup>a</sup>	51.0	45.1 <sup>a</sup>	4.8	5.3 <sup>a</sup>
St. Vincent & Grenadines	49.2	N/A	46.6	N/A	4.2	N/A
Suriname	48.0	49.0	48.0	48.0	4.0	3.0
Trinidad & Tobago	42.8	37.0	53.2	58.0	4.0	5.0
Turks & Caicos	N/A	47.1	N/A	46.7	N/A	6.2
U.S. Virgin Islands	39.8	35.7 <sup>a</sup>	53.3	60.5 <sup>a</sup>	6.9	3.8 <sup>a</sup>
Venezuela	46.0	43.7	51.3	53.0	2.7	3.3

SOURCES: World Tables, World Bank, 1980, and United Nations Demographic Yearbooks 1961 and 1979.

NOTES: MRE = most recent post-1970 estimate.  
N/A = not available.

<sup>a</sup>1970.



Source: Mexico Demografico, Breviario, 1980-81. Consejo Nacional de Poblacion, Mexico City, 1982.

Fig. 5 ~ Comparison of Mexico's current and projected age/sex structure

to satisfy the aspirations of a small but articulate middle class? Or should they aim instead at rural development and the aspirations of the large and growing numbers of landless peasants whose simmering frustrations may reach the boiling point? Such choices are difficult even without sustained population growth, because they inextricably intertwine basic economic, political, and nationalistic considerations, as is clearly illustrated by the current situations in Mexico and El Salvador. To the extent that continued rapid population growth further inhibits the ability of these and other Basin countries to satisfy the economic and social aspirations of their residents, it may also continue to spark political unrest and foster a growing demand for revolutionary change that could threaten U.S. strategic and economic interests in the Basin.

Traditionally, the problems of rapid population growth in the Basin have been relieved by immigration both within and outside the region. Estimates based on 1979 data indicate, for example, that 19 of the Basin countries, containing 120 million persons or almost 90 percent of the total population, sent over 250,000 *legal* immigrants to destinations outside their boundaries (see Fig. 6). Only about 60,000, or 25 percent, of those emigrants were absorbed by the nine countries in the Basin that were still receiving immigrants. The rest, or 75 percent of the total, left the region primarily for the United States. In addition to this flow of almost 250,000 legal immigrants, the Basin countries sent an unknown number of illegal immigrants to other countries, including a substantial number of undocumented Mexicans to the United States, as well as sizable numbers of Salvadorans and Guatemalans to both the United States and Mexico.

Continued rapid population growth in the Basin will only intensify these migration pressures both within and outside the region. Moreover, because many of the countries currently importing migrants in the region are also experiencing rapid natural increase--e.g., Venezuela--they are unlikely to be willing to continue to absorb the surplus populations from neighboring countries. Indeed, with economic growth slowing down in much of the Basin, the spillover of migrants from the poorer countries into the more wealthy countries may well increase tensions

within the region. These pressures could be particularly intense if the split between the rapid and slow growth countries overlaps the split between the Spanish- and English-speaking countries. The English-speaking countries generally have much lower rates of natural increase than their Spanish-speaking counterparts.

The prospects for increasing conflict within the region over the migration issue are almost certain to increase the flow of emigrants out of the region. With previous destinations--for example, Britain--now severely limiting migration from their former colonies, a natural destination for those migrants will be the United States. Indeed, the signs of that movement were already clear between 1950 and 1980, when the number of legal immigrants from Basin countries to the United States swelled from less than 500,000 during the 1950s to almost 1,500,000 during the 1970s. The number of *illegal* immigrants has been widely estimated to exceed 350,000 per year by the late 1970s. If this trend continues, the number of *legal* immigrants alone entering the United States from the Basin would reach almost 3,000,000 by the decade of the 1990s (see Fig. 7). Moreover, our ability to control even the current inflow is constrained as both immigrants and refugees come pouring over our borders. We are turning into the country of first asylum for the economic and political refugees who leave the region.

How we respond to these pressures may well affect not just our relations with the countries in the Basin but also political and economic conditions in the United States. For example, if we refuse to absorb a large portion of the potential migrants, we face the prospects of increasing tensions with many of the Basin countries. These could well have ramifications for our foreign, strategic, and economic policy interests in the region. This possibility is already evident in our relations with Mexico with whom the issue of immigration spills over into other policy areas. If, however, we attempt to absorb a substantial portion of what is almost certain to be an increasing number of migrants from the region, we face an entirely different set of economic and political problems. For example, even if labor market conditions in the United States should change, as some have predicted,<sup>1</sup> these legal immigrants, particularly if supplemented by a sizable number

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<sup>1</sup>See William Butz et al., *Demographic Challenges in America's Future*, The Rand Corporation, R-2911-RC, April 1982.

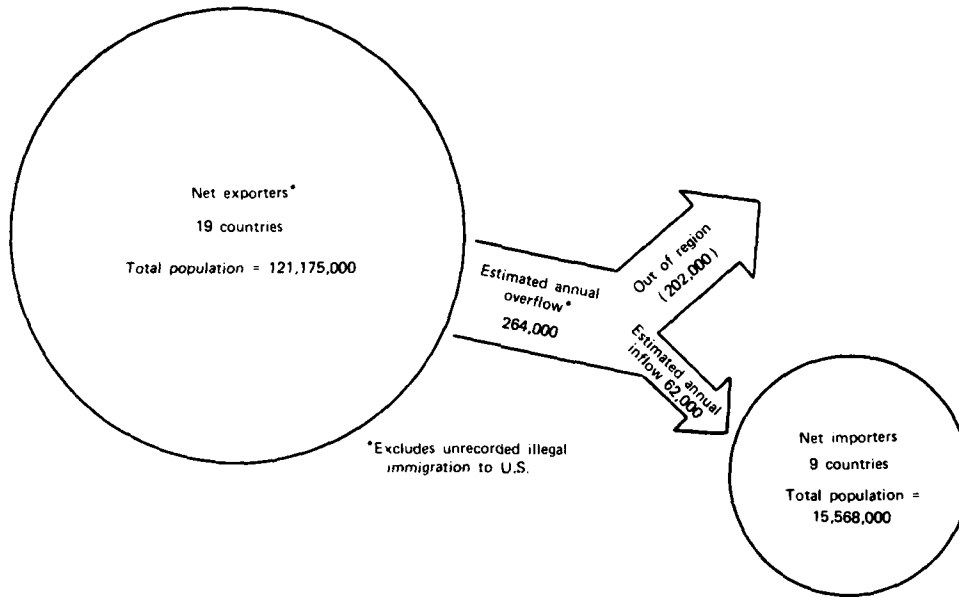
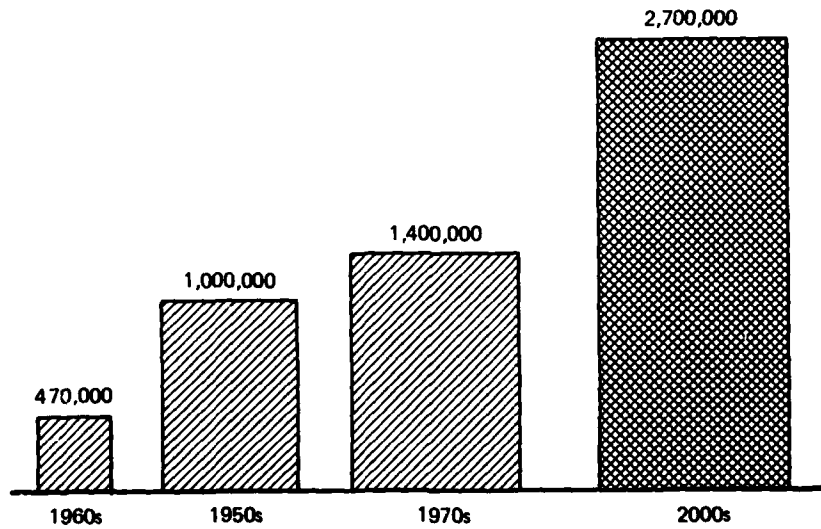


Fig. 6 – Caribbean Basin immigration patterns 1979



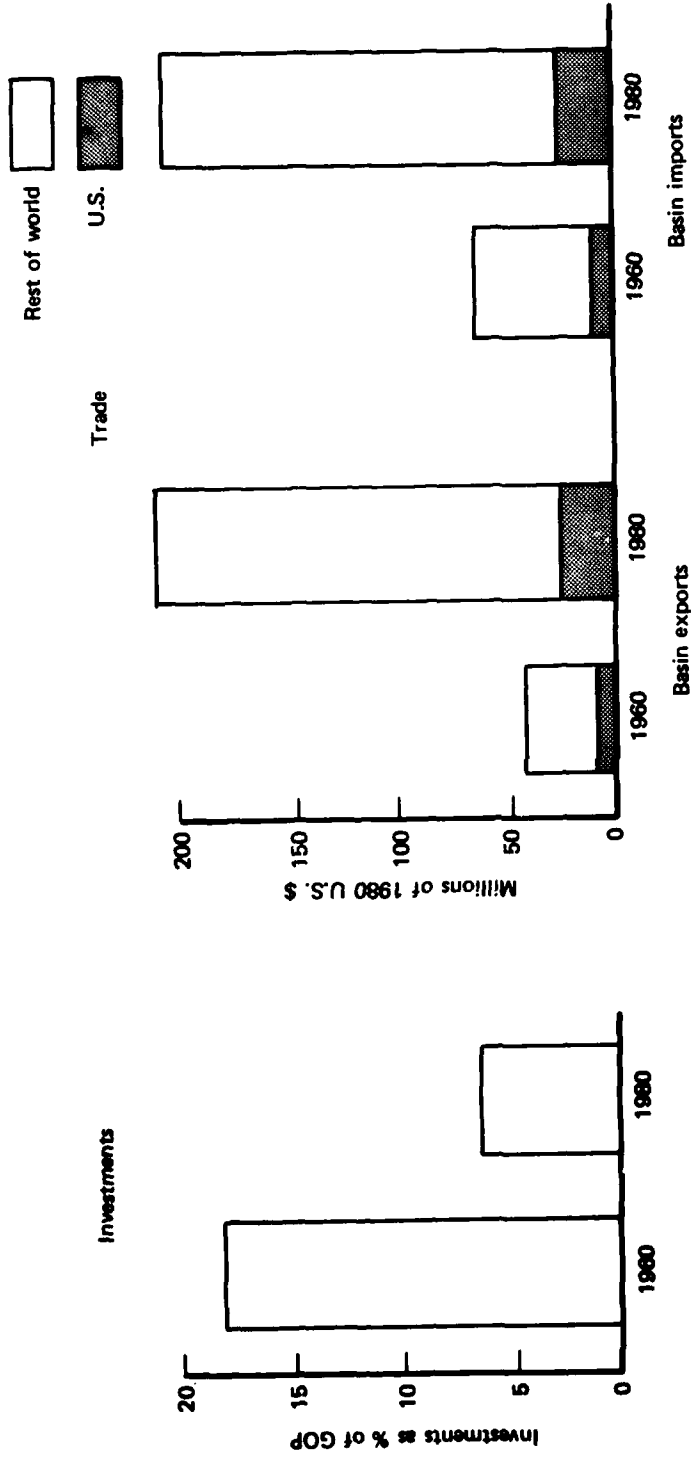
Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Nationality Service, *Statistical Yearbook of Immigration and Nationality Service: 1979*, Washington, D.C., 1982.

Fig. 7 – Caribbean Basin's immigration to U.S. 1950 to 1980 and projected total by 2000

of illegals, could well strain the absorptive capacity of the American economy and generate social tensions within the United States. Even if we are able to tailor the number of immigrants who enter to our capacity to absorb them, we will simultaneously be building new interest and pressure groups with a stake and a legitimate voice in our domestic political debate. As the case of the Cuban refugees demonstrates, such interest groups can directly affect future foreign and domestic policies.

### **Trade and Investment Trends**

Traditionally, the United States has been able to exert substantial influence over events in the Basin through its economic leverage. Although we remain today the dominant trading partner with the majority of the Basin's countries, in recent years our trading leverage has been substantially eroded by skyrocketing oil prices and increasing economic competition from Japan and Western Europe. For example, the constant dollar value of direct U.S. investments (a measure of reliance on U.S. capital) has increased less than 20 percent between 1960 and 1980, despite the vigorous economic growth of many Basin countries. See Fig. 8. Indeed, direct U.S. investments in the Basin have declined from 18 to 6 percent of the GDP of the Basin. Similarly, although the total dollar value of U.S. trade within the Basin has increased, it has failed to keep pace with the explosion of Basin trade with the rest of the world. Between 1960 and 1980, the Basin countries increased their exports to the United States by 218 percent and their imports from the United States by 251 percent (both comparisons are in constant 1980 dollars); yet these increases failed to match the volume of trade between the Basin and the rest of the world. As a result, the U.S. share of Basin exports declined from 19 percent to 12 percent and its share of imports remained constant at 12 percent (Fig. 8). These trends reflect competition from Japan and Western Europe, both of which are seeking new world markets in the face of declining domestic markets; the increasing desire of Basin countries to control investment in their countries and to spawn local import substitution industries; and a growing trend toward nationalization of foreign industries. The net



Source: *Direction of Trade, Annual 1960-64, Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook, 1974-1980, and BI/DATA Time Series.*

Fig. 8 — U.S. economic involvement with the Caribbean Basin, 1960 to 1980

effect of these trends will be a challenge to the U.S. role as the dominant economic power in the Basin.

This reduction has not occurred equally throughout the Basin. Traditionally, U.S. investment and trade with the region has been heavily targeted toward the three largest countries in the Basin--Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia. Although these three countries remain the dominant trading partners with the United States, their overall importance as a group has declined noticeably (see Fig. 9). This reduction was not equally distributed, however, since the level of U.S. investment in and trade with Mexico has increased dramatically over this period. Thus, the degree to which the U.S. trading role and hence its economic leverage has declined is actually understated in any aggregate comparison because of our special economic relationship with Mexico, the fastest growing economy in the region before 1980.

In summary, the pattern of recent demographic and economic events suggest that three major trends are likely to affect the longer-term context of U.S. relations with the Basin.

- First, the contrast between continued rapid population growth and slowing economic growth suggests the likelihood of increasing political and economic conflict within the region.
- Second, the development and population problems of the region are likely to spill over into the United States in the form of pressures for increased immigration to the United States. How we resolve those pressures will have direct effects on our relations with the countries of the Basin and, potentially, on U.S. domestic politics.
- Finally, the United States will face this new policy environment without the overwhelming economic leverage we once enjoyed.

See Table 4 for a comparison of economic growth of the major Basin countries.



Table 4

COMPARISON OF ECONOMIC GROWTH IN MAJOR CARIBBEAN BASIN COUNTRIES

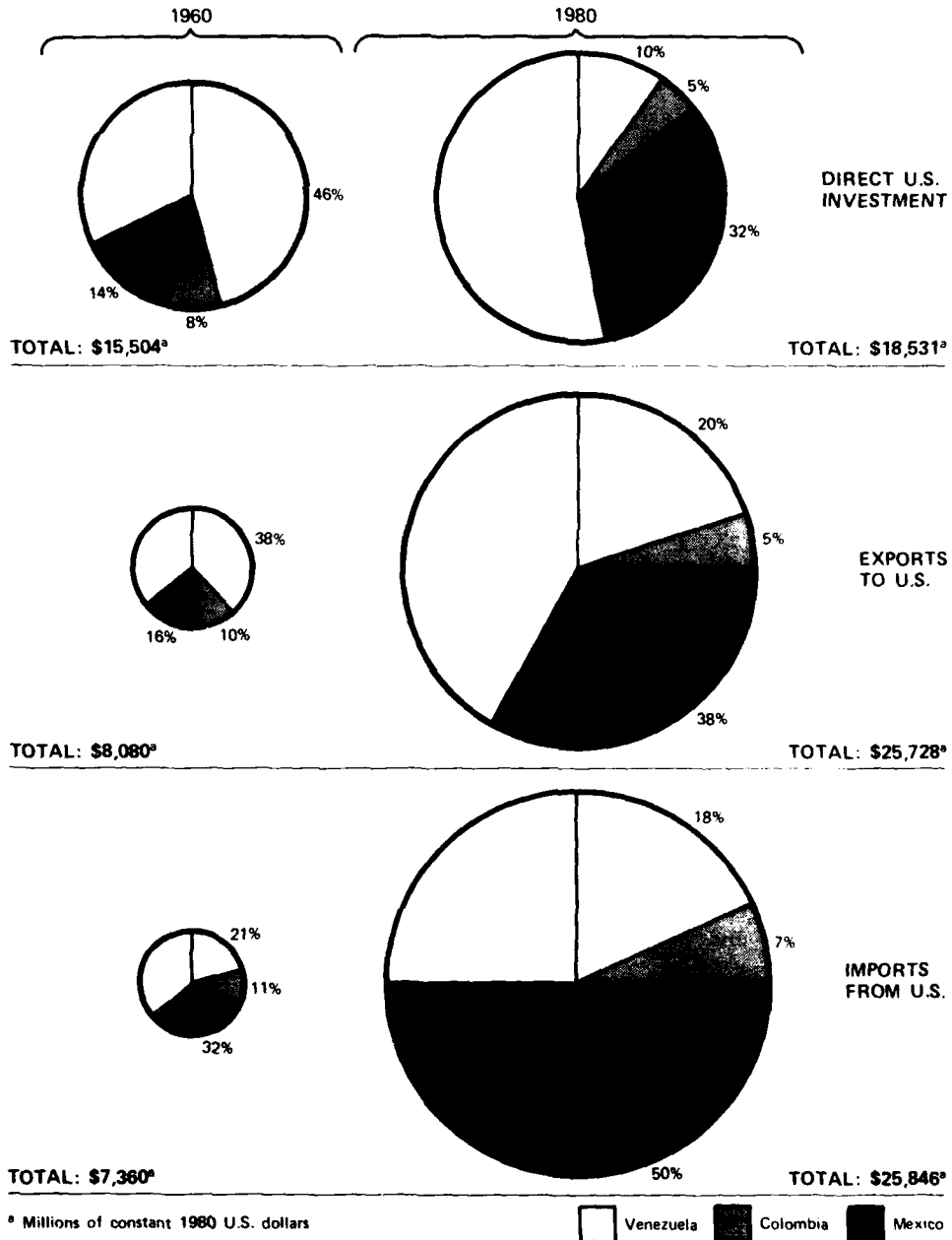
Country	Gross Domestic Product		GDP/Capita		Period
	MRE <sup>a</sup>	Average Annual Growth Rate	MRE <sup>b</sup>	Average Annual Growth Rate	
Bahamas	1,216	2.1	5,153	-1.5	1973-1979
Barbados	811	6.9	3,297	6.6	1960-1980
Colombia	32,738	5.5	1,254	3.0	1960-1980
Costa Rica	4,847	6.4	2,180	3.4	1960-1980
Cuba	14,862	N/A	1,616	N/A	1974
Dominican Republic	5,705	5.4	1,050	2.6	1960-1980
El Salvador	3,484	1.7	724	.9	1960-1980
Guadeloupe	1,329	6.7	4,301	6.6	1965-1980
Guatemala	7,852	5.1	1,113	2.2	1960-1980
Guyana	591	1.2	696	-.9	1960-1980
Haiti	1,724	4.4	304	2.1	1960-1979
Honduras	2,554	5.1	692	1.8	1960-1980
Jamaica	2,656	1.8	1,182	.2	1960-1980
Martinique	1,407	8.9	4,481	8.3	1960-1978
Mexico	165,570	8.4	2,369	4.8	1960-1980
Neth. Antilles	840	N/A	3,717	N/A	1960-1973
Nicaragua	1,468	2.3	606	-.3	1960-1980
Panama	2,979	4.9	1,622	2.3	1960-1980
Puerto Rico	13,916	5.4	4,015	3.4	1961-1980
Suriname	1,050	2.2	2,599	1.9	1972-1979
Trinidad & Tobago	5,740	7.3	4,927	5.5	1960-1980
Venezuela	60,035	5.4	3,986	1.8	1960-1980

SOURCE: Business International Corporation (on-line computer search) and Table A.2.

NOTE: MRE = most recent estimate.

<sup>a</sup>Millions of 1980 Dollars.

<sup>b</sup>1980 U.S. Dollars.



Source: *Direction of Trade, Annual 1960-64*, International Monetary Fund, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Washington, D.C., n.d.; *Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook, 1974-1980*, International Monetary Fund, 1981; and *Survey of Current Business*, United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, August 1981, Volume 61, Number 8.

Fig. 9 - U.S./Caribbean Basin economic involvement, 1960 and 1980

## MILITARY

A comparison of the military structures of the nations of the region leads to several revealing conclusions:

- In quantity, both of personnel and materiel, the military composition of most nations showed little or no growth from 1960 to 1981 (Fig. 10). The single exception is Cuba.
- In all countries except Cuba, percentages of military personnel per population have remained approximately unchanged or have declined (Fig. 11).
- The quality of weaponry also shows little improvement over this period beyond basic replacement of models and inventory, with minimal modernization, to maintain a usable force--again, the exception being Cuba.

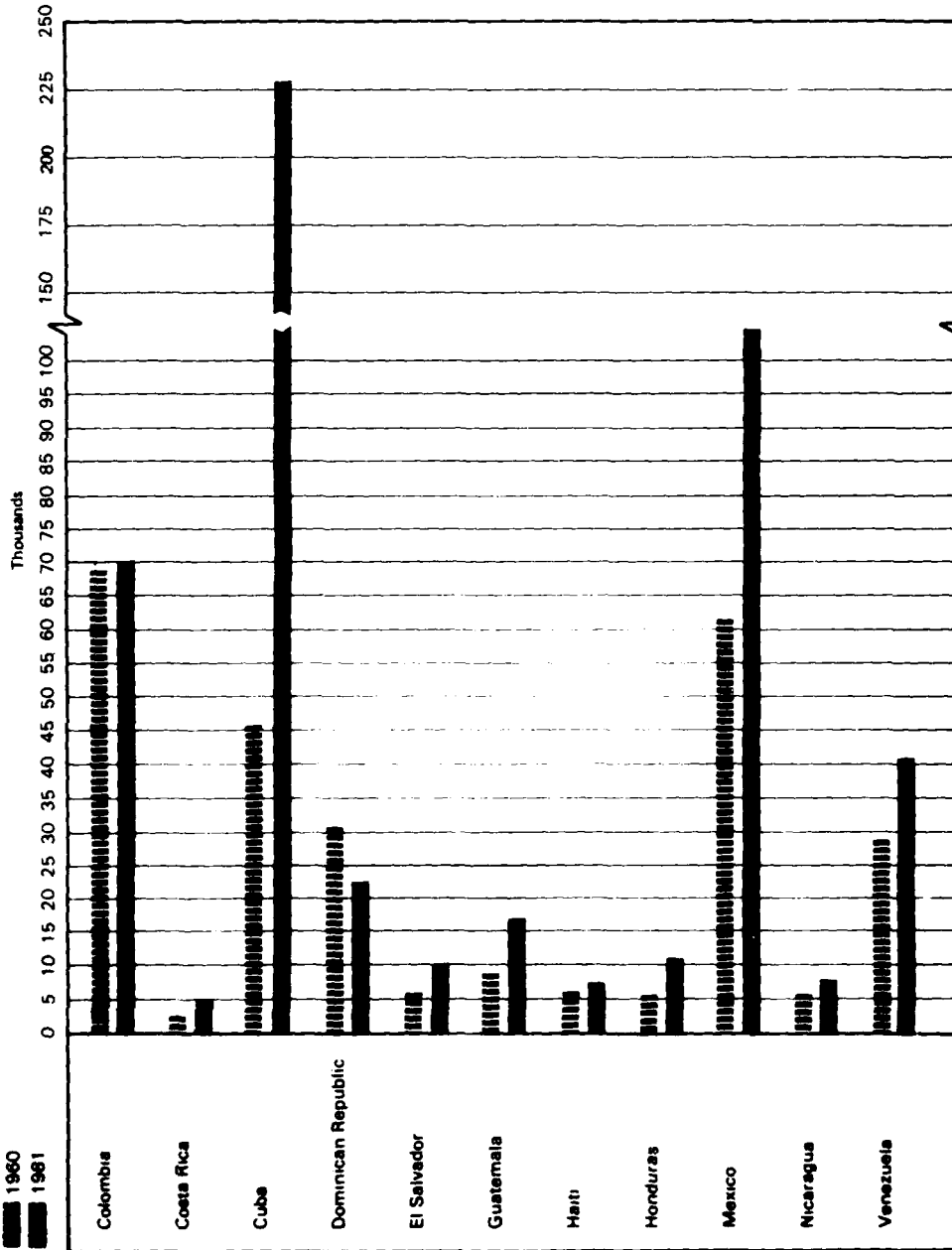
A comparison of the military structures of five countries--Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Venezuela--will provide a perspective against which the contrasting dimensions of the Cuban buildup can most effectively be measured.<sup>2</sup>

### Dominican Republic

In 1960, the Dominican Republic had a total armed force of 31,824 personnel (23,000 Ground Forces--Army, National Police, Foreign Legion--3,400 Navy, and 5,424 Air Force), representing 1.08 percent of its population of 2,942,000. Army weaponry ranged from Brazilian-supplied, U.S.- and German-manufactured mortars and howitzers to anti-aircraft and anti-tank artillery. The Navy depended primarily

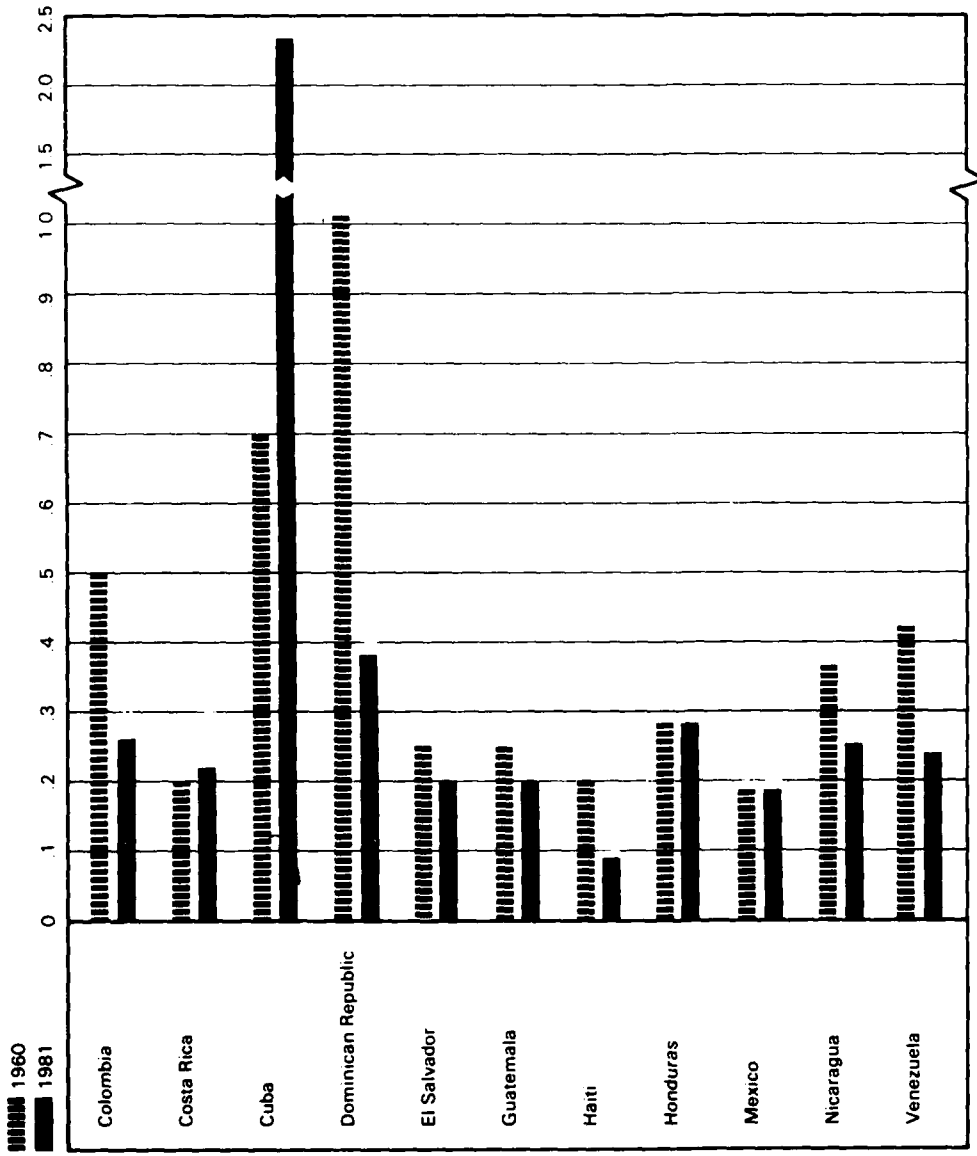
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<sup>2</sup>Statistics used in this section are from *Army Intelligence Digest*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., 1960; *Free World Air Intelligence Study (FWAIS)*, Vol. 4, Latin America, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF; Office of Naval Intelligence, Naval Department, Washington, D.C., 1961; and *The Military Balance, 1981/82*, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 1982. Wherever possible, statistics acquired for the 1960 presentations (both textual and tabular) have been reconciled with the stylistic formula of *The Military Balance*. Because of the differences in sources, however, there are occasional unavoidable inconsistencies in terminology and format.



Source Army Intelligence Digest, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., 1960; Free World Air Intelligence Study, Vol. 4, Latin America, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF; Office of Naval Intelligence, Naval Department, Washington D.C., 1961; and The Military Balance, 1981/82, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 1982.

Fig. 10 — Total armed forces, selected countries, 1960 and 1981



Source: *Army Intelligence Digest*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., 1960; *Free World Air Intelligence Study*, Vol. 4, Latin America, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, Office of Naval Intelligence, Naval Department, Washington D.C., 1961; and *The Military Balance, 1981/82*, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 1982.

Fig. 11 — Total armed forces, selected countries, 1960 and 1981, as a percent of total population

on two destroyers, and the Air Force on World War II vintage F-51s, Vampires, and F-47s. In the course of the two decades that followed, the total armed strength dropped to a 1981 level of 22,500, only .39 percent of a population that had virtually doubled to 5,835,000. In 1981 the Dominican Army possessed some light tanks and armored vehicles in addition to its artillery inventory; the Navy had acquired frigates, corvettes, and patrol craft; but 20 years later, the Air Force still depended on Vampire fighter-bombers and F-51s, albeit updated versions. (See Table 5.)

### Guatemala

In Guatemala, increases in armed strength lagged slightly behind population growth. Total armed strength rose from 8837 in 1960 to 15,050 in 1981, and population increased from 3,688,000 to 7,200,000--resulting in a drop in the percentage of the military from .24 percent to .21 percent. The 1960 Army inventory consisted of assorted mortars, artillery, and light armored vehicles; by 1981 it had added light tanks, but no other important category of equipment. In 1960 the Guatemalan Navy possessed no major combat vessels; by 1981 it had a small number of patrol craft. The Air Force 1960 fighter inventory of F-51s and B-26s had, by 1981, been replaced by counter-insurgency (COIN) A-37Bs. The quality of the armed forces thus remained modest, while the numbers declined in relation to overall population.<sup>3</sup> (See Table 6.)

### Honduras

Although the Honduran armed forces strength more than doubled from 1960 (5306) to 1981 (11,200), it only reflected the doubling of the population (1,918,000 to 3,900,000), and the percentage of military conscription remained nearly unchanged (.28 percent in 1960; .29 percent in 1981). The upgrading of weapons quality generally followed patterns of minimal modernization similar to those described above. The Army had,

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<sup>3</sup>For more recent elaboration of Guatemalan military capability, see Caesar D. Sereseres, *Military Politics, Internal Warfare, and U.S. Policy in Guatemala*, The Rand Corporation, R-2996-AF, forthcoming.

Table 5

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: MILITARY POSTURE, 1960 AND 1981

1960

Population: 2,942,000  
Military service: conscription; 3-5 mos tng, reserve till 54.  
Total armed forces: 31,824  
Annual defense budget: \$30,267,133 (\$1 = 1 peso)  
Ground forces (Army, National Police, Foreign Legion): 23,000  
ARMY: 17,500  
7 bdes (15 inf regts--each bde includes from 1 to 3 inf regts of from  
1 to 5 cos; 1 arty gp)  
1 Presidential Guard reg  
1 arty gp  
108 81mm (US or Ger) (from Brazil), 3 60mm (US) mor; 8 105mm How  
(from Brazil), 4 105mm How M3 (US), 12 57mm gun, Krupp (Ger),  
12 75mm gun, St Chamond (Fr), 8 75mm gun, Schneider (Fr),  
5 27mm AA, M1 (US), 10 57mm AT, M3A1 (US) arty; Misc: 680  
vehicles (trucks, ambulances, motorcycles, passenger cars)  
NAVY: 3,400  
2 DD  
AIR FORCE: 5,424  
160 total acft  
30 F-51 day ftrs; 20 *Vampire*, MK-1, 12 *Vampire* MK-2,  
16 F-47D (inop) ftr bmrs; 5 B-26, 1 B-25 lt atk bmrs;  
5 C-47, 2 C-54 tnspts; 2 H-19 tnspt helis; 2 Hiller,  
2 *Alouette II* utility helis; 48 T-6, 1 PT-17 trns;  
Misc: 2 PBV, 2 C-45, 1 Cessna 170, 1 L-20 *Beaver*,  
1 *Commander* 520  
*Paramilitary forces*: 3,000 National Police, 2,500 Foreign  
Legion

1981

Population: 5,835,000  
Military service: voluntary  
Total armed forces: 22,500  
Estimated GNP 1979: \$5.5 bn  
Defense expenditure 1979: 91 m pesos (\$91 m)  
\$1 = 1 peso (1979)  
ARMY: 13,000  
3 inf bdes (one has 1 armed recce sqdn)  
1 arty regt (3 bns)  
1 mixed armd bn  
1 inf bn (horsed)  
1 Presidential Guard bn  
1 engr bn  
35 AM13, 1t tks; 20AML armd cars; 25 M-3A1 half-track APC; 20 M-101  
105mm how; 20 40mm AA guns  
NAVY: 4,500  
1 ex-*Can River* frigate, 2 ex-US *Tacoma*-class patrol gunboats (in reserve)  
5 ex-US corvettes: 2 *Admirable* (ex-minesweepers), 3 *Cohoes*  
2 large patrol craft (3 ex-US *Argo* in reserve)  
8 coastal patrol craft  
1 LSM, 2 LCU  
1 cdo bn  
(On order: PTF-23 patrol boats)  
Bases: Santo Domingo, Bani, Haina  
AIR FORCE: 5,000; 29 combat aircraft  
1 FGA sqdn with 6 *Vampire* F-1/FB-50  
1 fighter/trg sqdn with 15 F-51D *Mustang*  
1 COIN/trg sqdn with 6 T-28D  
Maritime: 2 PBV-5A HR/SAR acft; 3 *Alouette II/III*, 2H-19,  
2 UH-12E, 7 OH-6A hel  
1 tpt sqn with 6 C-47, 3 DHC-2, 1 *Aero Commander*  
Hel incl 1 SA-365 *Dauphin* 2, Bell 205  
Trainers incl 4 Cessna 172, T-6, 4 T-41  
1 para, 1 AA arty bn  
(On order: 3 Cessna A-37B acft; 2 UH-1 SAR hel)  
*Paramilitary Forces*: 10,000 Gendarmerie.

Table 6

GUATEMALA: MILITARY POSTURE, 1960 AND 1981

1960

Population: 3,668,000  
Military service: conscription; 18 mos.  
Total armed forces: 8837  
Annual defense budget: \$8,816,000 (\$1 = 1 quetzal)  
ARMY: 8,400  
2 regs  
2 bns  
18 60mm (US), 99 80mm (Ger), 8 81mm (US), 2 Inchr (flare) mor;  
17 3.5-in rkt Inchr (US), 8 57mm rclss rfl (US), 3 75mm rclss  
rfl (US) rkt & RCL; 12 75mm Pack How (US), 6 75mm Anderson,  
4 105mm How (US), 24 37mm AT gun (Ger), 16 37mm AT gun (US),  
7 20mm AA Oerlikon (Swiss) arty; 4 lt tk M3A1 (US), 6 Marmor  
Harrington (US), 12 armd car M8 armor; Misc: 333 vehicles  
(trucks, trailers, autos)  
NAVY: 150  
No major cmbt vsls  
AIR FORCE: 287  
3 sdns; 47 total acft (36 in tac units)  
15 F-51 day ftrs; 8 B-26 lt/tac/atk bmrs; 3 C-47 tnspts; 9 T-6,  
2 T-11, 1 TF-51 tnrs; Misc: 2 C-45, 1 Cessna 182, 2 Cessna  
180, 1 Cessna 172, 2 Cessna 170, 1 Aero Commander

1981

Population: 7,200,000  
Military service: conscription; 2 years  
Total armed forces: 15,050  
Estimated GNP 1979: \$6.9 bn  
Defense expenditure 1980: 76.8 m quetzal (\$69.5 m)  
\$1 = 1.1 quetzal (1980), 1.0 quetzal (1979)  
ARMY: 14,000  
4 bde HQ  
1 Presidential Guard bde  
9 inf bns  
1 para bn  
1 engr bn  
1 armd car co  
15 arty btys  
7 M-3 Stuart lt tks; 6 M-3A1, 15 M-8 armd cars; M-3, 10 M-113,  
10 RBV-1.7 Commando APC; 12 75mm pack, 36 105mm how; 81mm,  
12 4.2-in mor  
NAVY: 600, incl 200 marines (3 cos)  
15 coastal patrol craft  
1 LCM  
Bases: Santo Tomas de Castillas, Sipacate  
AIR FORCE: 450; 10 combat aircraft  
1 COIN sqdn with 10 A-37B  
1 tpt sqdn with 1 DC-6, 11 C-47, 9 Arava  
1 liaison sqdn with Cessna: 6 170, 12 172, 1 180, 2 U-206C  
1 hel sqdn with 8 Bell UH-1D, 2 Bell 212, 3 Lama,  
3 Alouette III  
1 trg sqdn with 12 PC-7 Turbo-Trainer  
Paramilitary Forces: 3,000, Policia Militar Ambulante



by 1981, added light tanks to armored inventory, the Navy had acquired a small force of patrol craft, and the Air Force had transitioned from World War II vintage aircraft to Mysteres, supplemented with COIN F-86Fs and A-37Bs. (See Table 7.)

### **Mexico**

Similar patterns are apparent in Mexico: Its armed forces increased from 60,932 in 1960 to 119,500 in 1981, closely following a population growth from 33,782,000 to 69,000,000. As a result, the percentage of population in the military remained almost the same at the end of 20 years--.17 percent in 1981 and .18 percent in 1960. The Army moderately upgraded its weapons while retaining generally the same categories of equipment (light tanks, armored vehicles, howitzers). The Navy added frigates, patrol craft, and transports to its small fleet, and the Air Force replaced its Vampire and F-47 fighter-bombers with COIN AT-33As, although newer F-5Es and -Fs are on order. (See Table 8.)

### **Venezuela**

The Venezuelan ratio of armed force strength to population dipped markedly from .42 percent in 1960 to .25 percent in 1981. However, the total force, numbering 40,800 in 1981 (compared with 28,690 in 1960), remained one of the better trained and equipped military organizations in the Caribbean. In 1981 the Army possessed 142 medium tanks in addition to its inventory of light tanks, and anti-tank guided weapons to complement its conventional anti-tank guns. The Venezuelan Navy upgraded its fleet with surface-to-air missile (SAM)-equipped frigates and surface-to-surface missile (SSM)-equipped fast-attack craft. The Air Force added CF-5 interceptors and Mirage ground-attack fighters to its all-jet combat inventory, a counterinsurgency squadron of OV-10s, and a large fleet of support aircraft, including DC-9 and Boeing 737 transports; F-16s are currently on order.<sup>1</sup> (See Table 9.)

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<sup>1</sup>For more recent elaboration of Venezuelan military capability, see David J. Myers, *Venezuela's Pursuit of Caribbean Basin Interests: Implications for United States National Security*, The Rand Corporation, R-2994-AF, forthcoming.

Table 7

HONDURAS: MILITARY POSTURE, 1960 AND 1981

1960

Population: 1,918,000  
Military service: conscription; 18 mos.  
Total armed forces: 5,306  
Annual defense budget: \$3,827,130 (\$0.50=1 lempira)  
ARMY: 3,500  
6 bns  
15 60mm (US), 16 81mm (US, Fr) mor; 14 57mm rclss rfl (US), 5 75mm  
rclss rfl (US), 25 3.5-in rkt Inchr (US) rkt & RCL; 4 75mm Pack  
How (US), 2 20mm AA (Danish) arty; Misc: 49 trucks & trailers  
AIR FORCE: 406  
37 total acft (22 in tac units)  
10 F-4U, 3 F-32, 2 F-63 day ftrs; 1 P-4Y ASW; 2 C-47, 1 C-46,  
1 C-82 tnspts; 1 TF-38, 1 AT-11, 9 T-6, 3 BC-1 tnrs; Misc: 1  
PA-23, 2 L-13  
*Paramilitary Forces:* 1,400 Civil Guard

1981

Population: 3,900,000  
Military service: conscription, 8 months  
Total armed forces: 11,200  
Estimated GNP 1979: \$2.17 bn  
Defense expenditure 1980: 90.4 m lempiras (\$45.2 m)  
\$1 = 2 lempiras (1979, 1980)  
ARMY: 10,000  
1 Presidential Guard bde (2 bns)  
6 inf bns  
2 arty bns  
1 engr, 1 sigs bn  
17 *Scorpion* It tks; 12 M-116 75mm pack, 12 M-101 105mm how;  
81mm, 120mm mor; 57mm RCL  
(On order: 105mm how)  
NAVY: 200  
7 *Swift* patrol craft: 3 105-ft fast, 4 65-ft coastal  
(On order: 105-ft patrol craft)  
*Base:* Puerto Cortes  
AIR FORCE: 1,000; 27 combat aircraft  
1 FGA sqdn with 12 *Super Mystere* B2  
1 COIN sqdn with 6 F-86F *Sabre*, 6 A-37B  
1 recce sqdn with 3 RT-33A  
Tpts incl 2 C-54, C-45, 1 C-47, 3 *Arava*, 1 *Westwind*  
1 liaison sqdn with 2 Cessna 180, 2 185  
Hel: 2 UH-19D, 10 UH-1H  
1 trg sqdn: 6 T-6, 24 T-28F, 5 T-41A  
(On order: A-37B COIN, T-37B trg acft)

Table 8

MEXICO: MILITARY POSTURE, 1960 AND 1961

1960

Population: 33,782,000  
Military service: voluntary; 3 yrs.  
Total armed forces: 60,932  
Annual defense budget: \$60,120,000 (\$0.08 = 1 peso)  
ARMY: 50,000  
1 inf brig  
1 Pres Gd bde  
21 cav regs  
1 sep arty bn  
49 inf bns  
2 engr bns  
310 60mm (Mex, US, Fr), 89 81mm (Mex, US), 16 120mm (Fr) mor; 31  
2.36-in rkt lnchr; 4 37mm inf gun (US), 18 75mm Pack How (US),  
6 75mm How SP (US), 60 105mm How (US), 6 180mm coastal gun (US) arty;  
45 lt tk (US), 40 armd car (US), 40 armd recon veh (It), 31 half-  
track (US), 35 scout car (US), 3 tank recovery veh (US) armor;  
Misc: 1,115 vehicles (trucks, spec purpose vehs)  
NAVY: 6,148  
No major cbt vsls  
Nav Air: 111  
2 sqdns; 23 total acft (15 in tac units)  
4 HTL helis; 4 N2S:5, 3 T-34 tnrs; Misc: 7 JRB:4, 1 Cessna 180,  
1 L-5E, 3 PBY-5A  
AIR FORCE: 3,726  
182 total acft (143 in tac units)  
5 gps (1 trp carr, 4 ftr bmr)  
1 sqdn (ftr bmr)  
14 Vampire Mk III, 2 F-47 ftr bmr; 5 C-54 tnspts; 7 T-33,  
27 T-28, 72 T-6, 22 T-11, 18 PT-17, 5 PT-13, 1 T-7 tnrs; Misc:  
1 C-45 recon

1981

Population: 69,000,000  
Military service: voluntary, with part-time conscript militia  
Total armed forces: 119,500 regular, 250,000 part-time conscripts  
Estimated GNP 1979: \$120 bn  
Defense expenditure 1981: 2.6 bn pesos (\$1.166 bn)  
\$1 = 23.68 pesos (1981), 22.8 pesos (1979)  
ARMY: 95,000 regular, 250,000 conscripts  
1 mech bde gp (Presidential Guard) (3 bns)  
2 inf bde gps (each of 2 inf, 1 armd recce, 1 arty bns)  
1 para bde (2 bns)

Table 8--continued

Zonal Garrisons incl:

28 indep cav, 3 arty regts, 64 indep inf bns  
AA, engr and spt units  
M-3, M-5 lt tks; 100 M-3A1, M-8, 15 MAC-1 armed cars;  
HWK-11, M-3 APC; M-116 75mm pack, M-101 105mm towed;  
M-8 75mm, M-7 105mm SP how  
NAVY: 20,000, incl naval air force and marines  
2 ex-US *Fletcher* destroyers  
6 frigates: 1 ex-US *Edsall* (trg ship), 4 ex-US  
*Lawrence/Crosley*, 1 *Durango*  
34 ex-US patrol ships: 18 *Auk*, 16 *Admirable* ex-  
minesweepers  
31 *Azteca* large patrol craft  
15 patrol craft: 4 *Polimar*, 2 *Azueta*, 1 *Guanajuato*  
coastal, 8 river  
3 tpts incl 2 ex-US 511-1152 LST; 1 repair ship, 6 fleet tugs  
(On order: 6 F-30 (*Descubierta*) corvettes, 3 *Azteca*  
large patrol craft)  
Bases: Gulf: Vera Cruz, Tampico, Chetumal, Ciudad del Carmen,  
Yukalpeten  
Pacific: Acapulco, Ensenada, La Paz, Puerto Cortes, Guaymas,  
Mazatlan, Manzanillo, Salina Cruz, Puerto Madero, Lazaro Cardenas  
NAVAL AIR FORCE: (350); 14 combat aircraft  
1 MR sqdn with 14 HU-16 *Albatross*  
1 liaison sqdn with 1 *Learjet* 24D, 1 DHC-5D, 1 DC-3,  
2 F-27, 6 *Bonanza*, 4 *Baron*; Cessna: 4 150,  
8 152, 1 337, 1 402; 1 Stearman N-2-55  
1 hel sqdn with 1 *Alouette* II, 4 *Alouette* III, 5  
Bell 47G, 2 UH-1H  
Trainers: 2 T-34B  
(On order: 6 corvettes; 10 SA-315B *Lama* hel)  
MARINES: (3,810)  
3 bn HQ  
19 security cos  
AIR FORCE: 4,500; 14 combat aircraft  
1 COIN sqdn with 14 AT-33A  
1 SAR sqdn with 18 LASA-60 ac; 9 *Alouette* III, 1 Hiller 12E hel  
1 Presidential (tpt) sqdn with 2 Boeing 727, 1 *Jetstar*,  
1 BAC-111, 2 C-47  
4 tpt sqdns with Boeing 737, 1 DC-7, 2 C-118, 5 C-54, 1 *Electra*,  
25 C-47, 3 *Sabreliner*, 1 HS-125-400, 3 *Skyvan*, 12  
*Islander*, 10 *Arava*, 10 Aero *Commander*, 1 DHC-5D  
1 hel sqdn with: Bell; 14 47G, 5 206B, 3 212, 10 205; 5 *Puma*  
6 trg sqdns: 2 with 20 T-6G; 4 with 45 T-28D  
Trainers incl 1 *Baron*, 20 Beech F-33-9, 20 *Musketeer*,  
12 PC-7 *Turbo-Trainer*  
1 para bn  
(On order: 10 F-5E fighters, 2 F-5F, 26 PC-7 *Turbo-Trainer*  
trg acft)

Table 9

VENEZUELA: MILITARY POSTURE, 1960 AND 1981

1960

Population: 6,800,000  
Military service: conscription (unevenly enforced); 2 yrs.  
Total armed forces: 28,690  
Annual defense budget: \$177,989,000 (\$0.3003 = 1 bolivare)  
ARMY: 14,500  
1 cav reg  
16 bns (9 inf, 2 arty, 1 AA AW, 2 armd, 1 MP, 1 engr)  
National Guard: 6,000  
1 bn  
Total ground forces: 20,500  
830 60mm (US, Fr), 620 81mm (US, Fr), 2 120mm (Fr) mor; 8 70mm (Fr),  
4 75mm How (Fr), 16 75mm Pack How (US, Fr), 16 105mm How (US),  
6 155mm Gun (US), 8 150mm coastal gun (Fr) (obsolete), 1 37mm AT (US),  
38 76mm gun motor carriage M18TD arty; 18 lt tk M3A1 (US), 40 lt  
tk AMX (Fr), 19 scout car McA1 (US), 60 armd car M8 (US), 11 half  
track M9A1 (US) armor; Misc: 150 trucks (2,000 trucks avail in  
emerge from Ministry of Publ Wks)  
NAVY: 5,315  
1 (2) DD  
6 DC  
1 SS  
AIR FORCE: 2475  
3 ftr sqdns  
2 bmr sqdns  
2 transp sqdns  
1 recon sqdn  
180 total acft (130 in tac units)  
18 F-86F, 15 *Venom* Mk4, 12 *Vampire* Mk5 ftr bms; 4 *Canberra*  
B-2, 6 *Canberra* B-8, 12 B-25J lt bms; 18 C-123, 1 C-54, 16 C-47  
tnspts, 3 H-19 tnspt helis; 7 H-13 util helis; 2 *Canberra* T-4,  
5 *Vampire* T-55, 19 T-6, 1 T-7, 4 T-11, 31 T-34 tns; Misc: 2 L-23F  
*Seminole*, 1 L-17, 3 C-45

1981

Population: 16,458,502  
Military service: 18 months, selective  
Total armed forces: 40,800  
Estimated GNP 1980: \$47.9 bn  
Defense expenditure 1981: 4.8 bn bolivares (\$1.1 bn)  
\$1 = 4.29 bolivares (1979, 1981)  
ARMY: 27,000  
1 armd bde (2 med, 1 lt tk bns)  
1 cav bn horsed

Table 9--continued

2 mech bns  
11 inf bns  
3 ranger bns  
7 arty gps  
5 AA arty and engr bns  
142 AMX-30 med, 40 AM-13 lt tks; 12 M-8 armd cars; AM-VCI, 20 UR-416 APC;  
75mm pack, 105mm pack, 135 M-101 105mm towed, 20 Mk F3 155mm SP how;  
81mm, 120mm mor; 40 M-18 76mm SP ATK guns; 106mm RCL; SS-11, AS-11  
ATGW; 40mm AA guns  
ARMY AVIATION:  
1 tpt sqdn with 2 *Arava*, 2 *Merlin*, 1 *Islander*,  
1 *Queen Air*  
2 hel sqdns: 1 with 20 *Alouette III*, 6 Bell 206B, 3 UH-ID/H;  
1 with 2 Bell 205A, 2 UH-19, Bell 47G  
NAVY: 9,000, incl naval air and 4,500 marines  
3 submarines: 2 Type 209, 1 ex-US *Guppy II*  
2 ex-US *Sumner* destroyers  
4 frigates: 2 *Lupo* with *Otomat* SSM, *Aspide* SAM,  
1 hel; 2 *Almirante Clemente*  
3 Vosper Thornycroft FAC(M) wih *Otomat* SSM  
3 Vosper Thornycroft FAC(G)  
1 LST, 3 LSM, 2 transports, 12 LCVP (all ex-US)  
NAVAL AIR: 6 combat aircraft, 6 armed hel  
1 ASW sqdn with 6 S-2E  
1 ASW hel sqdn (afloat) with 6 AB-212  
1 SAR sqdn with 4 HU-16A *Albatross*  
1 tpt sqdn: 1 HS-748, 1 *King Air* ac, 2 Bell 47J hel  
(On order: 2 Type 209 submarines, 4 *Lupo* frigates, 4 AB-212 ASW hel)  
MARINES:  
3 bns, 1 AA, 1 amph co, APC, M-42 SP 40mm AA guns  
*Bases*: Caracas, Puerto Cabello, La Guaira, Puerto de Hierro  
AIR FORCE: 4,800; 102 combat aircraft  
2 lt bmr/recce sqdns with 23 *Canberra* (14 B-82, 6 B(I)-82, 1 PR-83,  
2 T-84)  
1 FGA sqdn wih 16 *Mirage* (9 IIIEV, 5 5V, 2 5DV)  
2 intercopter/FGA sqdns: 1 with 14 CF-5A, 4 CF-5B; 1 with 18 F-86K  
1 COIN sqdn with 15 OV-10E  
1 Presidential (tpt) sqdn with 1 Boeing 737, 1 DC-9, 1 HS-748, 1 Cessna  
*Citation* acft; 1 UH-19, 6 Bell 206B, 1 206C hel  
2 tpt sqdns: 1 with 20 C-47, 1 HS-748; 1 with 6 C-130H, 12 C-123A  
2 utility/liaison sqdns: 1 with 4 *Islander*, 1 *King Air*, 1  
with 9 *Queen Air*, 12 Cessna 182N, 2 Cessna 310R  
2 hel sqdns: 1 with 13 *Alouette III*, 20 UH-ID/H; 1 with 9 UH-19,  
2 Bell 212; other: 8 *Agusta A-109*, 1 Bell 412  
Trg Command: 12 *Jet Provost*, 23 T-2 *Buckeye* (12 armed),  
25 T-34 *Mentor*, 2 *Beech 95 Travelair*  
AAM: R-530  
1 para bn  
(On order: 2 C-130H-30 ac, 1 Bell 412 hel)  
*Paramilitary Forces: Fuerzas armadas de Cooperacion*: 20,000:  
28 MICV; 120 60mm mor; 3 *Arava*, 1 *King Air* ac; hel; 43  
coastal patrol craft

Upgrading of military resources of these five representative nations has been generally slow, but individual country defense requirements have been correspondingly modest; the forces of the region seem, for the most part, adequate for regional needs. Recent exceptions have been the Salvadoran and Nicaraguan military organizations: The former has expanded as a result of the Salvadoran insurgency, whereas the latter's expansion stems both from efforts to consolidate the Sandinista regime's power and as part of the Cuban-Soviet threat.

On the whole, however, the forces of these primary Basin nations have been categorically outclassed--perhaps collectively and certainly individually--by the Cuban military, both in numbers and in sophistication of weaponry. Throughout the entire 20-year period, the huge buildup of Cuban military strength has remained consistently conspicuous in the otherwise moderate evolution of the Caribbean Basin military environment.

### III. GEOSTRATEGIC PROFILES: 1960 AND 1982

One of the most profound and far-reaching effects of the changing Basin environment has been the expansion of the Soviet and Cuban military presence in the area. Both individually and in combination, the USSR and Cuba have greatly increased their capacity to project military power into the region since the early 1960s; and this is currently occurring in an atmosphere of heightened political and social unrest in other Basin countries.<sup>1</sup> This section will consider the geostrategic composition of the Basin from two perspectives:

1. The Soviet-Cuban presence in the Caribbean in the years 1960 and 1982, dramatizing the differences that have developed in the intervening two decades, and
2. A general overview of this presence in recent years, evaluating some pertinent trends.

#### SOVIET PRESENCE, 1960

Soviet bloc arms shipments began to arrive in Cuba in the middle of 1960. Before then, there was no Soviet military presence in the Caribbean region. What direct Soviet activity there was existed mainly in the form of rapidly deepening political and economic ties with the new Castro regime and a sustained flow of harsh political rhetoric. Premier Nikita Khrushchev, in separate speeches, encouraged other Latin American countries to join in the "struggle for independence against American imperialism," and declared the death of the Monroe Doctrine. In July 1960, he announced that "figuratively speaking," Soviet missiles in the USSR could be used to defend Cuba if the United States attacked the island. The missile crisis would in fact materialize in October 1962 with the installation of Soviet-manned missiles in Cuba itself, only to be terminated ignominiously for the Soviets with Khrushchev's

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<sup>1</sup>On the various dimensions of the Cuban and Soviet threat to U.S. security interests in the Basin, see Edward Gonzalez, *A Strategy for Dealing with Cuba in the 1980s*, The Rand Corporation, R-2954-DOS/AF, September 1982, pp. 3-25.



withdrawal of the offensive weapons. Throughout 1960, however, the Soviet role was confined to supporting its new Caribbean client and supplying it with the economic and military means to ensure the Castro regime's survival, while otherwise remaining in the background.

### CUBAN MILITARY STRENGTH, 1960

At the end of 1960, the Cuban arsenal still consisted mainly of U.S. equipment, with a random assortment of British, French, and Italian artillery. The air inventory, although respectable in numbers, was aging, as, indeed, were the aircraft in other air forces in the Caribbean and throughout Latin America. However, the total number of personnel in Cuba's post-revolutionary armed forces remained large: 45,970, which amounted to .7 percent of the population of 6.5 million.<sup>2</sup> (See Table 10.)

The Army, numbering 32,000, comprised three tactical combat groups, each containing an infantry regiment, an artillery battalion, an armored battalion, a parachute regiment, an anti-aircraft battalion, and supporting service units. In addition, the Army included six rural police regiments. This battle-trained organization (including many former guerrillas) was well equipped with efficient, if obsolescent, weaponry ranging from rocket launchers and recoilless weapons to an array of heavy artillery and armored vehicles, including 42 light and medium tanks and 40 armored cars.

The Cuban Navy, with 4,720 personnel, had little need for sophisticated equipment in 1960 and possessed no major combat vessels. The Naval Air arm consisted of only 17 aircraft, including a Sea Fury and two PBY reconnaissance aircraft.

The Air Force remained primarily dependent upon World War II vintage U.S. combat aircraft: an F-51, 3 F-47s, 10 Sea Fury fighter bombers, 17 B-26s and 5 TBM-35 ASWs. This combat force was supported by 15 transports, including two four-engine C-54s, 11 helicopters, and 28 trainers.

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<sup>2</sup>Statistics used in this section are from *Army Intelligence Digest*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., 1960; and *Free World Air Intelligence Study*, Vol. 4, Latin America, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF; Office of Naval Intelligence, Naval Department, Washington, D.C., 1961, and *The Military Balance, 1981/82*, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 1982.

Table 10

CUBA: MILITARY POSTURE, 1960 AND 1981

1960

Population: 6,550,000  
Military service: no conscription  
Total armed forces: 45,970  
Annual defense budget: \$88,900,000 (CY59) (\$1=1 peso)  
ARMY: 32,000  
3 tac comb gps; each contains:  
1 inf reg  
1 arty bn  
1 armd bn  
1 sig co  
svc units  
1 parachute reg  
1 AA bn  
(also 6 rural police regs)  
17 60mm (US), 14 81mm (US), 2 3-in (UK), 72 81mm (It) more; 20  
3.5-in. rkt lnchr (US), 70 3.5-in rkt lnchr (It), 9 57mm  
rcs rfl M18 (US), 4 75mm rcls rfl (US) rkt & RCL; 4 20mm  
Oerlikon (Cuban Navy), 16 25mm Hotchkiss, AA gun (Fr), 9 37mm  
gun M6 (US), 6 57mm gun (Salute Gun) (UK), 8 75mm Pack How  
(US), 4 105mm (It) arty; 8 Lt tk "3-man Dutch" (US), 12 Lt tk  
M3A1 (US), 7 Med tk M4A1 w/76mm gun (US), 15 Med tk Comet w/  
77mm gun (UK), 19 Scout Car M3A1 (US), 20 Lt armd car M8 (US)  
armored; Misc: 1151 vehicles (trucks, trailers, gen purp vehs)  
NAVY: 4720  
No major cmbt vsls  
Nav Air: 250  
17 total acft  
6 TBM-3S recon carrier acft; 6 N2S trainers; misc: 2 Cessna  
31-tnrs, 1 *Sea Fury* recon, 2 PBV-5A recon  
AIR FORCE: Personnel strength unknown  
91 total acft  
1 F-51 day ftr; 3 F-47, 10 *Sea Fury* Mk-1 ftr bmrs;  
17 B-26 lt tac/attack bmrs; 5 TBM-35 (carrier type) ASW;  
1 C-82, 7 C-47, 4 C-46, 2 C-54, 1 Lockheed *Lodestar*,  
1 H-19 tnspt heli; 9 H-13,  
2 UH-12 utility helis; 4 T-33, 6 T-6, 6 N2S, 12 Z-326 tnrs  
*Paramilitary forces*: 9000 National Police, 200,000 Civilian  
Militia (Reserve)

1981

Population: 9,800,000  
Military service: 3 years

Table 10--continued

Total armed forces: 227,000  
Estimated GNP 1980: \$18.4 bn  
Estimated defense expenditure 1980: 811 m pesos (\$1.1 bn)  
\$1 = 0.72 pesos (1980)  
ARMY: 200,000 (incl 60,000 reservists)  
3 armed bdes  
15 inf divs (bdes) (some mech)  
Some indep bns  
60 IS-1 hy, 400 T-34, 200 T-54/55, 50 T-62 med tks; PT-76 lt tks;  
BRDM-1 armd cars; BMP MICV, 400 BTR-40/-60/-152 APC; M-116 75mm  
pack, 76mm, 85mm, 122mm, 130,, 152mm guns/how; 100 SU-100 SP guns;  
50 FROG-4SSM; 57mm ATK guns; 57mm RCL; *Sagger, Snapper*  
ATGW; ZU-23, 37mm, 57mm, 85mm, 100mm towed, ZSU-23-4 SP AA guns;  
SA-7 SAM  
Reserves: 130,000  
NAVY: 11,000  
3 ex-Sov submarines: 2 F-, 1 W-class  
11 ex-Sov large patrol craft: 9 SO-1, 2 *Kronshtadt*  
24 ex-Sov FAC(M) with *Styx* SSM: 5 *Osa-I*, 7 *Osa-II*,  
12 *Komar*  
24 ex-Sov FAC(T): 6 *Turya*, 6 P-6, 12 P-4  
22 ex-Sov *Zhuk* FAC(P), 12 coastal patrol craft  
9 minesweepers: 2 *Sonya*, 7 ex-Sov *Yevgenya*  
7 T-4 LCM  
Some 50 *Samlet* coast-defense SSM  
(On order: 1 F-class submarine)  
Bases: Cienfuegos, Havana, Mariel, Punta Ballenatos, Canasi  
AIR FORCE: 156,000, incl air defense forces; 175 combat aircraft  
3 FGA sqdns: 2 with 30 MiG-17; 1 with 12 MiG-23BM *Flogger F*  
8 interceptor sqdns: 3 with 48 MiG-21F; 2 with 30 MiG-21MF; 2 with  
40 MiG-19; 1 with 15 MiG-23 *Flogger E*  
1 trg sqdn with 22 MiG-15UTI  
4 tpt sqdns: 10 Il-14; 12 An-2; 15 An-24; 10 An-26  
4 hel sqdns with 15 Mi-1, 24 Mi-4, 20 Mi-8  
Trainers incl 2 MiG-23U, 15 MiG-21U, 1 Il-14, some An-2, 20 Zlin 326  
AAM: AA-2 *Atoll*  
24 SAM bns with 144 SA-2/3, SA-6  
*Forces Abroad: Angola* 15,000 State Security troops,  
3000 Frontier guards with 20 vessels; 100,000 Youth Labor Army,  
Territorial Militia (being formed); 1 bn to each municipal  
district, 1 regiment in each of 14 provinces

In addition to this large regular force, Cuba maintained a paramilitary force of 9000 National Police and 200,000 Civilian Militia (Reserve), many of them combat veterans, and some as well-prepared as the majority of the regular forces of Cuba's Caribbean neighbors. It was an element of this militia that later endured the initial brunt of the Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961, thus contributing to the defeat of the 1400-man exile force.

### SOVIET PRESENCE, 1982

The Soviet presence in the Caribbean continues to center almost entirely in Cuba. The primary Soviet activity outside of Cuba continues to be air and sea reconnaissance. TU-95 (Bear) reconnaissance aircraft are periodically deployed to Cuban airfields, from which they support Soviet maneuvers and monitor U.S. and NATO maneuvers and sea trials in the nearby Atlantic.<sup>3</sup> In this respect, Soviet traffic in the South Atlantic alone has increased considerably, as 1980 saw ten times as many ship days (2600) as were sailed in 1970.<sup>4</sup> The Soviet naval ship visit program, which has been operating continuously since its initiation in 1969, sent task groups into the Caribbean in April and May of 1981, making routine port calls in Havana. These task groups included, for the first time, a Kara-class cruiser, the largest Soviet combatant vessel ever to have visited Cuba. Other routine Soviet traffic includes intelligence-gathering, hydrographic research, and space program support vessels, which ordinarily patrol the waters off the U.S. east coast, as well as the Caribbean and South Atlantic.<sup>5</sup>

In Cuba itself, the Soviet brigade remains one of the more prominent manifestations of Soviet presence, a residue of the 1962

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<sup>3</sup>See Department of State, *Cuban Armed Forces and the Soviet Military Presence, Special Report 103*, Washington, D.C., August 1982.

<sup>4</sup>See *The Security Threat in the Caribbean and Central America*, Testimony by the Honorable Fred C. Ikle, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Before the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 15 December, 1981, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup>See *Cuban Armed Forces and the Soviet Military Presence*.

missile crisis. Based near Havana, the brigade includes between 2600 and 3000 Army personnel assigned to one tank battalion, three motorized rifle battalions, and several smaller combat and service support units. The arsenal maintained by these battalions includes 40 tanks and 60 armored personnel carriers.<sup>6</sup> The brigade apparently serves many purposes, providing a small symbolic Soviet commitment to Castro, implying a readiness to defend Cuba and its regime, and security for Soviet personnel and facilities, particularly for the large intelligence collection facility. The brigade almost certainly would not have a role as a force for external intervention, although it is capable of tactical defense and offensive operations in Cuba. Unlike such units as airborne divisions, the brigade is not structured for rapid deployment, and no transport aircraft capable of carrying its armed vehicles and heavy equipment are stationed in Cuba.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to the Army brigade, a Soviet Military Advisory Group in Cuba possesses at least 2000 military personnel in tasks ranging from ground unit support to technical assistance in the maintenance and operation of sophisticated weaponry such as the MiG fleet, surface-to-air missiles, and the Foxtrot submarines. Soviet pilots in fact flew Cuban MiGs in Cuba while Cuban pilots performed combat missions in Ethiopia in the late-1970s. Another sizable and sensitive task is the operation of the Soviet electronic intelligence collection facility. It intercepts and monitors U.S. telephone and cable traffic, as well as encoded messages transmitted from U.S. government satellites and missiles. This facility, located near Havana, is the largest Soviet-managed intelligence complex outside the Soviet Union.<sup>8</sup>

The greatest Soviet presence in Cuba, however, is not in numbers of military personnel (totaling up to 5000), but in civilians. An estimated 6000 to 8000 Soviet civilian advisors are assigned throughout the island in several government-related positions, bringing the Soviet presence in Cuba to between 10,600 and 13,000 total military and civilian personnel.

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>See *The Security Threat in the Caribbean and Central America*, p. 4.

Arms shipments from the Soviet Union to Cuba were escalated sharply in 1981. A total of 66,000 tons of equipment (compared with a previous annual average of 15,000) was delivered in 1981 to modernize and expand the already well-stocked Cuban arsenal. The State Department gives these reasons for the sudden buildup of arms:

- The beginning of a new five-year upgrading and replacement cycle;
- Additional arms to equip the newly established Cuban territorial militia, which claims to be 500,000 strong, but expects to reach 1 million;
- Increasing stockpiles, part of which is passed to Nicaragua;
- A convincing demonstration of Moscow's continuing support for the Havana regime.<sup>9</sup>

The Soviet military commitment to Cuba has not gone so far, however, as to include Cuba as a member of the Warsaw Pact or to sign a security treaty with Havana. Perhaps as partial compensation for these shortcomings, Moscow provides Cuba with generous economic as well as military assistance programs. Soviet economic assistance alone now amounts to \$8 million per day, reaching a total of over \$3 billion annually--one-fourth of Cuba's gross national product. This extraordinary financial infusion allows Cuba not only to support its vast sophisticated domestic military program, but perhaps more important, to project its power abroad--in Africa, in the Middle East, and in other parts of the globe, but increasingly in the Caribbean and Central America as well.

#### **CUBAN MILITARY STRENGTH, 1982**

Including army ready reservists, Cuba had a total armed force of 227,000 by the end of 1981, which represents over 2.3 percent of its population of 9,800,000.<sup>10</sup> This percentage is almost ten times that of

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<sup>9</sup>*Cuban Armed Forces and the Soviet Military Presence.*

<sup>10</sup>*The Military Balance, 1981/82.* All data in this section, unless otherwise noted, is from this document.

Cuba's Caribbean Basin neighbors, whose total forces average less than .25 percent of their populations. In addition, the government maintained a paramilitary force of up to 780,000, distributed in six different organizations ranging from the Youth Labor Army to the newly organized Territorial Troop Militia. (See Table 10.) In terms both of size (second in Latin America only to Brazil) and of capability (second in this hemisphere only to the United States),<sup>11</sup> the Cuban military had evolved as a force vastly exceeding all defense requirements other than those prompted by the possibility of a direct confrontation with the United States. (See Table 10.) Yet such a possibility was not the initial cause for Cuba's military buildup, which began during a thaw in U.S.-Cuban relations at the time of the Ford administration. That buildup began while Cuba was initiating combat operations in Africa in the mid-1970s, and continued afterward despite the Carter administration's even more conciliatory posture during 1977-78, long before the Reagan administration came into office with its tougher line on Cuba.

The Army in 1981 numbered 200,000, including 60,000 reservists, compared with a 1960 total of 32,000. It was well equipped and well trained:

- The Army's three armored brigades, 15 infantry divisions (some mechanized), and independent battalions were now equipped with an impressive array of tanks (heavy, medium, and light), armored cars and personnel carriers, heavy artillery, SSMs, anti-tank guided weapons, self-propelled anti-aircraft weapons, and SAMs.
- This army is also largely battle tested, with veterans from campaigns ranging from the Cuban revolution to operations in Angola and Ethiopia.
- The 60,000 reservists train about 45 days per year in active duty roles and maintain proficiency in the use of sophisticated equipment

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<sup>11</sup>Measured by numbers and sophistication of weaponry, level of training, and overall combat readiness.

Approximately 70 percent of Cuba's Army reserves served on active duty in the African campaigns. They must therefore be considered an integral and reliable extension of the active Army force.

The Cuban Navy, with 11,000 personnel, had almost tripled in size since 1960. By 1981 its equipment was almost all new:

- Whereas in 1960 the Navy possessed no combat vessels of any type, it now boasted a fleet including three Foxtrot- and Whiskey-class submarines, one Koni-class frigate, 11 ex-Soviet large patrol craft, 24 fast-attack missile craft (FAC[M]) with Styx SSMs, 24 fast-attack (hydrofoil) torpedo craft (FAC[T]), and 22 fast-attack patrol craft (FAC[P]). Smaller vessels included 12 coastal patrol craft, 9 minesweepers, and 7 medium/mechanized landing craft.
- This impressive inventory was rounded out with a battery of about 50 coast-defense surface-to-surface missiles (SSMs).

These resources of personnel and equipment were based at five modernized facilities on the island: Havana, Cienfuegos, Mariel, Punta Ballenatos, and Canasi. The recently acquired Foxtrot-class submarines, with an operating range of 9000 n mi at 7 kt per hour and a patrol duration of 70 days, have extended the Navy's operating range to include the entire Caribbean Basin, the Gulf of Mexico, and parts of the Atlantic. The Koni frigate, with a range of 2000 n mi without refueling or replenishment, further enhances the Navy's image as a force to be reckoned with in the Caribbean. Complementing Cuba's imposing Naval force is a Coast Guard organization comprising 3000 personnel.

The Air Force, including the Air Defense Forces, had grown in size to 16,000 personnel by 1981. It also constituted a far more modernized force than in 1960:

- By 1981 the Air Force had more than 200 Soviet-supplied MiGs, including such advanced models as the MiG-21F and -MF interceptors and MiG-23E and -F (Flogger) ground-attack



fighters. Other aircraft in the eight interceptor and three ground-attack fighter squadrons included 40 MiG-19s and 30 MiG-17s.

- Still other combat-support units included one training squadron with 22 MiG-15s; four transport squadrons with 10 Il-14s, 12 An-2s, 15 An-24s, and 20 An-26s; four helicopter squadrons with 15 Mi-1s, 24 Mi-4s, and 20 Mi-8s; and miscellaneous trainers including two MiG-23Us, 15 MiG-21Us, one Il-14, 20 Zlin 326s, and several An-2s.
- The Air Defense Force was equipped with AA-2 (Atoll) anti-aircraft missiles and 24 SAM battalions, with 144 SA-2s, -3s, and -6s, together with associated launchers, radars, transporters, canisters, new early warning and height-finding radar stations, and electronic warfare vans.

The Cuban paramilitary forces, as indicated above, comprised as many as 780,000 people. Some of these were combat veterans or specially trained police teams, but many of them were simply drawn from civilian ranks with little or no opportunity for training. Still, they were organized or organizing, and, if only in sheer numbers, provided a remarkable addition to the regular armed forces. Three organizations were under the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (MINFAR), and three were under the Ministry of the Interior (MININT). Under MINFAR were the following:

- Youth Labor Army: 100,000 young people with little military training, whose wartime mission might be to operate and protect the railroads;
- Civil Defense Force: 100,000 civilians in two groups: "military" units for local defense, and non-military units for first aid and disaster relief;
- Territorial Troop Militia: More than 500,000 (still forming) trainees preparing for regional security and local defense.

Under MININT were the remaining organizations:

- Border Guard Troops: 3000 full-time personnel (plus auxiliaries) to help guard the Cuban coastline;
- National Revolutionary Police: 10,000 personnel (plus 52,000 auxiliaries) to keep public order in peacetime, or provide rear area security in wartime;
- Department of State Security: 10,000-15,000 counterintelligence trainees responsible also for prevention of counterrevolutionary activities.

In addition to these masses of military-conscious civilians, MINFAR administered a force of over 30,000 civilians working in construction and repair assignments throughout Cuba and in Africa (e.g., building roads and airstrips).<sup>12</sup>

#### **Regional Power Capabilities and Extraterritorial Operations**

The present range of Cuban-based MiG-23s extends to portions of the southeastern United States and most of Central America (see Fig. 12). They are thus capable of interdicting nearby SLOCs unless deterred by a substantial commitment of U.S. Air Force and Navy interceptors. Only limited round-trip sorties would be possible from the bases in Cuba, but were these aircraft to operate from bases in Nicaragua or Grenada, their combat radius would be appreciably extended to reach all of Central America as well as parts of South America.

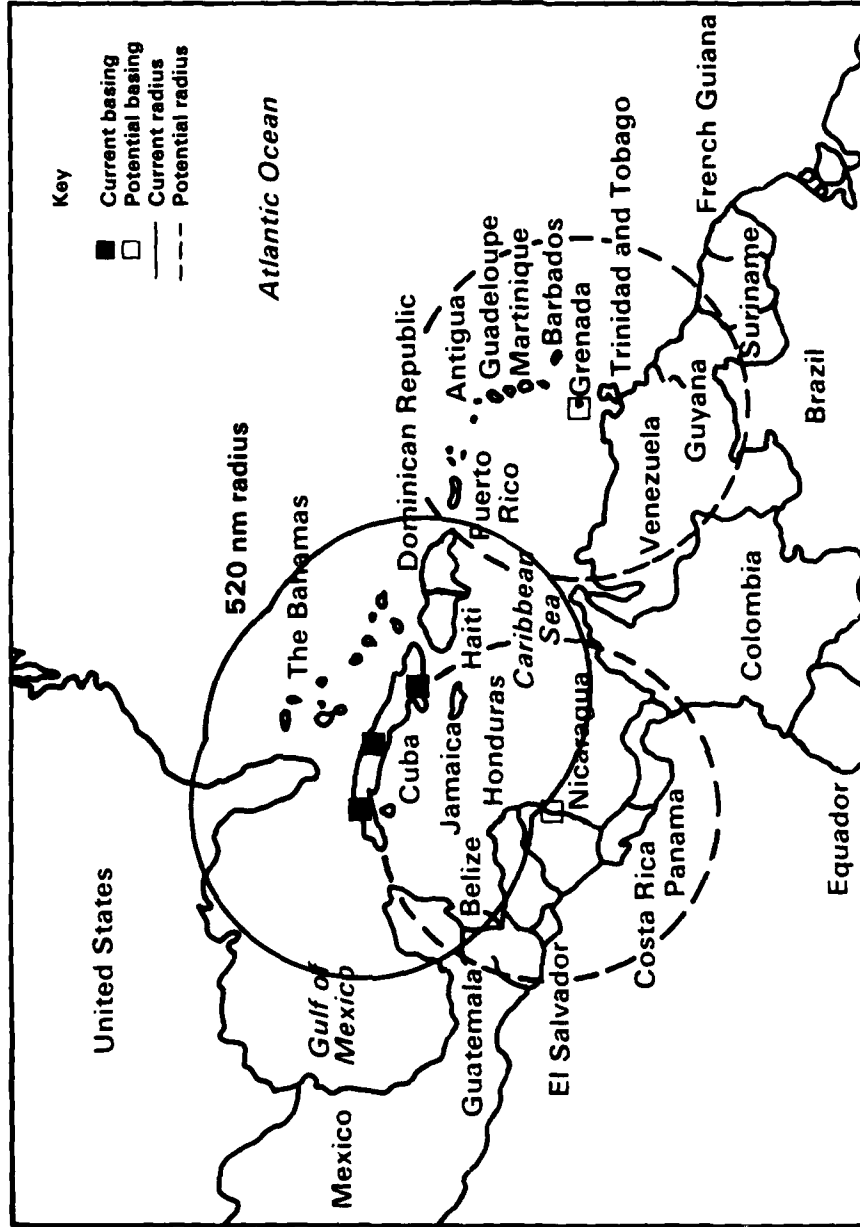
In the meantime, Cuba has already engaged in extraterritorial activity in the Caribbean Basin:

- In Costa Rica, a Special Legislative Commission documented Cuba's role in establishing an extensive arms supply network during the Nicaraguan civil war and found the network was later used to supply Salvadoran insurgents;<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>*Cuban Armed Forces and the Soviet Military Presence.*

<sup>13</sup>See Adriana Bosch-Lemus, *Nicaragua: The Internationalization of Conflict and Politics in Central America*, The Rand Corporation, R-2998-AF, forthcoming.



Source: U.S. Department of State, *Cuban Armed Forces and the Soviet Military Presence*, Special Report No. 103, Washington, D.C., August 1982, and International Communication Agency document (same title, no date)

Fig. 12 — MiG-23 range

- In Nicaragua, following the *Sandinista* victory in 1979, Cuba quietly increased its presence to 5000 personnel, including more than 1500 security and military advisors;
- In El Salvador, Cuba has played key roles in serving as a transshipment center for the arming of the Salvadoran guerrillas, and, perhaps more important, in unifying the insurgents and supplying them with strategic direction.
- In Colombia, Cuba was discovered to have trained guerrillas attempting to establish a "people's army."

Cuban activity in Grenada has been evident in the construction of the 75-kilowatt transmitter for Radio Free Grenada and development of the Point Salines airfield, with its 9800-foot runway. Despite Grenadian claims that the reason for the project is to promote tourism, the airfield would be able to serve every kind of Cuban aircraft, thereby vastly extending their operational range and providing refueling facilities for Cuban Air Force missions to Africa.

A State Department report provides detailed descriptions of other extraterritorial activity involving Guatemala, Honduras, Dominican Republic, and Guyana. In Guatemala, for example, many of the more than 2000 active guerrillas have received Cuban training. Cuba trains Honduran extremists in insurgent operations and provides training in lesser degrees to recruits from Guyana and the Dominican Republic.<sup>14</sup>

Also important has been the use made of countries as staging or transiting points for extraterritorial operation. Two such countries are Mexico, used as a base for Cuban contacts with insurgents from Caribbean countries, and Panama, used as a transit point for Central and South American extremists engaged in training programs in Cuba.

Another dimension of Cuban extraterritorialism in the Caribbean has been its vigorous program of military training for recruits from neighboring countries. During the past two years, Cuba has provided

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<sup>14</sup>*Cuba's Renewed Support for Violence in the Hemisphere*, A Research Paper Presented to the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, by the Department of State, Washington, D.C., December 14, 1981, pp. 21-22, 26, 28, 30.

intensive training for groups from most of the countries of the region, including Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, and Nicaragua. The government is also active in other, primarily technical, areas. According to the State Department report, "from the Eastern Caribbean alone, close to 300 students are currently in Cuba studying technical and academic subjects. The study of Marxist-Leninism is compulsory in many courses and military affairs is compulsory in some."<sup>15</sup>

### GENERAL TRENDS

The Soviet support for the Cuban armed forces that flourished in the immediate post-revolutionary years dropped off markedly in the aftermath of the missile crisis of 1962, rising again in the mid-1970s to the current high level of activity. In 1962, for example, Soviet military deliveries to Cuba amounted to 250,000 metric tons, compared with an average of 15,000 tons annually over the next ten years. Also in 1962 as many as 22,000 Soviet combat troops were stationed in Cuba. Their main purpose was to protect the offensive missiles that were withdrawn during the Missile Crisis, so most of these forces were also withdrawn the following year. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Cuban political-military operations in the Caribbean and South America continued on a lower profile against a background of frequent Soviet-Cuban disagreement on policy matters. Cuban attempts during these years to establish *focos* (guerrilla warfare focal points in rural areas) in Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, and Bolivia had few successes and ultimately failed with the death of Che Guevara and his guerrilla followers in Bolivia in 1967.

In the middle 1970s, Cuba's military expeditions into Africa, first in Angola, then in Ethiopia, demonstrated Cuba's military value to the Soviet Union on the world scene. The next years witnessed impressive modernization and growth of all branches of the Cuban military, changing it from a primarily home defense force to the major Caribbean power that it is today, with clear offensive potential:

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

- Cuba's total armed forces, numbering less than 50,000 in 1960, had more than doubled by 1970 (109,500), and have doubled again to more than 225,000 (Fig. 13).
- The percentage of population under arms has grown correspondingly from .7 percent in 1960 to 1.3 percent in 1970 and 2.3 percent in 1980 (Fig. 14).
- The sharpest growth took place in the years surrounding Cuba's African operations, from totals of 116,000 and 117,000 in 1974 and 1975 to 175,000 in 1976, then increasing steadily, exceeding 200,000 in 1980, 225,000 in 1981, and still growing.

The Cuban Army, which has doubled in size with the Angolan expedition and its sequels, has continued to upgrade in training as well as in acquisition of sophisticated weaponry. However, the main advantage the Army received during this period is clearly its combat experience and proof of its effectiveness in these types of operations. The consequent threat to the Caribbean Basin is obvious, as is pointed out in this State Department assessment:

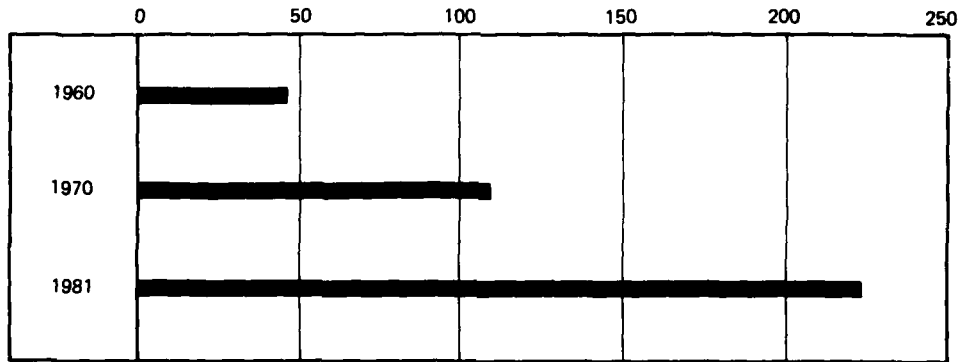
As in 1975, when a single battalion of Cuban airborne troops airlifted to Luanda at a critical moment played a role far out of proportion to its size, a battle-tested Cuban force interjected quickly into a combat situation in Central America could prove a decisive factor.<sup>16</sup>

The expansion of the Cuban Navy that began in the mid-1970s with the acquisition of Osa patrol boats, possessing a range of 400 n mi and equipped with Styx SSMs, has continued steadily to include the recent additions of the Koni-class frigate and Foxtrot and Whiskey submarines.

The Air Force also, as was observed earlier, has undergone considerable modernization since the mid-1970s, including the addition of advanced models of the MiG-21MF in 1975 and MiG-23 Floggers in 1978. By mid-1980 the Air Force had completed the development of two operational squadrons of Floggers containing five -E and five -F models respectively; at the end of 1981 the strength of each squadron had more than doubled to 12 Flogger-Fs and 15 Flogger-Es.

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<sup>16</sup>*Cuban Armed Forces and the Soviet Military Presence.*



Source: *Army Intelligence Digest*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., 1960; *Free World Air Intelligence Study*, Vol. 4, Latin America, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF; Office of Naval Intelligence, Naval Department, Washington D.C., 1981; and *The Military Balance, 1981/82*, The International Institute for Strategic Studies London, 1982.

Fig. 13 - Total Cuban armed forces 1960-1981 (thousands)



Source: *Army Intelligence Digest*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., 1960; *Free World Air Intelligence Study*, Vol. 4, Latin America, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF; Office of Naval Intelligence, Naval Department, Washington D.C., 1981; and *The Military Balance, 1981/82*, The International Institute for Strategic Studies London, 1982.

Fig. 14 - Cuban armed forces 1960-1981 — Percent of population

Conclusions drawn from this brief review of Soviet and Cuban activity in the Basin must be speculative, particularly in regard to their political-military consequences. However, certain factually based conclusions are evident:

- Cuban armed strength has expanded steadily since the revolution, especially since the mid-1970s.
- The arms inventory of each branch of the Cuban military has been modernized, especially since the mid-1970s.
- Personnel in each of the services have received intensive training under the supervision of a large staff of Soviet advisors in the use of recently acquired sophisticated weaponry.
- Large numbers of Cuban Army troops--initially 36,000 in Angola and 12,000 in Ethiopia--are veterans of combat environments; previously untested personnel, equipment, strategies, and field tactics have now been proven in battle conditions.

The above assessment, in turn, has major implications for the U.S. defense posture, globally as well as regionally:

- As the size of Cuban ground, naval, air, and air defense forces continues to grow, correspondingly increasing demands may be placed on already strained U.S. global commitments.
- If a serious Caribbean crisis were to develop simultaneously with a crisis elsewhere--e.g., in Europe or the Middle East--U.S. military forces could easily be stretched thin and might well prove insufficient to safeguard vital SLOCs and other targets in the Basin.

Indeed, as a close collaborative military ally of the USSR, Cuba now is developing an offensive capability for striking at targets in the region that cannot be ignored by the United States and its allies. Additionally, Cuba is developing a capability to conduct extraterritorial operations



in the Basin that includes not only training and logistical support to guerrilla groups as in the past. It also possesses a new capacity to extend external assistance and even military forces to allied regimes in the region.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>See Gonzalez, *A Strategy for Dealing with Cuba in the 1980s*, pp. 6-21.

#### IV. U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE: 1960, 1968/69, 1981/82

Coinciding with the social, economic, and political-military changes that have taken place since 1960, an overall decline of U.S. military presence has also occurred in the Basin--in personnel strength, in numbers and staffing of facilities, and in amounts of military and security assistance being provided. This drawdown is reflected in the following changes during 1960-82:

- After having increased gradually in the aftermath of the Cuban revolution from a 1960 total of 22,073 to a 1968 peak of 25,121, the numbers of U.S. personnel declined in the succeeding decade to levels represented in the 1981 total of 15,668 (Fig. 15).<sup>1</sup>
- The largest reductions were evident in the main facilities: in Puerto Rico (from 8331 to 3542), in Panama (Canal Area) (from 11,721 to 9566), and at Guantanamo (from 4197 to 2164).
- Personnel reductions were accompanied by the downgrading or closing of a number of installations (notably Ramey Air Force Base and Fort Brooke in Puerto Rico)<sup>2</sup> and the conclusion of the Panama Canal Treaty, with its immediate and long-range consequences.

These changes were also accompanied by the reduction of military group and attache personnel throughout the region, resulting in

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<sup>1</sup>U.S. military personnel only. Unless otherwise specified, all personnel statistics used in this section have been derived from *Selected Manpower Statistics*, Directorate for Information, Operations and Reports, Washington, D.C., various years.

<sup>2</sup>Some of the causes of personnel reductions involved actions unrelated to specific U.S. regional interests (e.g., the decision that Ramey Air Force Base was no longer necessary for SAC global operation). Nevertheless, the overall decline in personnel that resulted from these actions remains an important factor in the evaluation of the U.S. military presence in the region and contributes to the perception of declining U.S. involvement.

aggravation of already complicated liaison between the U.S. military services and their counterparts in Caribbean and Central American nations (Fig. 16). Another important reduction is evident in the area of military assistance, where U.S. deliveries, which accounted for about 40 percent of the Latin American total in 1960, constituted only 4 percent of global deliveries in 1981.

This part of the analysis will examine the extent of U.S. military involvement in the region in the representative years 1960 and 1981. However, special attention will also be given to the U.S. presence in the peak year of 1968, which was preceded by high levels of political unrest and revolutionary violence and by the establishment of a permanent Soviet military presence in Cuba. In contrast, the post-1968 period saw a decline in Cuban-supported insurgencies in the Basin until the late-1970s, a general trend toward more normalized relations between Cuba and other Basin states (including the United States) until the late-1970s, and an incremental, low-profile increase in the Soviet military presence in and around Cuba. Hence, as will be seen, the subsequent reduction in the U.S. military presence responded in part to this lowering of the threat perception in the Basin during most of the 1970s.

## PERSONNEL AND FACILITIES

### 1960

In 1960, in the wake of the Cuban revolution, the United States maintained major facilities in three strategic locations in the Caribbean Basin:

1. In Puerto Rico, at the Atlantic threshold to the Caribbean
2. In Panama, defending the Canal Zone at the southern rim of the Basin
3. At Guantanamo Naval Station, in Castro's Cuba, on the northern perimeter of the Caribbean.

These three force concentrations thus represented strategic points, north, south, and east, of a triangle that stretched across the entire

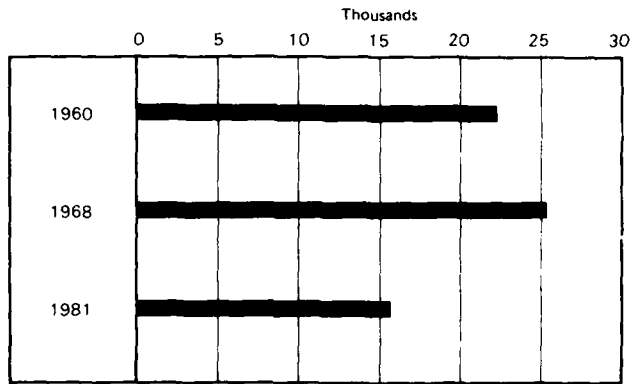
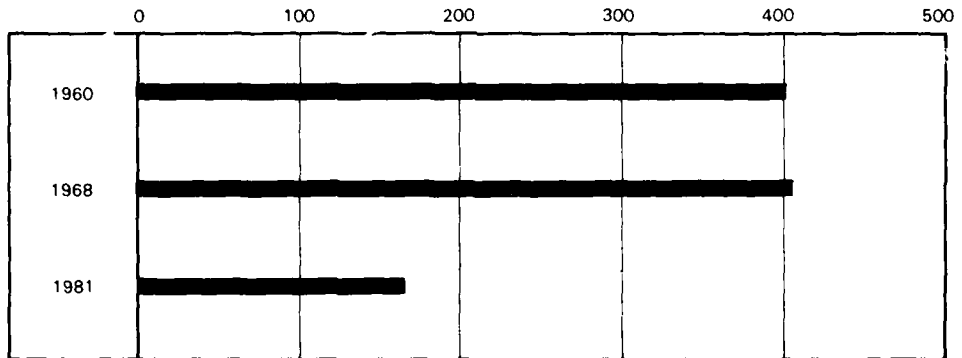


Fig. 15 – U.S. presence: total personnel in Caribbean Basin assignments



Source: *Selected Manpower Statistics (for representative years)*, Directorate for Information, Operations and Reports, Washington, D.C.

Fig. 16 – U.S. presence: military groups, attaches and associated facilities in the Caribbean Basin

Basin, assuring a measure of security to the United States, while also enabling it to maintain the Basin as an "economy of force" region.

### **Puerto Rico**

In Puerto Rico the Army maintained a force of 2329 personnel deployed in various locations, with the majority stationed at Fort Brooke in San Juan, in the Rodriguez Hospital, and in various recruiting offices. The Navy had 1509 personnel assigned to shore activities at Roosevelt Roads Naval Station, at the San Juan Naval Station, and at smaller installations in San Juan and elsewhere on the island. In addition, 1064 Naval personnel were afloat--that is, assigned to Puerto-Rico-based ships--or involved in other mobile activities. Complementing the Naval forces on these installations were a total of 1998 Marines, the largest concentration of Marine Corps personnel in the Caribbean. The Air Force, too, had its largest concentration in Puerto Rico, with 3501 personnel stationed mainly at Ramey Air Force Base, a Strategic Air Command facility located on the northwestern end of the island.<sup>3</sup>

### **Canal Zone**

The preponderance of Caribbean-based Army personnel, a total of 6121, were in the Panama Canal Zone, stationed in six posts, three at each end of the Canal. Guarding the Caribbean approaches were Fort Sherman, Fort Gulick, and Fort Davis; at the Pacific end, on the Bay of Panama, were Fort Clayton, Fort Kobbe, and Fort Amador. Additional troops were located at Balboa Heights, Corozal, and Quarry Heights. Naval and Marine forces together totaled 583 personnel, the majority based at Rodman Naval Station and Galeta Island, with others at Ft. Amador, Balboa, and at other locations in the area. A total of 1138 Air Force personnel were stationed in the Canal Zone, mainly at Albrook and Howard Air Force Bases, with the remainder at Quarry Heights.

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<sup>3</sup>Identification and specific location of facilities derived from *Installations and Personnel in Alaska, Hawaii, U.S. Territories, and Foreign Countries* (as of 30 September 1969), Directorate for Information Operations, Washington, D.C.

### **Guantanamo**

The U.S. Naval presence at Guantanamo Bay, which began under lease rights in a 1903 naval agreement, continued through the turbulent period of the Cuban revolution and its aftermath, providing an effective strategic counterpoint to potential Soviet penetration of the region. Naval strength at Guantanamo in 1960 included 1536 personnel assigned to shore activities, with another 3950 afloat. In addition, a total of 290 Marines were stationed at the Guantanamo Marine Barracks.

### **Other Facilities**

Beyond these major concentrations of forces, the United States staffed facilities in four other locations throughout the Basin:

1. Virgin Islands: 162 Marines
2. British West Indies Federation: 394 Naval personnel and 64 Marines, mainly at Antigua and Barbados
3. Bahamas: 319 total military: 298 Navy, 18 Army, and 3 Air Force
4. Netherlands West Indies: A staff of seven Naval personnel at Aruba.

The other principal dimension of U.S. presence in 1960 was represented in the staffing of military advisory groups and attache offices throughout the region. A total of 249 personnel were assigned to the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and the countries of Central America. An additional 152 were stationed in Colombia and Venezuela, bringing to 401 the total of military personnel located in these offices in the major countries of the Basin.

This total of 401 military advisory group and attache personnel, added to the combined force of 21,672 stationed at the major bases and other facilities throughout the region (including 1,797 enroute or afloat), produces the grand total, referred to earlier, of 22,073 U.S. military present in the Caribbean Basin in 1960.

## 1968

In the wake of the Cuban Revolution, the period between 1960 and 1968 saw the Basin convulsed by political instability, revolutionary violence, and Soviet military probing--all of which affected U.S. security. As in the decades past, the region continued to be characterized by political turmoil, as seen by the abortive coup in Guatemala in November of 1960 and the Panamanian coup of 1968. But far more serious upheavals were also taking place: these involved the Venezuelan insurgency (1960-63), the Bay of Pigs invasion (1961), the Cuban missile crisis (1962), the Dominican revolt (1965), and the Guatemalan insurgency (1966-68). Three of these events prompted the United States to employ armed force either directly as in the Cuban missile crisis and the Dominican revolt, or indirectly as in the Bay of Pigs. It was during this period of political turbulence and heightening of tension in 1968 that U.S. military presence grew to its peak strength of 25,121 (Fig. 15). Although this total represents an overall increase in U.S. presence, it does not reflect an even distribution of increases--the totals for U.S. personnel stationed in Puerto Rico and Guantanamo, for example, showing a decrease, while those for the Canal Zone reflect an increase.

### Puerto Rico

While the numbers of military assignments were generally increasing throughout the Caribbean, an overall decrease occurred in Puerto Rico, partly as a result of the post-Korean War reduction in force that was continuing throughout the military, but more apparent in installations in Puerto Rico than in others in the Basin area. Because of the primacy of the Navy mission in Puerto Rico, the reduction had less effect on Naval personnel assignments than on those in other branches. One aspect of this reduction called for the deactivation of the Army's Antilles Command, which had been headquartered in Fort Brooke, resulting in a decrease of Army personnel from the 1960 total of 2329 to 633 in 1968. Most of the responsibility for island defense thus shifted to the strong Puerto Rican National Guard (approximately 7000 personnel). Naval and Marine strength increased from 3507 to 3544 at Roosevelt Roads and San

Juan. Numbers of Air Force personnel at Ramey AFB and other scattered facilities on the island decreased slightly from 3501 (1960) to 3490 (1968). The total strength of U.S. military forces in Puerto Rico thus amounted to 8629, reflecting an overall decrease of 1670.

### **Canal Zone**

The Panama Canal Zone manifested a sharp rise in U.S. presence in all of the services. Army manning rose from 6121 in 1960 to 7844 in 1968, an increase of 22 percent. Naval and Marine presence increased from 583 to 827, and Air Force assignments to Howard, Albrook, and Quarry Heights almost tripled, from 1138 to 3050. The total strength in all services stationed in the Canal Zone thus rose from 7842 to 11,721--an increase of 3,879 personnel overall.

### **Guantanamo**

Through these years of turmoil, Guantanamo Bay continued to be generally regarded as a symbolic as well as practical safeguard against the expansion of Cuban influence in the Caribbean. However, the numbers of assigned Naval and Marine personnel tended to remain fairly static, fluctuating slightly from year to year, and showing an overall drop from the 1960 total of 5776 to 4197 at the end of 1968.

### **Other Facilities**

The next largest concentration of U.S. forces continued to be devoted to Naval facilities in the Bahamas, with 363 personnel at Eleuthera, San Salvador, and Grand Turk, an increase of 44 over the 1960 numbers. Staffing of the other minor facilities at Antigua and Barbados in the British West Indies and at Aruba in Netherland Antilles either declined slightly or remained the same.

The numbers of military group and attache personnel increased somewhat in the Caribbean during this period, reflecting the general increase occurring throughout the Inter-American region. These assignments showed a negligible increase from the 1960 total of 401 to a 1968 peak of 406.



### **1981-82**

The years following the peak buildup of 1968 witnessed a relaxation in U.S.-Soviet tensions under detente, a marked decrease in Cuban-backed insurgencies in most Basin states, changes in U.S. government attitudes toward Latin America, as well as the eventual signing of the Panama Canal Treaty. This was the period of the sharpest decline in U.S. presence in the Caribbean, not only in numbers of personnel assigned to major bases, but also in staffing of military groups and attache offices (Figs. 15 and 16).

### **Puerto Rico**

The downward trend in Army personnel stationed in Puerto Rico continued: by 1981, the Army maintained only a small force of 427--down from 633 in 1968--who were mainly assigned to a training center at Ft. Buchanan and to various tenant locations. Naval and Marine strength at Roosevelt Roads also declined from 3544 in 1968 to 3067 in 1981, and with the closing of Ramey Air Force Base the number of Air Force personnel dropped from 3490 to 48 (mostly recruiters and advisors to National Guard and Reserve units).

### **Panama**

Following the signing of the Panama Canal Treaty, the Army retained most of its strength, declining from its 1968 total of 8259 to 7277, assigned mainly to Ft. Clayton, Ft. Davis, and Ft. Gulick. Ft. Amador, which had been turned over to Panama in October 1979 following the Treaty signature, retained a token Army presence. The numbers of Naval and Marine personnel declined from 717 to 316, and Air Force strength dropped from 3204 to 1831, most still assigned to Albrook, Howard, and Quarry Heights.

### **Guantanamo**

Naval and Marine strength at Guantanamo continued to drop, from 3999 in 1968 to 2479 in 1981. Starting in the mid-1970s, the United States had begun re-examining its relations with Cuba in general and its policy regarding the Guantanamo lease in particular. Although at first

(in 1977) questioning the need for indefinite commitment to Guantanamo, the Carter administration, after lengthy review of the matter, and after the addition of Whiskey- and Foxtrot-class submarines to the Cuban Navy, reconfirmed the value of Guantanamo as essential to the protection of U.S. interests in the Caribbean.

### **Other Facilities**

The Navy continues to maintain a staff of 113 (plus 4 Air Force) at its Antigua facility. Other facilities in the region involve small numbers of personnel, primarily in the Bahamas (42) and the Virgin Islands (11).

Military group and attache staffing in the nations of the Basin decreased from 401 in 1960 and 406 in 1968 to 165 in 1981, partly as a result of reorganization of the mission structure. Again, as in the instances of base closure, specific circumstances governing personnel reductions, such as organizational restructuring, may have been justified, but the overall personnel decline remains an important consideration.

Despite the substantial reduction of U.S. presence in the Caribbean, the points of primary strength remain: the bases at Roosevelt Roads and Guantanamo and the forces remaining in Panama.

The signing of the Canal Treaty has not diminished the value of the Canal to the security of the United States. It is still regarded by defense planners as an indispensable facility, the use of which, as distinguished from ownership, is of primary importance.

In Puerto Rico, Roosevelt Roads provides facilities, services, and materials to support all types of fleet-weapons and amphibious training, aviation operations, and emergency support of operating units. Naval strategists emphasize that Roosevelt Roads could be crucial in providing support in possible Atlantic area hostilities, in protecting sea routes from the United States to all of Latin America, and in facilitating U.S. power projection to South America and Africa.

Guantanamo Bay, too, is strategically located and is recognized as the best deep-water port in the Caribbean. Its location dominates the Windward Passage, the principal channel for traffic between the Canal and ports in South America and the U.S. East Coast. It has become

perhaps all the more important because of the growth in both Cuban and Soviet military capabilities in the Basin. In this respect, Guantanamo, like Roosevelt Roads, provides a major base for power projection throughout the Caribbean and into the rest of Latin America.

## SECURITY ASSISTANCE

The pattern of U.S. security assistance to the nations of the Caribbean corresponds generally to that reflected in the numbers of assigned U.S. personnel: an increase from 1960 to 1968-1969, followed by a decrease from 1969 to the present (see Figs. 17, 18, and 19). Both Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and Military Assistance Program (MAP) figures, when converted to constant 1980 U.S. dollars, follow this pattern despite recent sharp increases in assistance to several countries, notably El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico. One reason for the relatively high FMS figures for 1980 (compared with MAP and International Military Education and Training (IMET) program figures) is that agreements and deliveries vary in amount from year to year in individual countries, often quite erratically, depending upon the changing annual materiel requirements within each country. Although erratic patterns can be found in all categories of security assistance, they are not as pronounced in the MAP or IMET programs as in FMS. Another influence affecting patterns of security assistance is that of international politics: the same forces that produced the general trends evident in 1960, 1968, and 1980 may have affected U.S. negotiations with individual governments in different ways, thus creating seeming aberrations in specific categories of assistance. Another recent factor was the manner in which human rights considerations restricted security assistance to different countries--and various specific programs within individual countries--in different and sometimes contradictory ways.

As was true regarding the decrease in numbers of U.S. personnel in the area, so also the reduction in recent years of security assistance in FMS, MAP, and IMET programs reflects an apparent low global priority with respect to the supporting of U.S. security interests in the Caribbean Basin. This appears to be the case even in light of the recent escalation of tensions between the United States and Cuba, and

the heightening of official U.S. concern over developments in Central America since the Nicaraguan Revolution in 1979.

### **Foreign Military Sales**

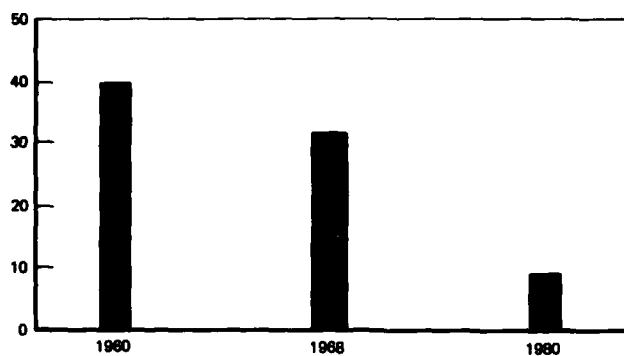
Total foreign military sales deliveries, when considered in constant U.S. dollars, have fallen from \$40,238,000 in 1960 to \$17,245,000 in 1980, resulting in a precipitous decline in the U.S. share of total global deliveries from approximately 40 percent in 1960 to less than 10 percent in 1980 (Fig. 17).<sup>4</sup> Some of the initial reasons for low U.S. participation in arms transfers to Latin America--such as human rights-related restrictions, lower threat perceptions, and limitations on distribution of sophisticated weaponry during the 1970s--have recently come under critical re-examination. However, despite some relaxation, resulting in sales of F-5s and F-16s, U.S. arms sales to Caribbean nations remain small. As before, the vacuum is inevitably filled by other countries. The overall consequence of this condition, in the view of many observers, is a perpetuation of the erosion of U.S. influence in the Basin.

### **Military Assistance Programs (MAP)**

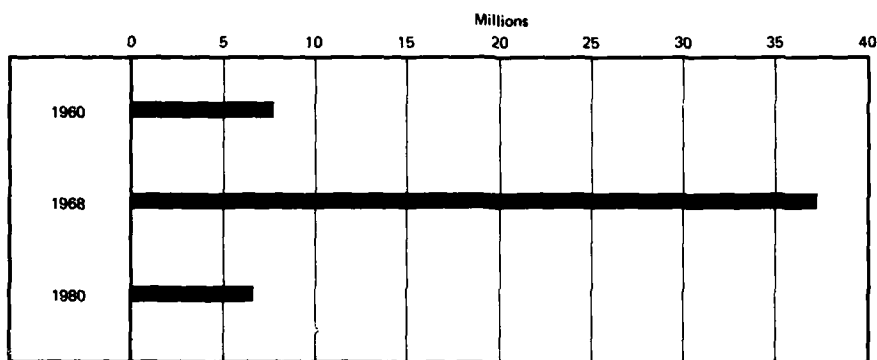
U.S. Military Assistance Program (MAP) deliveries to countries in the Caribbean Basin rose progressively from \$7,731,000 in 1960 to \$37,203,000 in 1968, then dropped to \$665,000 in 1980 (constant 1980 U.S. dollars). The tables for 1981 show negligible amounts (less than \$500) in windup costs for Guatemala, Honduras, and Panama. No other countries received assistance in 1981 except El Salvador, the recipient of \$25 million under the government's Section 506(a) drawdown authority (Fig. 18). 1982 estimates are for \$67,519,000 for the region, but when the \$63,500,000 designated for El Salvador is discounted the total returns to a more traditional figure, \$4,019,000 (including \$1 million each to Dominican Republic, Honduras, Jamaica, and to a group of selected island states in the Eastern Caribbean)--more than in recent previous years, but still a moderate sum. The Military Assistance

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<sup>4</sup>All security assistance data in this section are from *Fiscal Year Series*, Department of Defense, Security Assistance Agency, Washington, D.C., various years.



**Fig. 17 – Arms sales: deliveries**  
U.S. percentage of total deliveries to CB countries  
(Constant 1980 U.S. dollars)



**Fig. 18 – Military Assistance Programs (MAP) deliveries to CB nations**  
(constant 1980 U.S. dollars)

Program, including as it does, grant defense articles and services (other than training), is widely perceived as a strong indicator of donor interest for underdeveloped or developing countries.<sup>5</sup> Measured by this and other standards, the U.S. administration of the program for the nations of the Caribbean appears to many to be disappointingly short-sighted.

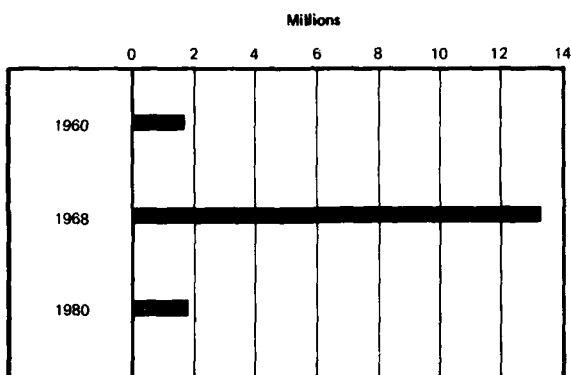
### **International Military Education and Training Programs**

The IMET programs often represent the most effective dimension of U.S. security assistance in terms of producing direct and lasting benefits for the cementing of U.S. military ties with the region. In these programs personnel from Latin American countries train in schools on military installations in the United States, in Panama, and in various overseas U.S. facilities. They are provided the opportunity of becoming immersed in U.S. culture, meeting U.S. counterparts--often resulting in lasting professional friendships--and gaining useful insights into U.S. military concepts and techniques. There are obvious risks for the United States in such programs. For example, cultural immersion could be counterproductive if it succeeded only in reinforcing an individual's animosities and prejudices concerning U.S. society, or if U.S. military officers were to compromise their professional objectivity by too close association with their Latin counterparts. However, the practical experience of these programs over the many years of their existence has been, in the consensus of both U.S. and Latin participants, extremely rewarding.

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<sup>5</sup>The general program goals of security assistance, as described in the FY 1983 *Congressional Presentation*, seem to be particularly appropriate to U.S. concerns in the troubled Caribbean region. According to this document, the United States will use these programs to "defend against and deter aggression, contribute to regional stability, demonstrate its concern for the legitimate security problems faced by its friends and allies, diminish both the need and potential for direct U.S. military involvement in local conflicts, avert major economic and political crises, and promote other strategic, political, and economic interests." *Congressional Presentation, Security Assistance Programs, FY 1983*, Washington, D.C., p. 2.

One of the many accomplishments of IMET has been the facilitating of international military-to-military communication between individuals and groups at various levels in different service branches. Especially disappointing, then, to those familiar with the IMET programs is the spectacle of the decline in funding to \$1,792,000 in 1980 from the high of \$13,332,000 in 1968 (the 1960 level was \$1,715,000) (Fig. 19). This trend, like that of MAP, has been reversed in 1981 and in the 1982-83 proposals. However, even with a substantial increase, producing a 1981 total of \$2,741,000, the funds dedicated to IMET for the Caribbean nations are small when compared with amounts allocated in earlier stages of these programs, or with other forms of security assistance.



Source: *Fiscal Year Series* (for representative years), Department of Defense, Security Assistance Agency, Washington, D.C.

**Fig. 19 – International Military Education and Training (MET) programs for CB nations (constant 1980 U.S. dollars)**

## V. CONCLUSION

Defense planners understandably tend to be more closely occupied with the immediately visible threats to world peace centering in the NATO-Warsaw-Pact confrontation, the Middle East, Southwest Asia, and other points generally located on an East-West global axis than with problems that periodically intrude from the southern hemisphere. The purpose of the preceding sections has therefore been to indicate the urgency of directing a greater share of attention to the fundamental shifts and trends occurring in the Caribbean Basin over the past two decades. In the matter of military balance alone, these developments could ultimately present serious security problems for the United States. If not arrested, they could directly threaten U.S. security interests in the years ahead; at the very least, they could seriously impede the U.S. ability to respond to simultaneous crises occurring both in the Basin and in other global theaters.

To demonstrate the shifts and trends taking place, an effort has been made to contrast the political, social, economic, and military environment of the Basin as it appeared in 1960, and as it exists today. A brief recapitulation of the main points will sharpen these contrasts:

### Geopolitical Changes

- The Caribbean Basin, so long regarded by the United States as its reliably secure "back yard," must now be recognized as containing a large number of autonomous states, many vulnerable to and some already directly under strong anti-U.S. influences.
- The European colonial presence has eroded, but a second political influence has appeared and assumed a new character, no longer friendly in the earlier historical sense, but now often supporting causes essentially hostile to traditional U.S. interests in the Basin.



- The once unified political complexion of the region is now diversified over a broad and complicated spectrum.

### **Foreign Trade and Economic Performance**

- Although the United States is still by far the leading trade partner with Caribbean countries, the U.S.-Basin economic relationship has been steadily deteriorating: U.S. direct investment has not increased proportionately to regional economic growth, and, although U.S.-Mexican trade has continued to increase, the U.S. share of both imports and exports has declined generally throughout the Basin despite continuous vigorous expansion of these markets.
- Even though the 1960-1980 economic growth rates of the Caribbean nations have generally exceeded those of the United States, the income levels of individual countries have remained excessively low. Rapid increases in population have caused consistent reversals in the direction of income patterns that might otherwise have been improved by the positive growth rates.

### **Population and Migration**

- Over half the people of the Basin currently live in countries where population is expected to double within the next 25 years. One of the most serious problems resulting from this rapidly expanding population is that of the proportionately large increase in numbers of young people (0-14 age group) who must be absorbed into already crowded school and work environments.
- Of the many consequences, both domestic and international, of regional overpopulation, one of the most profound will inevitably be increases in the already excessive numbers of emigrants from Basin countries, most of whom, either legally or illegally, will eventually enter the United States. Because of

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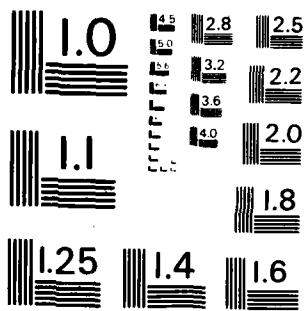
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its contiguous border and large numbers of young adults, Mexico will continue to produce an ever-increasing number of emigrants.

### **Military Posture**

- The armed forces of all the major Basin countries except Cuba have followed a pattern of modest improvement in quality of weaponry over the past twenty years, while maintaining a generally unchanged ratio of military personnel to overall population.
- Although progress has been gradual both in modernization of equipment and in expansion of numbers of personnel, it seems reasonable and adequate considering the presumed internal defense needs of each country.
- However, none of the Basin countries (except Cuba) have attained a capacity for power projection into the region. Hence, neither Mexico nor Venezuela--not to mention other Basin states--can assume roles as "regional powers" in the military sense.

### **Geostrategic Environment: Cuban and Soviet Presence**

- While other Basin countries maintained a generally low military profile, Cuba's armed forces were multiplying both in numbers of highly trained, battle-tested personnel and in aggregates of sophisticated weaponry.
- Cuba's capacity for extraterritorial military action, dramatically demonstrated in its Angolan and Ethiopian campaigns, has become an increasingly disturbing threat that, if realized, would add a radical new dimension to political turbulence in the region.
- Soviet presence in the Caribbean, meanwhile, although seeming to have languished for most of the 1960s, began to escalate in several respects during the 1970s: in increased sea traffic and port visits, reconnaissance flights, in sharply stepped up

shipments of advanced weaponry to Cuba--new MiG Floggers and Foxtrot submarines--in the supplying of Soviet pilots for Cuban MiGs, and in the maintenance of a large electronic complex on the island--all adding to the already swollen numbers of Soviet military and civilian personnel on the island.

### **Eroding U.S. Presence**

- The decline of U.S. military presence in the Caribbean from its 1960 levels, and especially from the peak levels reached in 1968, responded in part to the reduced threat perceptions emanating from the Basin during much of the 1970s, but it can be seen as at least partially symptomatic of the overall deterioration of U.S. influence that also has taken place during this period.
- The lowering of force levels at primary stations (Guantanamo, Panama, Puerto Rico), the downgrading or closing of others, and the continuous cutbacks in security assistance have aroused concern among many defense planners. Guantanamo, Panama, and Puerto Rico, as a kind of three-pointed umbrella of security countering the emerging "hostile triangle" of Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada, must continue to be regarded as critical outposts of U.S. security in the region.
- The decrease in numbers of attache and military group positions has likewise created apprehension, largely because it has aggravated already existing problems in intermilitary communication, but also because it betokens the general recession of a positive image of the U.S. military that in the past has nourished U.S. liaison with the nations of the Caribbean.
- Finally, the curtailment of security assistance can be seen to have had deleterious consequences, partly because of the adverse reactions of some countries to conditions imposed (some of which, such as the human rights clauses, have been perceived as politically arbitrary and unfair), but also because of the loss, over the last two decades, of sizable portions of the

military sales market to aggressively competing third countries.

Given other equally important changes in the global balance of forces as well as continuing adverse trends in the Basin, the alteration of the U.S. position has potentially serious implications for future U.S. security. First, over the next two decades, the Basin is likely to become even more important not only because of its vital SLOCs and oil resources, but also because of its continuing economic interdependence and social and political linkages with the United States, including effects of migration flows. Second, if present trends continue unabated, the United States could confront a far more politically unstable and militarily less secure Basin than in the 1960s and 1970s. Third, were the United States to become tied down in the Basin, it could become more constrained as a global power because it no longer would enjoy the advantage of having a secure "southern perimeter" in the Caribbean Basin as has been the case between the early 1900s and the 1970s.

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