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U.S. MILITARY SCHOOLS FOR LATIN AMERICA: A UNIQUE PLUS FOR UNCLE SAM

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USAWC RESEARCH ELEMENT
(Essay)

U.S. Military Schools for Latin America:

A Unique Plus for Uncle Sam

by

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22 April 1966

SUMMARY

This essay discusses the missions, objectives and operations of three relatively unknown military schools, sponsored by the United States, which train members of Latin American armed forces in military skills. All instruction at these schools is presented in Spanish.

The three schools are the Inter-American Defense College at Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.; the U.S. Army School of the Americas at Fort Gulick, Canal Zone; and the U.S. Air Force School for Latin America at Albrook AFB, Canal Zone.

Various similar and unique aspects of each school are examined, and problems are discussed. It is concluded that the schools make a highly effective contribution to the U.S. Military Assistance Training Program for Latin America, and play a significant role in projecting favorably the US image to our southern neighbors and allies.

Not until Cuba became a Communist satellite did the majority of citizens in the United States start looking southward towards the immense land masses of Central and South America which could more than twice cover the continental United States. This vast area with its over 200 million population has tremendous undeveloped potential, is bursting at the seams with long latent energy and nationalism, and is fertile ground in which to plant the seeds of democracy or communism.

Cuba has become the new world headquarters for Communist efforts to subvert Latin American governments and escalate guerrilla warfare in this hemisphere. In January 1966 at the Moscow-sponsored Communist conference in Havana, the overall plan called for "the use of every form of struggle necessary including armed battle . . ." to win Communist aims. Attendees at the conference included the guerrilla leaders of national liberation movements in such important countries as Guatemala, Venezuela, Colombia, and Peru--countries which the free world cannot afford to lose.

For a number of years, Red-inspired violence has flared throughout Latin America in the form of riots, strikes, banditry, coup attempts, kidnappings, and terrorism. Such is the pattern of stepped-up Communist subversion, and it is unlikely to decrease. Guerrilla training camps in Cuba are training agents to infiltrate every country in Latin America. Great amounts of Communist printed propaganda being disseminated all over Latin America originate in Havana. The United States has become increasingly aware of the

growing threat of communism in the Western Hemisphere, and is taking positive steps to meet it.

In this ideological battle for men's minds, a unique, highly effective and relatively unknown effort is being made to win friends and further democratic ideals in Latin America through US-sponsored and conducted military schools for Latin American officers and enlisted men. Two of these schools are located in the Canal Zone of Panama; the U.S. Air Force School for Latin America (USAFSLA) at Albrook AFB, and the US Army School of the Americas (USARSA) at Fort Gulick. The third school, the Inter-American Defense College (IADC), is located at Fort McNair in Washington, D.C.

These schools serve widely different levels and purposes. The two in the Canal Zone conduct military technical and field training for Latin American enlisted men and officers up to (and sometimes including) the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. The school in Washington follows a top-level war college curricula for senior Colonels, Navy Captains and a few civilians from both Latin American countries and the United States. The IADC falls under the auspices of the Inter-American Defense Board.

Perhaps the most unique feature of these schools is that all instruction is presented in Spanish. Also most of the instruction is presented by US officers and enlisted men who are bilingual either through language training or childhood environment. The schools in the Canal Zone have been operating since the 1940's

and have graduated more than 19,000 students; the college in Washington was opened in October 1962, and has graduated 130 students.

These schools play a significant role both in the US Southern Command's military assistance training program and in the United States' overall alliance for progress. To better understand how they fit in the program, it is first necessary to take a look at the overall military assistance training program for Latin America.

MILITARY ASSISTANCE TRAINING PROGRAM (MATP)

The military assistance training program is designed to strengthen Latin American armed forces in their ability to resist both external and internal subversion, to train them along democratic lines to be responsible and participating members in the betterment of their countries, and to build up their image in the eyes of their own people as a stable, responsible force for good. In Latin America the armed forces play a different role than they do in the United States. Spanish power in America was established by military might, the military influence in government was strong, and the colonial governors usually were military men. When the republics were formed after three centuries of Spanish military rule, the military continued to be a powerful influence in the governments by tradition and experience, whether for good or bad. Actually much credit should be given to many military leaders of Latin America for abetting self-government

within their countries. In contrast, others became dictators of the most vicious, tyrannical type. The strong influence of the military continues today, and we cannot ignore it, for good or bad. For this reason it is to our interests to assist and influence the course of military developments in Latin America, as well as developments in the social and economic areas. Actually, these areas all overlap to a certain extent.

The military assistance program for Latin America began in the early 1950's with an aim towards providing hemispheric security. Since 1961, its mission has been recast to emphasize training of light, competent mobile forces which can be used within a country to provide internal security. The Military Assistance Training Program (MATP) is administered by the US Southern Command, a joint command with headquarters in the Canal Zone. Its philosophy is to try to develop within the Latin countries indigenous skills and training capabilities that eventually will put the US effort out of business. There are two major categories of training furnished under the MATP. They are Student Training and Mobile Assistance Training.

Student Training includes courses of instruction in military schools and civilian institutions, orientation tours to the United States, on-the-job training (OJT) in various US military establishments, observer training, and underway training in US naval craft.

Formal training can be provided in stateside schools or in the schools in the Canal Zone. Students attending schools in the

United States must be able to speak, read and write English, since all instruction is presented in the English language. Of course, in the Canal Zone schools all instruction is in Spanish, enabling training to be furnished to a much wider base of students. Besides the USAF and US Army schools there is the Inter American Geodetic Survey School (IAGS) at Fort Clayton in the Canal Zone. The IAGS is somewhat different from the other schools in that it trains both military and civilians from cartographic agencies, and is supported primarily by US AID. It too teaches in Spanish.

Orientation tours to the CONUS and/or Canal Zone installations are designed for orientation and indoctrination of key Latin American military personnel in US operations and techniques. Each tour is designed to meet the requirements of the group. Most tours average four weeks in length, though shorter tours are conducted by the military schools in the Canal Zone for certain of their students. A very significant side benefit of these tours is the usually salutary effect of U.S. hospitality and exposure to the US way of life.

On-the-job training (OJT) and observer training usually follow some technical course and run approximately two to eight weeks. OJT merely gives a technician some actual experience on the equipment or in the skill for which he received formal training.

Mobile Training Assistance consists of Mobile Training Teams (MTT's) and Contract Technical Service Personnel (CTSP's). The

MTT's are composed of US personnel who are sent on temporary duty to assist Latin American countries, at their request, in training their own personnel in the operation and maintenance of complex pieces of equipment provided under the Military Assistance Program (MAP). They also assist, advise and help establish maintenance, operations and supply systems, and recommend civil action projects. CTSP's or Technical Representatives (Tech Reps), as they sometimes are called, are civilian personnel under contract to the US government, and are provided to train initial instructor cadres or establish training courses of instruction on maintenance and operation of specific items of equipment or systems. Normally they are provided only when such training is beyond the capability of the US military services. CTSP's other than for training purposes are programmed in the MAP materiel programs.

The above training programs are administered and sub-divided by service, so that within each country there normally will be an Army, Navy and Air Force training program. Coordination within the countries is effected by the Military Group Commander, a joint commander within each country appointed from within the US military missions by the Commander, US Southern Command. The Military Group Commander, be he Army, Navy or Air Force, is responsible for coordinating all aspects of the military assistance training program within his country area. With the foregoing in mind, we will turn to an examination of the three schools themselves.

INTER-AMERICAN DEFENSE COLLEGE

The stated mission of the Inter-American Defense College at Fort McNair, Washington, D.C. is as follows:

> The Inter-American Defense College is a military institution of high-level studies, devoted to conducting courses on the Inter-American System and the political, social, economic, and military factors that constitute essential components of inter-American defense, in order to enhance the education of selected armed forces personnel and civilian government officials of the American Republics for carrying out undertakings requiring international cooperation.

The college, conceived in 1957 during discussions held by delegates of the member nations of the Inter-American Defense Board concerning a need for a hemispheric war college, was approved in December 1961 and opened its doors to the first class in October 1962. Its site location at Fort McNair was chosen for its proximity to the Inter-American Defense Board and the broad diversity of guest speakers from all governments and many universities readily available within the Washington complex. In addition Fort McNair could offer necessary school accomodations, and had the experience to do so, as the U.S. National War College and Industrial College of the Armed Forces also are located there.

The facilities are rehabilitated barracks and the old Walter Reed Hospital, and consist of an academic/administrative building with a 100-seat auditorium, 31-man bachelor officers' quarters, and an officers' mess. Within the academic/administrative building are student seminar rooms, faculty offices,

auditorium, book store, reception lounge, and a 6000 book student library which is being systematically expanded and contains volumes in the Spanish, English and Portuguese languages.

The Inter-American Defense Board designates the countries whose governments may appoint the Director and Assistant Director (the Spanish word "Director" is used in Latin America to designate heads of military schools, and enjoys higher status than "Comandante" which means Commander and in some countries is merely a rank equivalent to the US Major). The Director always is appointed from the host country, the United States, and presently is an Army Major General. The Assistant Director must be appointed from a different country, and presently is a Peruvian Army Brigadier General. The Board further selects the Chief of Studies (presently an Argentine Army Brigadier General) from a third country. Faculty advisors are nominated by member nations of the Board, with final selection by the College Director. To assist the Chief of Studies there presently are authorized 12 senior officer and civilian advisors who represent U.S. and Latin American Armies, Navies, Air Forces and State Departments respectively. Advisor countries represented at present are the U.S., Brazil, Venezuela, and Argentina.

The student body is truly inter-American. Each member nation of the IADB may send up to five students who have the rank of Lt Col, Colonel or equivalent; have graduated from an advanced level college; have considerable military training and

experience at an advanced level; and are of the type who are likely to play a significant role in the solution of future hemispheric defense problems. To date the school has graduated a total of 130 students representing 18 different countries, including the United States. Only Cuba, Panama, and the Dominican Republic have not been represented at the College. Only the United States has sent a civilian to the school, though Costa Rica sent a member of its "Fuerzas Publicas" as it has no armed forces as such. The present class contains 31 students (one of whom is a US Foreign Service civilian) representing Venezuela, Argentina, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Mexico, United States, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, and Guatemala. Servicewise these students represent the Army, Navy, Air and Marine forces of their countries.

The current curriculum is 9 months long. The system of operation is similar to that of the U.S. National War College, and begins with a study of the over-all international situation and world blocs. The first part deals generally with the Communist bloc nations and the free world; then the heart of the course is devoted to study of the factors affecting this hemisphere and its defense. The military situation and factors affecting strategic planning are studied, leading to the final phase which is a study and analysis of the actual problems involved in planning Western Hemispheric defense. Numerous field trips are made throughout the course to US military and industrial facilities,

international organizations such as the United Nations, and to various facilities without the continental United States. The students begin school in early September, and graduate the following June.

As at the other war colleges, the mornings frequently are given to guest lectures followed by a question and answer period. Simultaneous interpretation equipment is available in the auditorium to accomodate the three languages represented. During the afternoons students meet with advisors in seminar rooms for working committees, discussion, and further study. These sessions are chaired by students.

One noteworthy feature of this College is that US officers are included as members of the student body and comprise only a small part of the faculty. This tends to make the inter-American aspect of the college ring true. Another point worth noting is that perhaps because so many different countries and such high rank levels are represented, there is little attempt to prescribe requirements and study matter which so fill the student's time as to prevent the reflective thought, study along lines of personal need, and personal associations which make such a school so valuable. These two features contribute to the high effectiveness of the College.

U.S. ARMY SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS (USARSA)

Founded in 1949 primarily to teach military subjects to U.S. personnel stationed in the Canal Zone, the U.S. Army School of the Americas by 1955 was conducting all courses in the Spanish language to meet the training needs and requests of Latin American armies representing some 20 countries in Middle and South America. At present the school is offering some 31 courses which range from two to forty weeks in length. This means a continual turnover of students with the concurrent problems of transportation to and from their countries (furnished to a large degree from USAF Southern Command resources), in and out processing, clothing issue, etc.

That the school has been and still is highly effective and serving a useful purpose can be derived from the statistics of numbers graduated and presently in attendance. As of 30 June 1965 some 17,009 Latin American students and 11,233 U.S. students had been graduated from the USARSA. The 4 October 1965 roster of students for fiscal year 1966 showed 348 Latin American and 134 U.S. students enrolled in 24 different courses, and representing 18 different countries. Most of the U.S. students were attending the revitalized Jungle Warfare School in training for Vietnam, and the training under such circumstances is presented in English.

The following courses (with duration shown in weeks) are offered by the two academic departments of the School:

Internal Security Department		Technical Department	
Cadet	40	Communications Officer	12
Command and General Staff	40	Engineer Officer	20
Mil. Civic Action Planning	3	Officer General Supply	12
Counterinsurgency Operations	10	Senior Officer Preventive Maintenance Course	2
Counterinsurgency Orientation	2	Automotive Maintenance Officer	14
Infantry Officer	20	Communications Chief	14
Military Police Officer	13	Radio Repair	20
Military Intelligence (Officer)	16	Radio Operator	14
Jungle Operations	3	Engineer NCO Combat & Construction	14
Parachute Rigger	8	NCO General Supply	9
Basic Airborne	4	Engineer Equipment Operator	11
Jumpmaster	3	Engineer Equipment Mechanic	16
Pathfinder	7	Basic Medical Technician	20
Military Police Enlisted	8	Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic	16
		Weapons Repair	10
		Repair Parts Technician	4

The yearly frequency of the above courses depends upon the needs and stated requirements of the various Latin American countries who must make known to their U.S. Army Mission Chief well in advance their annual requirements for Canal Zone training. Even with advance programming, the actual number of students attending each course may differ greatly from programmed statistics. Lack of funds, internal disorders, and various other considerations sometimes cause entire countries to cancel their requirement at the last moment. However, over the years a history of attendance as well as reports from the U.S. in-country Missions indicate whether or not a course is needed and to what extent it will be supported.

Several areas of the USARSA training program deserve special attention.

The Cadet Course is 40 weeks in length and comprises either the third or fourth year of military academies in various Latin American countries. During the 1965-66 academic year, 46 cadets from the Bolivian Military Academy will complete their last year at the USARSA, and upon return to their country will be commissioned in the Bolivian Army. Also attending the cadet course for this year are 30 Nicaraguan cadets who will have one more year at their own military academy after graduating from the USARSA in June 1966. Other countries that have sent cadets in the past are the Dominican Republic and Honduras. Of interest is a short 4-week cadet orientation course (not listed above) given each January to cadets of the Peruvian Military Academy. This orientation is of a general nature and covers almost all courses taught at the School of the Americas.

The US Air Force School for Latin America at Albrook AFB, C.Z., used to teach cadets too. However, in 1964 the cadet courses were eliminated because of the wide divergency in age and experience of students at the Air Force school, the more technical nature of the Air Force courses and the lack of facilities to separate cadets from the older enlisted students and their influence--to offer a suitable cadet program, in effect.

Since 1961, great emphasis has been placed on the counter-insurgency aspects of school training. The Jungle Warfare Center at Fort Sherman was inactivated in 1963, but its functions were assumed by the School of the Americas which now is conducting

courses for both U.S. and Latin American troops. The war in Southeast Asia has emphasized the continued need for such training. Of course, the frequency of jungle terrain in Latin America makes this training especially valuable in counterinsurgency. Other courses which very definitely contribute to and emphasize internal security, civic action and counterinsurgency are the police, intelligence, military civic action planning, and basic medical technician courses. In the civic action courses, students are taken into the field to a small Panamanian village where they analyze various needs--water supply, schools, roads, sanitation, etc.--and try to work up solutions, which if sufficiently good are turned over to the Panama Guardia Nacional for implementation, if desired.

The School of the Americas emphasizes practical application in all of its courses.

Other significant contributions which the School of the Americas makes to the overall mission are:

1. Manning of Mobile Training Teams to assist Latin American countries as needed.

2. Translation of Army Training Manuals and similar texts into Spanish, as well as all school instructional materials. (The Air Force school also has a significant translation capability and mission.)

3. A certain amount of English and Spanish instruction given to students and post personnel.

Student life is full, both academically and socially, at both the US Army School of the Americas and the US Air Force School for Latin America. Dining halls provide food with a certain Latin flavor to appeal to the students. Barracks are roomy and comfortable, though the high humidity often is oppressive to students from non-tropical climates. Organized athletics, receptions, entertainment in faculty homes, and student dances help to fill off-duty time, not to mention the many outdoor activities such as swimming, fishing, golf, and tennis which are available year-round in the Canal Zone for those so inclined. Students are afforded all the post privileges of US servicemen of similar rank.

The Guest Instructor program, common to both the Army and Air Force schools, deserves special mention. Guest instructors are selected graduates who are retained with the permission of their service for periods of usually one year to serve as regular members of the school faculty. They are permitted to bring their families to the Canal Zone, most occupy quarters on base or post, and are fully integrated into post life. Normally guest instructors are selected from among the top graduates of each class for their maturity, academic ability, instructor ability or potential, and character. They are a decided asset, carry a full academic teaching load after a few months on the job, offer a goal towards which other students may aim, as this position is considered a real feather in their caps, careerwise, and return to their own countries usually as firm friends of the United States.

U.S. AIR FORCE SCHOOL FOR LATIN AMERICA (USAFSLA)

The USAF School for Latin America opened its doors to Latin American students in 1945 at the request of Peru to train a few mechanics on-the-job. It was once closed briefly in the late 1940s, was reopened a year later and has been in operation ever since.

There are many similarities between the US Army School of the Americas and the US Air Force School for Latin America, and close coordination exists between the two. Only recently a survey team from the US Southern Command examined closely the curricula of the two schools and determined that no undesirable duplication of effort existed.

The USAFSLA mission is similar to that of the USARSA. It trains in air force skills and equipment which generally are of a more technical nature than those of the USARSA. Since 1945, it has graduated over 6700 students, considerably less than the School of the Americas, but this is understandable in view of the position of lesser importance that the Air Force plays in the armed forces of Latin American countries.

The USAF School for Latin America conducts only two classes each year. The duration of a class is five months. Classes begin in July and January. Although the school conducted courses for officers for years, within the last two years all regular officer courses have been dropped from the curricula due to lack

of attendance combined with a need to utilize fully the limited bilingual manpower resources of the USAF Southern Command in more productive areas. The USAFSLA contains four training departments with courses as follow:

Aircraft Training Department

Aircraft Propeller Repairman
Aircraft Pneudraulic Repairman
Instrument Repairman
Aircraft Electrical Repairman
Helicopter Mechanic
Aircraft Mechanic (Reciprocating)
Aircraft Mechanic (Jet)
Aircraft Maintenance Supervisor
Jet Engine Mechanic
Weapons Mechanic
Airframe Repairman

Electronics Training Department

Communications-Electronics Fundamentals
Aircraft Radio Repairman
Aircraft Communication-Navigation Equipment Repairman
Air Electronics Supervisor/ Technician
Ground Communication-Navigation Equipment Repairman
Instrument Trainer Specialist (C-11)

Medical Training Department

Aeromedical Specialist
Medical Service Specialist
Medical Laboratory Specialist
Public Health Specialist

Support Training Department

Special Air Operations Orientation Course
Inventory Management and Warehousing Specialist
Inventory Management and Warehousing Supervisor
Administrative and Personnel Specialist
Administrative Supervisor and Personnel Technician
Management Course
Technical Instructor Course
Fundamental, Intermediate, or Advanced English

Some of the above courses are taught only once a year, due to limited demand. The capacity of others cannot always meet the demand. One of the big problems of such schools is the determination of that point at which it is no longer feasible and economic to continue a course. A continued history of low

attendance immediately brings a course under close scrutiny for content, effectiveness, and down-country need. Manpower considerations are ever present within these schools.

In order to insure that students entering USAFSLA courses have the necessary background to assimilate the instruction, certain prerequisites must be met, and pre-entry examinations taken. These examinations are administered by the USAF Mission personnel in each host country, and are graded by the School. They serve a useful purpose in eliminating students who would fail should they attend the school, and have to return to their countries in disgrace. In some countries, failure at one of these schools results in heavy retribution on the delinquent students, even to the extent of dismissal from their service. Even so, there is a small failure rate as is appropriate in any such school which hopes to maintain high standards and reputation.

There are three terms which describe the areas of greatest emphasis within the USAF School for Latin America: "Integrated Training Program"; "Career Development Courses"; and "Aspirantes."

The Integrated Training Program is a system of skill and knowledge progression through the use of formal technical resident schools and dual channel on-the-job training composed of correspondence Career Development Courses (CDCs) and work centered job proficiency. This Dual Channel OJT concept of training which prevails in our own Air Force has given birth to a new, economical and more efficient way of meeting USAF foreign military training

objectives. Within the US Air Force, airmen are categorized at certain skill levels according to their experience, schooling and ability to meet requirements. These levels are "3", "5", and "7", the first being the apprentice level assigned to a basic airman who has completed 3 level training in a formal technical school, and the last being the level of a high ranking, experienced and well-schooled NCO Supervisor. To progress between levels requires schooling at formal technical schools, testing, on-the-job training, and experience. The Integrated Training Program in the USAF is effective, and has passed the test of time.

The USAFSLA has realigned its courses in the last few months to the "3" and "7" skill levels to meet this training concept. By concentrating all effort at these two levels, the USAFSLA feels it can better serve Latin American Air Forces. The reason for this shift in emphasis was justifiable criticism leveled at the School that certain "5" and "7" level courses at the school could not, by themselves, fully qualify graduates at the 5 and 7 levels. To do this would require post-school on-the-job training of an extensive nature covering varieties of equipment neither available to the USAFSLA nor the country itself. Under the new concept, "7" level courses will be limited, with emphasis on management and supervisory aspects of their career areas for experienced Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs).

The correspondence Career Development Courses for the USAF are produced by the USAF Extension Course Institute (ECI) at

Maxwell AFB, Alabama, and cover almost every technical field at every level. Successful completion of these courses with their books, study material and tests (graded at Maxwell AFB) provide an Airman with the knowledge needed to pass the standard 5-level Specialty Knowledge Test (SKT) in his Air Force specialty. Under the Integrated Training Program for Latin American Air Forces, the USAFSLA is translating into Spanish all pertinent Career Development Courses (with some modifications to fit Latin American requirements), and by July 1966 will offer a 5-level follow-on CDC in Spanish for each 3-level specialty taught by the school. Obviously, both the preparation and administration of these courses will require prodigious amounts of work, especially during the translation phase, but the benefits to the recipient countries should be long-reaching. Not only will the countries receive these translated materials upon request, but with minimal cost can upgrade their personnel within their own countries.

This idea has generated enthusiasm throughout Latin America. Currently, the Air Forces of Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela, and also Spain are assisting in the translation of Career Development Courses. However, because of its primary dependence upon the USAFSLA's considerable translation capability (over 30 people) and resident technical courses, this plan has been developed and managed by the USAFSLA. Ultimately the School hopes to have 140 courses with their specialty knowledge tests, translated and published in Spanish. The USAFSLA will grade the

tests. At present neither of the two Canal Zone schools has any large scale capability for translation in the Portuguese language.

The present Commandant of the USAF School for Latin America has stated that this work is, perhaps, the most important he has ever undertaken. Certainly the idea and implementation of standardized military correspondence courses for Latin American Air Force personnel which align Latin American Air Force methods and systems with USAF methods and systems cannot help but make the job of the Missions easier and the military assistance training program far more effective at a relatively low cost when compared to the potentially vast returns. The CDC program helps the Latin American air forces to help themselves.

The Aspirante program has been in effect for approximately a year. It provides 3-level training at the USAFSLA to young, aspiring students of host air force NCO schools (NCO aspirantes), as well as to graduates of airman schools (soldados alumnos). Normally the host countries send their NCO candidates to the USAFSLA for a five month "finishing course" prior to graduation. This program has numerous advantages to both the host country and to the USAF as follow: (1) The individual, still in student status, receives advanced follow-on training at a modern USAF school with its up-to-date equipment and methods; (2) space is made for additional students in the Latin American NCO academies; (3) the appeal of a "foreign tour" in Panama is highly appealing to many young aspirantes, creating a higher demand and thus

higher caliber student; (4) no per diem need be paid to NCO aspirantes such as is paid to regular air force members. (A discussion of per diem will follow); (5) students are a homogenous group with common interests, backgrounds and capabilities, making them easier to instruct and with a minimum of disciplinary problems; (6) the USAF standardization of 3-level (apprentice) training, and classification of skills throughout Latin America is increased; and (7) the host country is able to use the CDC OJT package for in-country advancement from the 3 to the 5 (technician) level of proficiency, leading logically to the USAF 7 level (advanced) courses of training.

The Aspirante Program has been received enthusiastically by Latin American countries. During the July-December 1965 class, aspirantes included more than 60 Chileans, 30 Colombians, and 40 Ecuadorians--over 130 out of a total class of 278 students.

One last feature of the USAFSLA deserves note--the Preventive Medicine Civic Action Team Program (PMCAT). The PMCAT plan was originated in late 1962 and contemplated the training of 5-man teams consisting of 2 Public Health Specialists, 2 Medical Service Specialists, and 1 Medical Laboratory Specialist. This team, upon completion of training, would return home to work in-country with a physician, visiting remote areas to provide medical treatment and sanitation education. Proposal of the plan in the summer of 1963 created an immediate favorable response from a number of under-developed countries such as the Dominican Republic, Honduras,

Ecuador, Bolivia and Paraguay. A first class was set up at the USAFSLA during the last half of 1963, and in January 1964 the Medical Training Department of the School was opened officially to meet this great need. Courses now include 600 hours, and involve large amounts of practical work. Seven day field trips were taken during the first classes to the interiors of Ecuador, Panama, Honduras and Paraguay. Various one day field excursions are taken within the Republic of Panama. An unsuccessful attempt was made, even, to try to sell sanitation and first aid to the Amazon witchdoctors.

This program has achieved outstanding success. Acceptance and acclaim by villagers receiving medical care for perhaps the first time in their lives have surpassed all original estimates. Impressed by this program's success, country air forces throughout Latin America are expanding their civic action operations. Of course the images of both US military and indigenous forces in Latin America are being broadened favorably beyond the normally accepted concept of armed forces.

Rather than duplicate at the USAFSLA the excellent counter-insurgency courses presented at the US Army School of the Americas, the USAF Southern Command has assigned two Air Force officers to the USARSA to represent the air arm of the joint counterinsurgency/counterintelligence team.

As at the USARSA, the USAFSLA conducts an extensive and valuable guest instructor program, and teaches both English and

Spanish language courses. The English, of which only 100 hours is given per class, is primarily an "extra", designed to teach the Latin American students a little English to assist them in their associations with North Americans while in the Canal Zone. Since the English instructors are bilingual civilians, many of whom are Panamanian citizens, courses in Spanish occasionally are presented to personnel of the USAF Southern Command, without the need of additional instructor personnel.

The USAFSLA no longer takes students on orientation trips to the United States. It frequently furnishes language-qualified members of Mobile Technical Training Teams for temporary duty to Latin American host countries. In addition, it hosts various special U.S. Southern Command conferences in its modern, air-conditioned auditorium completely equipped for simultaneous translation in 5 languages, similar to the facilities of the U.N. auditoriums.

COMMON ASPECTS AND PROBLEMS OF THE SCHOOLS IN THE CANAL ZONE

Latin American students attending the Canal Zone schools are given free uniforms, housing and meals. In addition they are paid $1.50 each day by the US government. This sum is minimally adequate to their spending needs while attending the school. Foreign students attending schools in the CONUS receive $6.00 a day. Thus it can be seen that in per diem costs the Canal Zone schools are much cheaper; however, per diem poses a problem.

By law, Latin American countries are required to pay certain fixed amounts of per diem to their military personnel visiting out-of-country. In the case of some countries the per diem is extremely high. For example, an Argentine officer receives $30.00 per day while out of his country. With only limited funds in the country budget, it sometimes has become necessary for countries to cancel their student input to programmed courses at the Canal Zone schools. Usually this is done very shortly before a course is due to start, creating problems for the schools. Although US Mission Chiefs and the Commander, US Southern Command repeatedly have emphasized that all necessary items are furnished free of charge and that the students need no per diem, it continues. These per diem laws are one of the big deterrents to expansion of the Canal Zone schools; in addition, they limit student training in North America. Thus far no success has been evident in changing them.

Unfortunately--and this damages the U.S. image--Latin American students often do not find a warm friendly reception from post and base personnel not connected directly with the two schools, or from long-time Canal Zone civilian residents. Because the staffs and faculties of the schools are relatively small in comparison to the numbers of students trained, it is quite possible for a student to spend 5 months in the Canal Zone and never be invited into a North American's home. Officers and instructors at the schools try to entertain those students of appropriate

rank, but they cannot always reach every student. This has been more of a problem for the commander of the Air Force school whose command position is one of several at Albrook AFB, than it has for the Army School Commander who in fact commands the entire post at Fort Gulick and all Atlantic side army activities. In addition, much of the student's off-duty time is spent in the questionable milieu of Panama where he hears vitriolic criticism of the Canal Zoners and the United States. Should this be combined with unfavorable impressions on the post, the student may return to his country critical and bitter. Considering this, it seems that these schools might better be located in the United States, despite increased costs, in a metropolitan, non-regional area such as Denver or Kansas City where Latin American students would be forced to use English during their off-duty time, but would be welcomed and could be absorbed socially into the homes of doctors, lawyers, businessmen, workers, etc., as well as military people--a more truly representative group of North American citizens. Certainly this would lend credence to the English instruction given at the schools. We do not want to train people in equipment and methods which they may some day use against us. On the other hand, the long record of the schools indicates that many more friends than enemies have been made over the years; graduated students often have been known to comment to US Mission personnel that the School in Panama was one of the high points of their life (and in some cases their only opportunity to travel abroad).

Therefore, the conduct of the military schools in the Canal Zone should continue to be such as to make the most of this singular opportunity to make friends for North America.

The main reason that base and post personnel do not extend full hospitality to the students and that the students seldom attempt friendly overtures is their inability to communicate with each other. In addition, personnel not directly concerned with the schools are busy with their own families, affairs and jobs. In the recognition that one of our primary missions in Latin America is to influence the people favorably towards the United States, it would appear that commanding officers from the top levels down not only would make study of the Spanish language mandatory but also would provide worry-free duty time during which their people could study and attend classes. Such a policy would have to start at the top to be successful, but what a vast difference it could make in human relations aspects.

Maintaining a steady input of qualified instructor personnel to the schools poses another problem. The US Air Force school has depended for instructors largely on non-commissioned officers with necessary skills who have attended instructor training courses in the United States. The vast majority of these instructors hail from Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California and Puerto Rico, are of Spanish descent, and learned the Spanish language through childhood home environment. These men, as a whole, are highly qualified in their technical areas and make outstanding

instructors. However, one criticism by Latin American students is that these instructors are Latins the same as they, and do not as truly represent the United States as the Anglo-American instructors. To resolve this problem, the US Army school at Fort Gulick has attempted successfully to maintain an approximately 50/50 mix of language-trained Anglos and home-trained Spanish Americans as instructors on their faculty. The Air Force has not resolved this problem due to the difficulty of training to fluency an Anglo instructor in highly technical areas such as communications-electronics.

To resolve the problem of sufficient Spanish-speaking instructors and staff personnel, more officers and enlisted men must be trained in the Spanish language. Incentive pay for language proficiency might well increase interest in learning languages. Hiring of civilians has been considered, but is not considered desirable if in large numbers because it would destroy the military nature of the schools. Some bilingual military instructors have so enjoyed their tours that they have repeatedly requested and had approved assignments back to the same job within a year of their return to the United States. Some have spent four four-year tours in the Canal Zone, making this work their entire career, in effect. This reflects the shortage of bilingual personnel, and definitely is not desirable, as the instructors become more like Latin Americans than North Americans. In addition, long retention in the Canal Zone schools of military

instructors causes them to drop behind current developments in their Service, especially in the case of the Air Force School where courses are taught in equipment some of which has been obsolete in the United States for as many as 15 years.

There is another aspect to the manpower problem. To administer even the most simple course requires at least two or three instructors to provide back-up for sickness, leave and temporary duty assignments. This especially is true in the more complicated technical courses where it may be impossible to find a temporary substitute teacher in an emergency. To gain maximum utilization of all instructors, the schools attempt wherever possible to provide overlap in instructor skills between courses. In this way, if one course has low student input, its instructors can be used in some other course. It is to the credit of the schools that they remain sufficiently flexible to provide quality instruction despite the necessity to furnish interpreters for various special missions and projects of the US Southern Command, Army or Air Force, furnish members of mobile training teams who may be gone for months in Latin America, and send their instructors for special upgrading courses in the United States. No US state-side school faces such varied demands.

Another problem occasionally arises because of the remote location of these Canal Zone schools away from any ties with military training schools in the United States. This is both a blessing and a curse. The requirement for flexibility makes it

logical that they fall under the US Southern Command; the need for stability might indicate a closer tie to US Army or Air Force training commands based in the United States. Because it is so easy to change organizations and policy, new Commandants of the Schools frequently have completely recast the organization, direction and policy of their schools. Obviously, sometimes this is advantageous and at other times detrimental to the School mission; certainly it is somewhat damaging to the continuity of instruction and stability for permanently assigned personnel. Frequently it is unnecessary and merely reflects a Commanders personal desires. Over the years a fairly consistent pattern has been developed for the administration and organization of these schools. While such schools must be more responsive to US government foreign policy than stateside technical schools, the US Army and US Air Force Southern Commands should examine closely any proposals on the part of the schools for major changes, and attempt to perpetuate sound organization and policy by firm, higher direction in the form of regulations.

Members of the staff and faculty of these relatively unknown schools are devoted to their duty and to the overall U.S. mission of training and equipping a more professional indigenous military to be a stabilizing influence in Latin American countries. To them, there is no job in the military more demanding, or rewarding.

In conclusion, it might be well to consider expanding this type of school to other areas of the world, such as Africa or

some parts of Asia. However, a much cheaper solution would be to evaluate the effectiveness of the Air Force correspondence courses in Latin America over the next few years with a view to their expansion not only to the other services but also to other areas of the world. This would involve a considerable translation capability, which for Latin America very properly would be located in the Canal Zone. While the Spanish language or "Castellano", as it is often called in South America, varies somewhat from country to country, employment of translators from many different countries would tend to give a more universal flavor to the finished translated product, and might eventually standardize technical terms throughout Latin America.

The English instruction at the Canal Zone schools often comes under fire as being unnecessary, unwanted and insufficient. However, it is recommended that this instruction be continued for all students at the two schools in the Zone, not only because it helps those who want to communicate with Anglo-Americans, but also because it is a healthy academic discipline and an excellent vehicle through which to teach a little of the U.S. way of life and political beliefs.

The location of the Schools in the Canal Zone presents something of a dilemma. Because of the belligerent nature of Panama and the anticipation of increased concessions with regard to Canal Zone administration, base rights, and sovereignty, it might be well to plan removal of these schools sometime in the

future to locations in the continental United States. While such a move would increase costs of student per diem (as paid by the U.S.) and transportation, it would decrease costs and increase amounts of U.S. support and certainly would make attendance at the schools more desirable to Latin Americans. It would result, probably, in graduated students more favorably disposed towards the United States, which after all, is one of the main reasons for the existence of these schools.

In order to provide fluent bilingual military personnel for positions in the Schools and in U.S. Missions in Latin America, more U.S. military personnel, both officer and enlisted, should be given more language training. It should be given early in their careers. If the United States is to expand favorably its influence throughout the world, especially through the physical presence of US servicemen overseas, training for all military personnel in some language is as necessary as basic training. This points to a need for a massive language training program sponsored by the US Government, and there should be no delay in implementing it.

This essay has attempted to present a picture of three schools --the Inter American Defense College, the US Army School of the Americas and the US Air Force School for Latin America. All are playing a quiet, unobtrusive but highly effective role in the

cold war, reaching far beyond the usual levels of country diplomacy to help and befriend the citizen soldiers of Latin America who in the long view, will largely determine the future of their countries.

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