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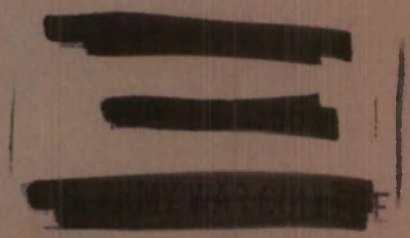
STUDENT RESEARCH PAPER

8 April 1966

GUATEMALAN MILITARISM AND UNITED STATES SECURITY POLICY TOWARDS GUATEMALA

By



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USAWC RESEARCH ELEMENT
(Research Paper)

Guatemalan Militarism and United States Security Policy Towards Guatemala

by

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Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania
8 April 1966

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SUMMARY

Military officers in Latin America play a large political role in government. Critics contend that the military coups and dictators impede social progress. The purpose of this research is to examine the political role played by Guatemalan officers and to determine what security policy the United States should have concerning Guatemalan militarism. A cutoff date of 10 February 1966 is established for consideration of new Guatemalan political developments.

Guatemala commenced a social revolution in 1944 when military and civilian revolutionaries rebelled against totalitarian government. Juan Jose Arevalo, a liberal civilian, assumed office in 1945 and commenced progressive social reforms; but permitted an influx of Communists. Jacobo Arbenz succeeded Arevalo and permitted Communist control of the Guatemalan government. In a 1954 liberation movement, Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas overthrew Arbenz and assumed control of the government. Since then, Guatemala has had two additional military rulers, Miguel Ydigoras and Enrique Peralta. Peralta, the present Chief of Government, assumed power in 1963, when he overthrew Ydigoras in a military coup.

The military have played a dominant political role in Guatemala because they sincerely consider themselves to be defenders of the nation and because civilian middle class leadership has been weak. Military governments have provided Guatemala political and social stability, but have failed to provide long-term political and social growth. The military uprising by Castillo Armas in 1954, although interrupting constitutional processes, was beneficial, as Castillo overthrew communism. Peralta's coup also was beneficial in that it gave Guatemala political and economic stability.

United States security policy towards militarism is largely influenced by our participation in the Inter-American system. The United States should have a long-term policy of being opposed to coups in Guatemala. In general, coups and dictators impede social progress. Specific action to be taken must be on a case-by-case basis, tempered by a policy of nonintervention. Coercion by withholding economic or military assistance to Guatemala will probably do more harm than good. If a Guatemalan coup endangers security of the Caribbean, United States remedial action against the coup should be waged through the Organization of American States.

Guatemala is faced with a Communist threat. The United States should provide military assistance to assist the Guatemalan military in maintaining internal security and conducting civic action. Political stability is required so that sorely needed social and economic reforms of the Alliance for Progress can be pursued.

United States economic aid, to decrease militarism, should emphasize improving civilian government capabilities and assimilating the Indians into all of the country's social, economic, and political activities by orderly democratic processes.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On 30-31 March 1963, Colonel Enrique Peralta, accompanied by tanks and troops, stormed the Casa Crema, official residence of President Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes, chased President Ydigoras into exile, and assumed control of the country.[1] In a traditional Latin American military coup d'etat, Minister of Defense Peralta disrupted the rule of an elected and constitutional government, suspended the constitution, and established a military dictatorship.

The problem of militarism in Latin America, particularly dictators and coups, is an old and troublesome one. Since World War II, military officers have participated heavily in Latin American politics in all countries excepting Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Uruguay. From 1930 to 1965, there were 75 illegal or unscheduled changes of government in Latin America.[2] Since 1960, military forces have overthrown Central American governments in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

Latin American and United States leaders have strongly criticized military dictators and coups. Critics contend that militarism impedes social justice and conflicts with ideals and goals of the Alliance for Progress. For example, the deposed Ydigoras asserted

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[1]Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes, My War with Communism, pp. 2-3.
[2]US Congress, House, Committee on Appropriations, Foreign Assistance and Related Agencies Appropriations for 1966, pp. 392-393.

that the Guatemalan coup halted the social progress that his government had made under the Alliance for Progress and that Peralta created a brutal police state.[3] After military uprisings which took place in the Dominican Republic and Honduras in late 1963, President Kennedy stated:

> . . . we are opposed to an interruption of the constitutional system by a military coup, not only because we are all committed under the Alliance for Progress to democratic government and progress and progressive government, but also because of course dictatorships are the seedbeds from which communism ultimately springs up.[4]

Why do military officers intervene in politics and usurp control of government by force? Historians, social scientists, and military analysts have extensively evaluated militarism in Latin America in an attempt to determine its causes, advantages, and disadvantages. A major difficulty encountered is that all Latin American countries are not alike. Individual countries vary significantly in political and socioeconomic structures. Lyle McAlister, Director of the Center for Latin-American studies, University of Florida, points out that more case studies of individual countries are needed before convincing generalizations for all Latin America can be drawn.[5]

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[3]Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes, "Use of Military Coups: Dangers Cited in Totalitarianisms of the Right," New York Times, 4 Oct. 1963, p. 34.

[4]John F. Kennedy, "The President's News Conference of October 9, 1963," in Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, John F. Kennedy, January 1 to November 22, 1963, p. 770.

[5]Lyle N. McAlister, "Changing Concepts of the Role of the Military in Latin America," The Annals of the American Academy of Political Science, Vol. 360, Jul. 1965, p. 95.

This research is such a case study. Guatemala has been selected for analysis for several reasons. This country has suffered recurrent revolutions and dictatorial leadership since its establishment as an individual Republic in 1839. It has had three major coups since 1944. It was the first country in the Western Hemisphere to fall to communism. Guatemala became the first and only country since World War II to free itself from a Communist-controlled government. Guatemala is presently governed by an unconstitutional military regime and is highly vulnerable to another military coup.

During 1962-1965, the author was assigned to Headquarters, United States Southern Command, and performed military staff duties relating to Central America. In this assignment, the author became deeply interested in Guatemala, the "Land of Eternal Spring."

This research paper examines Guatemalan militarism - the large political role that Guatemalan military officers play in government. The study centers on military assumption and rule of government with focus on military coups and military rule by force. Chapter 2 describes geographical, social, economic, political, and military factors which relate to militarism. Chapter 3 briefly reviews Guatemala's history of militarism since 1944. Chapter 4 analyzes the causes, strengths, and weaknesses of militarism. A review of past and present United States policy towards militarism in Guatemala is presented in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 analyzes future United States security policy towards militarism in Latin America with major focus on military coups. Finally, conclusions concerning Guatemalan militarism and United States security policy towards Guatemalan militarism are set forth in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 2

SETTING OF MILITARISM

THE GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE[1]

Guatemala comprises an area of 42,042 square miles and a population of approximately 4,300,000 people.[2] The country is slightly smaller than the state of Tennessee. It has a variety of topography. High mountain ranges, extending up to 13,000 feet, and numerous plateaus stretch across the northwest and southeast parts of the country. Tropical lowlands exist on both Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Lowlands and dense jungles are located in the sparse northern Department of Peten. Rivers are numerous. Guatemala has a Pacific coastline of 200 miles and an irregular Caribbean coastline of 70 miles. The population is unevenly distributed and largely centered in highlands in the central and western parts of the country. Guatemala City, the capital, has 570,000 people.[3] In contrast, the sparsely populated Department of Peten contains less than 20,000 people, but occupies almost one-third of the country.

Guatemala's climate varies widely. In both coastal lowlands, the climate is hot and humid. In the mountains and highlands it is cool and pleasant. There are two seasons: the rainy months of May through October, and the dry ones from November through April.

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[1]See Map of Guatemala, Annex A.

[2]United Nations, Demographic Yearbook, 1964, p. 97.

[3]US Dept of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Background Notes: Guatemala, p. 1.

The varied terrain and climate have contributed to an uneven population distribution and a lack of political and social unity within the country. The imposing mountains and jungles have isolated the rural areas from Guatemala City and other major cities.

THE PEOPLE

Guatemala is the product of a great Indian civilization, three centuries of colonial rule, and a 145 year struggle as a republic. Most Guatemalans are descendants of the highly developed Maya civilization which flourished in Central America and Mexico between the fourth and sixteenth centuries. Two distinct socioeconomic structures have evolved: Indians and Ladinos. Pure blooded Maya Indians, bearing customs much like those of their ancestors, live in cultural isolation and comprise 54% of the population. Most of the remaining population is mestizo of mixed Spanish and Indian descent. These mestizos and those Indians who have relinquished their Maya customs to adopt Western habits are generally classified as Ladinos.[4]

The Ladinos comprise Guatemala's upper and middle class of landowners, tradesmen, independent farmers, and laborers. They occupy the large cities, monopolize industry and commerce, and control the national and departmental governments. On the other hand, the Indians are poor, uneducated, peaceful farmers scattered

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[4]Nathan L. Whetten, Guatemala, p. 44.

in small villages and isolated settlements throughout the mountains. The rural Indian settlements differ significantly in local customs and languages. However, in general, Indians have simple wants, strong habits (costumbres), and are highly resistant to change.

Spanish is Guatemala's official language. However, it is not spoken throughout the country. The Ladinos speak Spanish; most Indians do not. The situation is further complicated by the fact that there are at least sixteen Indian languages.[5] Diverse languages coupled with a 70 percent illiteracy rate[6] make inadequate interpersonal communications a critical deterrent to Guatemalan national unity. Education of the Indians is one of Guatemala's major problems.

Religion plays an important role in Guatemalan life, particularly for the Indians. Although there is no official state religion, over 90 percent of the Guatemalans are Roman Catholic.[7] Ladino men do not attend church regularly. Ladino women do. Ladino male and female both participate heavily in special group activities such as fiestas, weddings, special requiem masses, and processions in church celebrations.[8] On the other hand, Indian men take their religion far more seriously. Indian religion and politics are inseparable. Indian Catholicism is a combination of Roman Catholic beliefs and Maya paganism. Indians cling rigidly to their Maya rites in most aspects of their personal and social affairs. This paganism tends

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[5]Ibid., p. 53.
[6]US Dept of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, op. cit., p. 1.
[7]Whetten, op. cit., p. 286.
[8]Mary Holleran, Church and State in Guatemala, pp. 223-225.

to isolate the Indians from both the official Catholic Church and from their Ladino countrymen.[9]

The Indians place great emphasis on family loyalties, responsibilities, and connections. Their extended families provide assistance and solace for the weak and needy but curb individual initiative of the healthy and able.[10] This lack of individual initiative retards social mobility and economic progress. The Indian extended family structure is highly resistant to change and will impose an obstacle to social reform efforts of either the Alliance for Progress or communism.

THE ECONOMY

The Guatemalan economy is predominantly agricultural, with three-fourths of all male workers engaged in farming.[11] Extensive areas of rich volcanic soil and favorable elimate permit the growth of a wide variety of crops. Principal crops are coffee, bananas, corn, beans, wheat, and sugar cane. The large landowners produce coffee, bananas, and cotton, which are the major export items.

Most Indians engage in a slash-and-burn subsistence farming on small family plots or they labor for meager wages on coffee plantations. Family plots are cleared by cutting down and burning brush and weeds to plant corn and other products. Their primitive pre-Columbian techniques are wasteful to both land and human resources.

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[9] Ibid., pp. 231-242.

[10] John C. Fralish, Cultural Aspects of an Agricultural Improvement Program for Guatemala, p. 12.

[11] Whetten, op. cit., p. 89.

Occupying poor land, earning little money, and accruing few savings, the Indian neither seeks nor is offered financial credit for possible expansion. The Indian society contributes very little to the national economy.

Sufficient arable land is available for future development, but distribution of the farm land is inequitable. Large landholdings are owned by the wealthy and are often idle. The tiny plots of the Indians are too small for efficient use. Agrarian reform, a political issue since 1952, has been attempted under several governments with limited degrees of success. The present Agrarian Reform Law of 1956 distributes land from national farms to farmers, giving the Indians a clear title to the land.[12] Colonization and resettlement accomplished thus far has been beneficial; however, more must be accomplished. The 3.1% rate of annual population growth[13] is crowding the Indians on their tiny plots. Continued land reform for the Indian is essential.

Lack of transportation is a major drawback to both Guatemala's cultural integration and economic growth. The nation's highway structure is based on three roads, the Inter-American, Atlantic, and Pacific highways. Guatemala sorely needs feeder roads into isolated areas. The only railroad, apart from a few private United Fruit Company lines and a short government railroad, is the International Railways of Central America which links the Pacific and

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[12] Pan American Union, Guatemala, p. 18.
[13] US Dept of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, op. cit., p. 1.

Caribbean coasts with Guatemala City and provides connections to El Salvador and Mexico.

A key to Guatemala's future economic development is its leading role within the Central American Common Market. This regional economic organization has made remarkable advances during the past decade in providing free trade for intraregional commerce and in coordinating Central American economic policies and measures. The Common Market has stimulated Guatemalan industrialization and trade with other Central American countries.

Political instability has been a drawback to Guatemala's economic development. Frequent changes in government, government expropriation of property, and constant political unrest have dissuaded foreign investment for the past fifteen years. Since Peralta assumed control of government in 1963, Guatemala has enjoyed an economic upswing. This boom is attributable to improved political stability, better public administration, and favorable world commodity prices of Guatemala's exports.[14]

THE GOVERNMENT

Guatemala's national government contains the three traditional branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. Colonel Peralta is Chief of Government (Executive) and rules with a mixed civilian-military cabinet of ten ministers. Legislative powers reside in a one-chamber congress. The Republic of Guatemala is divided into 22

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[14]US Dept of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, op. cit., p. 3.

departments for administrative purposes which in turn are divided into 322 municipalities. The Executive appoints the Department governors thus extending his formal centralized authority throughout the country. In practice, government control of activities within the departments and municipalities is quite limited because of the poor communication networks, diverse languages, and ethnic disparities.

Guatemala has had new constitutions in 1945 and 1956 following military coups. The Peralta government suspended the constitution of 1956 after the March 1963 coup and has drafted a new constitution for adoption in May 1966. The two Guatemalan constitutions upheld democracy and emphasized human rights. For example, the 1956 constitution gives little solace for military dictators:

> Article 1. Guatemala is a sovereign, free and independent nation, established for the purpose of guaranteeing to its inhabitants respect for human dignity, enjoyment of the fundamental rights and liberties of man, security and justice, to promote the complete development of culture, and to create economic conditions which are conducive to social well-being.
>
> Article 2. The system is republican, democratic and representative. . . .[15]

THE MILITARY

Guatemala has Army, Navy, and Air Force elements as part of its Armed Forces. The purpose of the Armed Forces is to defend Guatemala's

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[15]Pan American Union, Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala, 1956, p. 1.

territory, sovereignty, and independence and to maintain internal security and public order.[16] Although the military are continually involved in political affairs, the 1945 constitution specified the military as a professional nonpolitical institution.[17] The 1956 constitution also points out this nonpolitical role; delineating requirements for military obedience, loyalty, and professionalism.[18] A significant factor in the military personnel structure of the Army is the extremely large number of colonels that are available to assume political positions. Enlisted personnel are largely Indian conscriptees who play virtually no part in political maneuvering. In reviewing Guatemalan political history, one finds Army officers as the military element which participates heavily in politics.

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[16] Ibid., p. 36.

[17] Kahlman H. Silvert, A Study in Government: Guatemala, Part I, p. 29.

[18] Pan American Union, Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala, 1956, p. 36.

CHAPTER 3

TIDES OF MILITARISM

A brief review of Guatemala's political history since 1944 is necessary to know the military rulers and to understand why and how they assumed power.

EARLY DICTATORS

Guatemala has long been plagued by totalitarian rule. The Spanish control of Pedro de Alvarado, the conquistador, and his successors of the colonial period was highly authoritarian and oppressive. In the years following Guatemalan independence, military caudillos reigned for long periods with dictatorial powers. For example, in the period 1839-1944, four men reigned as president for a sum of seventy-three years.[1] Manuel Estrada Cabrera (1898-1920) and Jorge Ubico (1931-1944) were two of the most oppressive, permitting little social development. Cabrera remained in office for more than twenty years, denying freedom of the press and often disregarding rights and properties of the people.[2]

Ubico, a professional soldier and the son of a member of the Spanish elite, was a strong dictator. He utilized the military force and a secret police to maintain personal control of the country. Those who protested against Ubico's policies were exiled

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[1]Ronald M. Schneider, Communism in Guatemala, p. 6.
[2]Amy E. Jensen, Guatemala, pp. 100-101.

or otherwise sidelined. Although Ubico was efficient, his oppression was severe and his society ripe for revolutiin. Ydigoras, who served as Director of Public Works under Ubico, stated:

> Civil liberties were so restricted that it was not even possible to travel freely within the country. Freedom of enterprise was entirely relative and dependent on the will of the 'General.' There was of course no such thing as freedom of expression either in speaking or writing.[3]

OVERTHROW OF UBICO

On July 1, 1944, Ubico's thirteen years of iron rule abruptly ended when he was overthrown by an unarmed, bloodless coup. The uprising stemmed from dissatisfied Ladino business men, lawyers, and university students who stormed in rebellion against dictatorship. Ubico reluctantly surrendered power to a three man junta headed by Juan Frederico Ponce. Ponce also became authoritarian and was overthrown by young Army officers and students in an October 1944 revolution. A second three man junta assumed power consisting of Major Francisco Javier Arana, Captain Jacobo Arbenz, and Jorge Toriello. Arana and Arbenz both participated in the October revolution. The overthrows of Ubico and Ponce constituted a Ladino rebellion against authoritarian rule. The overthrows marked a first but distinct step in Guatemala's move towards political and social reform. Ydigoras points out that Guatemala had reached a point of social "evolution or revolution."[4]

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[3]Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes, My War with Communism, p. 36.
[4]Ibid., p. 37.

The second junta ruled until March 15, 1945 when Juan Jose Arevalo took office. Arevalo, a civilian, had returned from Argentina to win the Presidential election as head of a newly formed political party. Arevalo was a scholarly idealist who expounded a philosophy of "spiritual socialism," a unique brand of humanism.[5] Arevalo's initial intentions were good. He commenced sweeping social reforms relating to social security, labor codes, growth of labor unions, freedom of the press, formation of political parties, and other measures. Unfortunately, he moved too far to the political left in instituting these reforms. He brought Communist agitators into Guatemala from other Latin American countries and gave them responsible positions in government. For example, Vicente Lombardo Toledano, a top Communist labor organizer, came from Mexico to organize Guatemalan labor. Arevalo's friendliness towards Communists opened the door for subversion. Jose Manuel Fortuny, who became Secretary General of the Communist Party, held key government positions, and became an advisor to Arevalo.[6] Guatemalan enthusiasms for social reform were soon darkened by Communist intervention and bureaucratic inefficiency.

ASSASSINATION OF ARANA

Arevalo gave key positions to the junta triumvirate that he succeeded. He favored Arbenz, the new Minister of National Defense.

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[5]Daniel James, Red Design for the Americas, pp. 45-46.
[6]Schneider, op. cit., p. 24.

Jorge Toriello, the new Minister of Finance, differed with Arevalo over policies and relinquished his post. Arana, the new Chief of the Armed Forces, strongly opposed Arevalo's trend towards communism and as a result became a threat to Arevalo. Arana became a popular choice for president and the likely winner of a free election.[7] Unfortunately for Guatemala, Arana's opposition to communism ceased. In July 1949 while personally leading a confiscation of illegal arms at Lake Amatitlan, Arana was ambushed and assassinated. Arana's chauffeur, who escaped, named assassins who were later favored by Arbenz.[8] With Arana and Toriello out of the picture, Arbenz had an open door to succeed Arevalo.

When the government failed to arrest Arana's murderer, Lieutenant Colonel Castillo Armas, a man destined to play a stirring role in Guatemalan history, became disgusted with the Communist policies of the government and resigned from the Army.[9]

OVERTHROW OF ARBENZ

Arbenz was elected President in March 1951. Like Arevalo, he was liberal and desirous of sweeping social changes. One of his chief interests was agrarian reform. His Agrarian Reform Law of 1952 gave the government power to expropriate large private

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[7]US Congress, House, Select Committee on Communist Aggression, Report of the Subcommittee to Investigate Communist Aggression in Latin America, p. 5.

[8]US Congress, House, Select Committee on Communist Aggression, Communist Aggression in Latin America, p. 5.

[9]Ibid.

lands that were not being sufficiently cultivated. Landholdings were expropriated and distributed to some 50,000 peasants. Although appearing humanitarian, the "reform" became largely a political move and not permanently beneficial to the farmer. The peasants could neither farm the tiny plots efficiently, nor could they gain permanent titles to the properties. In 1953, Arbenz expropriated lands of the United Fruit Company and the International Railways of Central America.

The most distinct feature of the Arbenz regime was his close relationship with the Communists and his permitting the Guatemalan government to be dominated by the international Communist movement. Arbenz's wife reportedly was a devout student of Marxism.[10] Although it is questionable whether Arbenz was a Communist, he served the cause of communism well. The Communists infiltrated the agrarian movement, labor unions, social security, education, communications, and other activities. They established a solid foothold in Guatemala that threatened Central America and the whole Western hemisphere. Ambassador John E. Puerifoy, the ambassador to Guatemala testified:

> The Arbenz government, beyond any question, was controlled and dominated by Communists. These Communists were directed from Moscow. The Guatemalan Government and the Communist leaders of that country did continuously and actively intervene in the internal affairs of neighboring countries, in an effort to create disorder and overthrow established governments.[11]

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[10] Ibid., p. 125.
[11] Ibid., p. 115.

The rise in communism halted in June 1954 when the exiled Lieutenant Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas led an inspirational National Liberation Movement which overthrew Arbenz. Castillo Armas invaded Guatemala from Honduras with a small band of 250 men, supported by three obsolete aircraft. The insurgency gained momentum as Guatemalan Indian peasants greeted the liberation movement and volunteers joined the liberation ranks. This momentum plus the refusal of the Guatemalan Army to defend the regime of Arbenz led to the downfall of Arbenz and the Communists. Under pressure of the Army, Arbenz reluctantly resigned on 27 June and Castillo Armas became President on July 8.[12] The new government was recognized by the United States on July 13th.[13]

ASSASSINATION OF CASTILLO

Castillo's first task was to regain political and economic stability. Castillo quickly crushed and outlawed communism. However, conservative landowners sought a return to the dictatorship of Ubico. With the moral support of these conservatives, conspirators attempted unsuccessfully to overthrow the government in January 1955.[14] Castillo continually attempted to gain political stability, but his rule was shaky. His task was further complicated by an

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[12]US Dept of State, A Case History of Communist Penetration: Guatemala, pp. 56-59.

[13]"Recognition of Guatemala," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 31, 26 Jul. 1954, p. 118.

[14]John D. Martz, Central America, p. 64.

inheritance of a chaotic economy. Arbenz had left the treasury bankrupt, the government heavily in debt, and the country widely unemployed.[15] Castillo rose to meet the challenge with the help of United States economic and technical assistance. He instituted a promising five year (1955-1960) economic development plan and an improved agrarian reform law. Resettlement of families and improved relations with the United Fruit Company furthered agriculture. A large United States supported highway construction program was initiated. Rodriguez, the historian comments: "Guatemala's economic development was impressive by any standards during the three years that Castillo Armas ruled his country."[16]

Chief criticism of Castillo's presidency is that he ruled as a dictator. Castillo did not permit free presidential elections, substituting instead a plebiscite that voted him president. Castillo stifled political opposition, denied freedom of the press, limited civil rights, and curtailed labor organizations.[17] He used a Gestapo-type National Defense Committee Against Communism to root out those who had supported Arbenz.[18]

The viability of the Castillo government will always be open to question. On 26 July 1957, while walking down a corridor of the Presidential palace, Castillo was assassinated by a member of the

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[15]US Congress, House, Select Committee on Communist Aggression, Report of the Subcommittee to Investigate Communist Aggression in Latin America, p. 16.

[16]Mario Rodriguez, Central America, p. 29.

[17]Ibid., pp. 28-30.

[18]Ibid., p. 28.

Presidential Guard. The guard then committed suicide. Guatemalans have alleged that the assassination was Communist inspired, but evidence is not conclusive. Rosenthal sums up a confused situation:

> Theories as to who his assassins were abound, and all have their stalwart supporters. The only theory that nobody believes is that he was shot by a communist fanatic who had infiltrated the palace guard, the official story.[19]

OVERTHROW OF YDIGORAS

After a short reign by Vice President Louis Arturo Gonzales, and a voided election, Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes was elected President. He took office on 15 March 1958. Ydigoras had been a soldier and high government official under Ubico, a candidate for presidency against Arbenz in 1951, and a partner of Castillo in the National Liberation Movement. Sensitive to criticism that he might be looked on as a dictator, Ydigoras publicly proclaimed his dedication to freedom and democracy.[20]

Ydigoras was an anti-Communist, middle of the road conservative who could please neither the left nor right. The left distrusted him, believing him to be another dictator like Castillo. The right thought his approach too liberal and vulnerable for a revolution.[21] Ydigoras continued some of the economic measures initiated by Castillo and instituted others of his own. Notable efforts included school and housing construction, land distribution, tax reform, and

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[19]Mario Rosenthal, Guatemala, pp. 265-266.
[20]Martz, op. cit., pp. 78-79.
[21]Rodriguez, op. cit., p. 31.

a potable water program.[22] However, Ydigoras' rule was a shaky one. A drop in coffee prices crippled the economy. Extensive social unrest existed which Ydigoras attributed to the Communists. Riots and disorders, terrorism, strikes, street incidents, and guerrilla activity were continual. Ydigoras commented:

> These days tried my patience and more than once I was urged to take drastic measures: to impose martial law, to disband Congress, to rule by decree. It seemed to me that this was precisely what my enemies expected me to do: to flout democratic principles and to set myself up as a dictator.[23]

Ydigoras had other problems. Many of the exiled Communists who were banished by Castillo began slipping back into the country. Ydigoras became a target for communism because he cooperated with the United States in the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961. A group of Army officers attempted an unsuccessful coup in November 1960 which Ydigoras contended was Communist inspired.[24] Air Force officers revolted in November 1962, an uprising which was quelled by Peralta and the Army. Terrorism, riots, and insurgency continued throughout 1962 and into 1963.

Ydigoras completed five years of his six year term of office; then fell to a coup. Arevalo had announced in late 1962 that he would return to Guatemala from Mexico to run for President in the forthcoming 1963 elections. He returned as predicted in late March 1963. This was too much for Peralta and the Army.

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[22]Emanuel Celler, Congressional Record, Vol. 108, 23 May 1962, pp. A3854-A3855.

[23]Ydigoras, op. cit., p. 91.

[24]Ibid., pp. 169-170.

Colonel Enrique Peralta Azurdia, Minister of Defense, led his March 1963 coup that ousted Ydigoras. Peralta assumed the position of Chief of Government, cancelled the elections, and instituted a state of seige.[25] With a sharp swing to the political right, he launched a program of honesty in government and monetary reform. Under Peralta, Guatemala's political and economic stability has improved. Yet the country is still troubled. Trade unions and political parties are suppressed. Guatemala has been the target for Communist guerrilla activity, terrorism, kidnapping, and other acts of violence. Political and social unrest accelerated in late 1965. Mario Mendez Montenegro, a leading presidential candidate, was mysteriously shot in November 1965. As Guatemala approaches return to constitutionality, Peralta is exercising strong dictatorial military rule. Rumors are widespread that a coup may soon take place.

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[25]US Dept of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Background Notes: Guatemala, p. 1.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF MILITARISM

In reviewing Guatemala's political history we find that since 1944, Guatemala has had five Chief Executives whose tenures were significant: Arevalo, Arbenz, Castillo, Ydigoras, and Peralta. A recapitulation of their rules is summarized in Annex B. Arevalo was the only civilian. Arbenz and Ydigoras were elected military officers. Thus Arbenz and Ydigoras, although military, were legal representatives of the people and gained rule under constitutional processes. In this sense they are somewhat comparable to Presidents Washington, Grant, and Eisenhower in the United States. On the other hand, Castillo and Peralta were military officers who usurped power by means of a military uprising and ruled by force without popular election. It is the latter type of militarism, the military assumption and control of government by force, that has been particularly provoking to those who favor the democratic process. As a result, in this study it warrants centered attention.

Military officers in Guatemala were influential in politics throughout the 1944-1965 period, but least so during the Arevalo administration. Military officers performed many duties which were not specifically military in nature such as departmental governors, congressional deputies, members of the cabinet, and foreign diplomatic representatives. For example, Peralta has been an ambassador to Costa Rica, Cuba, and El Salvador. Ydigoras has been Director of Public Works, a military governor, and ambassador. In 1965, besides

Peralta who was Chief of Government and Minister of Defense, three other military officers were serving as cabinet ministers.[1]

ITS CAUSES

Guatemalan militarism is a product of an authoritarian heritage, a twentieth century social change that has taken place within the military, and a complex relationship of other interacting political and socioeconomic determinants. These determinants include weak political parties, absence of a civil service, a thin middle class, an undeveloped economy, illiteracy, and lack of national unity. From this milieu several factors emerge as being particularly significant.

Guatemalan militarism stems in part from its Iberian and colonial heritage. The Spanish government of colonial Guatemala was highly authoritarian. Guatemala inherited from the Spanish captaincy-general a system of rigid authority and an atmosphere of suppression. In Guatemala's early history of independence, this tradition continued, the 19th and early 20th century being marked by rule of tyrants called caudillos. Conservative defenders of the status quo, the military aligned themselves with the rich landowners and the church. Traditionally, the military elite came from established families associated with aristocratic groups.[2]

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[1]US Dept of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Background Notes: Guatemala, p. 4.

[2]American University, Special Operations Research Office, Case Study in Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare, Guatemala, p. 81.

After World War I, a sociological change took place within the military. The officer corps became professional, more socially conscious, and representative of the Guatemalan middle and lower middle class.[3] Arana-Arbenz participation in the October 1944 revolution gave notice of this trend. Guatemalan officers became highly idealistic and reform-minded with a conviction that the profession of arms was a purposeful one. They gained a sincere, deep-seated belief that they were guardians of the country. Arana patriotically resisted the leftist Arevalo government with the sincere motive to protect his country from Communist subversion. In the same vein, Castillo heroically escaped from prison, went into exile in Honduras and returned to Guatemala to overthrow Arbenz at great personal risk to himself. Peralta and the military ousted Ydigoras with an aim to protect their country. Ambassador John O. Bell, former Ambassador to Guatemala, in speaking of the Peralta coup stated:

> The takeover of power was on a basis of what I think was a sincere statement, that it was the armed forces as an institution assuming power, rather than an individual. The line was taken that they were assuming power as trustees for a limited period of time, during which they would seek to establish honesty in government, to protect it from the prospect of being taken over by the Communists and in time to return to constitutionality.[4]

In their actions, Arana, Castillo, and Peralta all strayed from purely military interests in opposing presidents. However, they did

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[3] Ibid.

[4] US Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Communism in Latin America, Hearings, p. 110. (Referred to hereafter as "Congress, Communism, Hearings").

not attempt to force a new political ideology on the people; instead they acted as sincere, loyal defenders of their country. They possessed an allegiance to the nation which was greater than that to the incumbent president, somewhat along lines professed by General Douglas MacArthur in his 1951 controversy with President Truman.

Militarism has evolved in Guatemala because it fills a political and social vacuum. Competent civilian government officials are lacking and as a result many Army officers occupy key civilian positions. The thin Ladino middle class and masses of poor illiterate peasants offer few individuals who can step forward to assume governmental responsibilities. The 1944 revolutionaries had to reach to Argentina and bring back Arevalo to obtain a candidate. Arevalo had little political experience. No civil service exists for orderly selection, placement, promotion, and career development of public servants.[5] Political parties have been and are now based on personalities instead of on any firm ideology. Political allegiance to an individual is greater than to a party platform. Labor unions are too weak to voice the rights of the workers. Silvert points out that the lack of large scale functional organization of the Guatemalan populace necessitates a strong executive.[6]

Militarism prevails because in times of crises it has been the only social institution capable of maintaining government stability. Unfortunately, crises have been frequent. During most of the Arevalo and

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[5]Kahlman H. Silvert, A Study in Government: Guatemala, Part I, p. 32.

[6]Ibid., p. 29.

Arbenz regimes the military remained on the sidelines and did not play a major political role. Even Arana resisted overthrow of the government, remaining loyal to Arevalo. As a result, Communist subversion prevailed. When the final showdown came in June 1954, when something drastic had to be done, the military finally opposed Arbenz. The ordering of 5,000 armed workers by the Communist labor leaders was too much for the Army. When the military turned against Arbenz, success of the Castillo uprising was assured. Castillo's firm military rule was needed to stabilize the turbulent conditions. A Department of the Army sponsored research revealed: "In 1954 when Guatemala's political order was completely disrupted, the Army was the only institution capable of restoring order and formulating policy."[7]

Likewise at the time of the 1963 coup, the Army was the only stabilizing force that could maintain political stability. Peralta was loyal to Ydigoras in resisting communism and in quelling the November 1962 revolt of the Air Force. Arevalo's return to Guatemala to campaign for the presidency was perceived by the military to be threatening to both the Armed Forces and the country. Arevalo had no strong civilian political opposition, so the military stepped in. Ambassador Bell commented that the Guatemalan people looked with disfavor on those presidential candidates who loomed on the scene, expressed apathy towards the government, and offered no real resistance to the Peralta coup.[8]

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[7]American University, Special Operations Research Office, op. cit., p. 83.

[8]Congress, Communism, Hearings, p. 110.

Militarism is encouraged by the Guatemalan civilians themselves. For example, civilian groups inspired the youthful Arana and Arbenz to revolt against Ponce in 1944. Arevalo provided economic favors to military officers to gain their political loyalty.[9]

Arana, in resisting Arevalo and Arbenz, had the strong backing of civilian conservatives and revolutionary groups.[10] Arana was a popular choice for president among civilians. The overthrow of Arbenz by Castillo was cherished and welcomed by the people. Similarly, Peralta's banishment of Arevalo from Guatemala and the present military rule of Peralta is widely supported.[11]

ITS STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

In analyzing what policy Guatemala and the United States should take with respect to militarism, one must first determine what advantages and disadvantages accrue when military officers assume political roles. Guatemalan history reveals that militarism has been a major factor in the defeat of communism and has provided political and economical stability. On the other hand, military rules have not furthered long-term political and socioeconomic growth.

Military intervention in politics has prevented Guatemala from becoming a Communist state. The country's political and socioeconomic posture in 1944 was not sufficiently strong to absorb Arevalo's drastic

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[9]American University, Special Operations Research Office, op. cit., p. 82.

[10]Ibid., p. 93.

[11]Congress, Communism, Hearings, p. 110.

leftist social reforms under a civilian government. As a result, communism intervened. The military Arana was the only strong opponent of Communists within the government during Arevalo's rule. The military revolution by Castillo was essential. It provides a convincing example that military uprisings can be good as well as bad. Likewise, the strongly anti-Communist Ydigoras contained the Communists and cooperated with the United States in the 1961 abortive Bay of Pigs affair. Peralta's coup prevented a leftist and anti-United States government by Arevalo. Peralta has conducted an active and reasonably effective campaign against the Communist guerrillas and terrorists.[12]

Related to this defeat of communism is the contribution militarism has provided in maintaining political and economic stability. This has been particularly so during the rules of the dictatorships of Castillo and Peralta who usurped and maintained power by force. The leftist Arbenz must be considered an exception as Communist subversion created serious political and economic unrest. The political stability rendered by Castillo and Peralta has been discussed as a cause of communism. This stability in turn has helped the Guatemalan economy. Castillo inherited financial and eeonomie confusion from the leftist regimes of Arevalo and Arbenz and turned administrative chaos into public order. A Study Mission of the United States House Foreign Affairs Committee visiting Guatemala in

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[12] Ibid., p. 112.

1957 was impressed with Castillo's political and economic gains.[13] Peralta's economic achievements ran a similar pattern. Inheriting economic disorder from Ydigoras in 1963, Peralta has provided a burst of economic boom. Ydigoras, unfortunately, suffered from lowered world coffee prices and inefficient government administration.

The main criticism of militarism is that it has not provided long-term political or social growth. The leftist and weak Arbenz regime became Communist. However, this was not the fault of the military. Ydigoras' rule showed political health in that he assumed office under constitutional processes. Unfortunately, the Ydigoras administration was marked by political unrest and rumors of graft and corruption.[14] Ydigoras has strongly contested the charges of graft and corruption.[15] He does warrant credit in that he lasted five years of a six year term under constant political pressures.

The dictators Castillo and Peralta, somewhat preoccupied with suppressing communism and maintaining law and order, both ruled with strong arms. Despite the good intentions of Castillo, his rule was authoritarian and a swing back to the political right, almost to that of Ubico's. He denied presidential elections. Political parties and labor unions were suppressed and social reforms commenced by Arevalo were halted. Likewise, Peralta has ruled with a tight hand and has been slow in returning the country back to constitutionality.

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[13]US Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Report of the Special Study Mission to Guatemala, p. 13.

[14]US Dept of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, op. cit., p. 1.

[15]Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes, My War with Communism, pp. 217-218.

Neither Castillo nor Peralta has done enough for providing social development of the Indians who are in dire need of increased land reform, education, and medical facilities. The containment of communism and increased political and economic stability has helped the Ladinos, but has had far less impact on the Indians. One probably should not blame Castillo and Peralta too harshly for this condition. They encountered tremendous difficulty in merely maintaining law and order. Social and economic reform measures in Guatemala encounter opposition from extreme right wing conservatives and do not receive much support from the Ladino civilian institutions. However, Guatemala will not be a truly representative, democratic or progressive nation unless more attention is paid to the rural Indians. Guatemala has a great need for agricultural development. The United States State Department summarizes: "One of Guatemala's great unsolved social and economic problems is the need to incorporate the rural Indian masses into the national economy and into the socioeconomic progress of the nation."[16]

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[16]US Dept of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, op. cit., p. 3.

CHAPTER 5

UNITED STATES POLICY

GENERAL

United States security policy towards Guatemalan militarism is largely an integral aspect of United States overall policy towards Latin America. Major issues relating to militarism are:

1. Intervention in Latin American Affairs.
2. Participation in the Inter-American System.
3. Assistance to Guatemala that furthers militarism.

INTERVENTION

United States support of dictators in Latin America is based in part on a policy of nonintervention.[1]

Early United States history in Latin America was one of intervention. Although the Monroe Doctrine shielded the American continent from European expansion, the doctrine created no bar to United States meddling. The Roosevelt Corollary in doctrines of 1904 and 1903 emphasized this point when the United States asserted that chronic wrongdoings may require that she intervene in Latin America.[2]

Strong anti-Yankee sentiments finally led to a relaxation in the form of the Good Neighbor Policy of Franklin D. Roosevelt.[3] The

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[1]US Dept of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Democracy vs. Dictators in Latin America - How Can We Help?, p. 2.

[2]Ibid.

[3]James W. Gantenbein, ed., The Evolution of Our Latin-American Policy, pp. 159-161.

United States finally adopted a principle of nonintervention at the Seventh Inter-American Conference held in Montevideo in 1933,[4] and the Buenos Aires Conference for the Maintenance of Peace in 1936.[5] The doctrine of nonintervention is now an integral part of the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS):

> Article 15. No State or group of States has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatever, in the internal or external affairs of any other State. The foregoing principle prohibits not only armed force but also any other form of interference or attempted threat against the personality of the State or against its political, economic and cultural elements.[6]

The United States is now committed to a policy of nonintervention. The United States has no legal right to force Guatemalan officers to decrease their participation in politics and rule of government.

INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM

Concurrent with waging policies of intervention and nonintervention, the United States and Guatemala have been part of a system of Inter-American cooperation. Both countries are signatories to pacts that commit them to Inter-American agreements. Therefore, any Guatemalan or United States policies concerning Guatemalan militarism must take cognizance of Inter-American obligations.

Inter-American solidarity gained formal status at the International Conference of American States held in Washington in 1889-1890.

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[4] Ibid., pp. 759-763.

[5] US Laws, Statues, etc., Additional Protocol Relative to Non-Intervention, pp. 41-64.

[6] Pan American Union, Charter of the Organization of American States and Inter-American and Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, p. 8.

This and subsequent conferences led to the formation of the Pan American Union in 1910. Additional Inter-American Conferences, special conferences, and other meetings have strengthened this American solidarity. The Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace in February-March 1945 in Mexico City was particularly significant. The conference resulted in the Act of Chapaltepec which provided that every act of aggression against an American state shall be considered as an aggression against the other states.[7] The Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance signed at Rio de Janeiro in September 1947 reaffirmed and extended this theme of solidarity with specific means for collective action. The Rio Treaty's Article 3 provided that:

> The High Contracting Parties agree that an armed attack by any state against an American State shall be considered as an attack against all the American States and, consequently, each one of the said Contracting Parties undertakes to assist in meeting the attack. . . .[8]

An Organ of Consultation would meet for examining and agreeing on specific collective measures to be taken.[9] Article 6 of the treaty provided for immediate consultation to agree on action to be taken against an aggression or threats to peace which are other than armed attacks.[10]

Inter-American cooperation gained further stature by the Organization of American States which was established at the Ninth

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[7]Gantenbein, op. cit., p. 818.

[8]Pan American Union, Charter of the Organization of American States and Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, p. 45.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Ibid., p. 47.

International Conference of American States at Bogota on 30 April 1948. The Organization of American States provided a legal structure for consultation and maintenance of hemispheric peace-keeping and also for the promotion of economic, social, and cultural development. Article 5 of the charter reaffirmed several Inter-American principles, one of which is that solidarity and ideals of the American states require that political organization be on the basis of representative democracy.[11] This concept is quite in opposition to military coups and dictatorships.

United States participation in social and economic development of Guatemala and other Latin American countries is centered in the Alliance for Progress. At Punta del Este, Uruguay in August 1961, the American republics signed the Charter of Punta del Este which launched the western hemisphere on a vast ten year effort to accelerate economic progress and social justice, and to strengthen democratic institutions.[12] The signing countries agreed to pursue specific goals for reform.[13] The Alliance for Progress provides a framework upon which democratic institutions can grow and thus eventually replace military governments, dictators, and coups.

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[11] Ibid., p. 5.

[12] Inter-American Economic and Social Conference, Alianza Para el Progreso, The Record of Punta del Este, pp. 1-3.

[13] Ibid., pp. 4-5.

STAND AGAINST MILITARISM

Prior to the Kennedy administration the United States supported military rulers throughout Latin America quite freely. In Guatemala the United States backed dictator Cabrera, and even sent pleas to save his life.[14] The authoritarian Ubico enjoyed cordial relations with the United States.[15] The United States favored the overthrow of Arbenz, and even provided limited aircraft support.[16] The United States recognized Castillo's government only five days after Castillo's advent to power.

In visiting Central America in 1959 as a representative of the President, Milton S. Eisenhower frequently encountered the charge that while the United States cherished democracy, she supported dictators in Latin America as well. Milton Eisenhower proposed that within the framework of nonintervention we take a slightly harder stand, giving an "abrazo"[17] for democracy and a formal "handshake" for dictatorship.[18]

President Kennedy did take a somewhat harder stand. His March 1961 Alliance for Progress message with a motto of "progress yes, tyranny no," was a plea for representative government, elimination

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[14]Amy E. Jensen, Guatemala, p. 104.
[15]Ibid., p. 133.
[16]Dwight D. Eisenhower, Mandate for Change, pp. 421-427.
[17]"A Spanish word which denotes 'a hug or an embrace'."
[18]Milton S. Eisenhower, "United States-Latin American Relations, 1953-1958," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 40, 19 Jan. 1959, pp. 103-104.

of tyranny, and reduction of arms.[19] After the Peru coup in July 1962, the United States temporarily suspended diplomatic relations with Peru and halted economic and military assistance. However, the stand against Guatemala's 30 March 1963 coup was mild. Eighteen days after Peralta assumed control the United States recognized the new Peralta government.[20] Strong actions like those in the case of Peru were taken again in late 1963 in the Dominican Republic and Honduras. The series of coups in 1963 triggered a firm United States policy statement in October 1963 which emphasized that the United States was against coups, that coups opposed the Alliance for Progress, and that coups were not helping free and democratic institutions.[21]

The anti-tyranny policy of President Johnson is similar, but more pragmatic than that of President Kennedy. President Johnson made clear that he also supported the democratic ideals of the Alliance for Progress. In speaking to Ambassadors of Latin American nations, he stated:

> Our charter charges each American country to seek and strengthen representative democracy. Without that democracy and without the freedom that it nourishes, material progress is an aimless enterprise, destroying the dignity of the spirit that it is really meant to liberate. So we will continue to join with you to

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[19]John F. Kennedy, "The President Proposes the Alliance for Progress," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 44, 3 Apr. 1961, pp. 471-474.

[20]"US Extends Recognition to New Government of Guatemala," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 48, 6 May 1963, p. 703.

[21]Edwin W. Martin, "US Policy Regarding Military Governments in Latin America," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 49, 4 Nov. 1963, pp. 698-699.

> encourage democracy until we build a hemisphere of free nations from the Tierra del Fuego to the Artic Circle.[22]

In a September 1964 policy statement, the Department of State reaffirmed the United States policy against coups:

> It has long been, and continues to be, our firm policy to discourage any who conspire to overthrow constitutionally elected governments. But if governments are overthrown, it has long been our practice, in ways compatible with the sovereignty and the national dignity of others, to encourage the holding of free and fair elections--to encourage a return to constitutional procedures.[23]

However, the latter policy statement further points out that in the future United States actions towards unconstitutional governments concerning recognition and economic cooperation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The policy statement inferred that we must adhere to a broad interpretation of our policy of nonintervention. This tone of permissiveness towards coups was reflected in the United States' favorable attitude towards the April 1964 uprising in Brazil.

ASSISTANCE TO GUATEMALAN MILITARISM

Criticism against United States policy towards militarism is largely centered against the United States furnishing assistance and advice which perpetuate militarism. Lieuwen among others insists

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[22]Lyndon B. Johnson, "President Johnson Pledges Redoubled Efforts to Alliance for Progress," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 50, 1 Jun. 1964, p. 856.

[23]US Dept of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Democracy vs. Dictators in Latin America - How Can We Help?, p. 1.

that the United States' military aid program compounds Latin American internal problems and hinders social and economic development.[24] Shapiro in 1963 pointed directly at Guatemala:

> Colonel Peralta has asked for $85 million in Alianza money, and will probably get a large part of it. But propping up a fading caudilloship, as our experience in Batista's Cuba shows, is an expensive, unpopular and in the long run impossible, task. We are still asking the Guatemalan military to behave and shipping in the arms with which they murder civilians; military assistance to the regime was doubled in fiscal 1962-1963.[25]

United States economic assistance has been provided to Guatemala to further her social and economic growth. During the Arevalo-Arbenz regimes a United States economic and technical aid program existed for Guatemala, but was limited.[26] Between 1946 and 1950 Arevalo began showing disinterest in United States aid personnel.[27] United States economic aid increased abruptly with the Castillo government and except for one year it became sharply lower and fairly constant during the Ydigoras and Peralta rules.[28] From Fiscal Year 1946 through Fiscal Year 1964 United States economic assistance of all types totaled $178 million. This includes $46 million in grants and $132 million in loans. Fiscal year 1964 assistance totaled

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[24]Edwin Lieuwen, Arms and Politics in Latin America, p. 240.

[25]Samuel Shapiro, Invisible Latin America, p. 41.

[26]US Agency for International Development, US Loans and Grants and Assistance from International Organizations, p. 40.

[27]Richard N. Adams, "Social Change in Guatemala and US Policy" in Social Change in Latin America Today, Council on Foreign Relations, p. 236.

[28]US Agency for International Development, op. cit., p. 40.

$13.7 million, including $6.4 million grants and $7.3 million loans, for social and economic betterment.[29] Economic aid has been for highway construction, road building, agricultural development, health, education, public administration, housing, school construction, and Food for Peace.[30] Economic aid has had no large direct impact on increasing militarism. Instead it has furthered economic and social development which is sorely needed.

Criticism towards military assistance has been greater. After the series of 1963 coups and heated Congressional clamor, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (Sec 505a) was amended to specify that military assistance could be furnished to Alliance for Progress countries to safeguard against the overthrow of constitutional governments.[31]

The United States provides Guatemala military assistance through grant aid and sales. It is the grant aid program that encounters chief criticism in Latin America. The Rio Treaty of 1947 and the Mutual Security Act of 1951 opened the door to military assistance to Latin America for furthering the defense of the Western Hemisphere. The Arbenz government and the United States did not make a Mutual Security Agreement. Arbenz did purchase arms from the United States at the beginning of his term, but in 1952 the United States placed an embargo on all arms shipments to Guatemala.[32] Thus,

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[29] Ibid.

[30] US Dept of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Background Notes: Guatemala, p. 3.

[31] US Laws, Statutes, etc., Public Law 88-205, p. 6.

[32] American University, Special Operations Research Office, Case Study in Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare, Guatemala, p. 86.

the Arbenz government looked elsewhere for military purchases. A huge arms shipment from the Soviet bloc stepped up Castillo activities and helped precipitate the final downfall of Arbenz.

A Grant Aid Bilateral Agreement in 1955 provided for United States-Guatemalan cooperation in the defense of the Western Hemisphere.[33] As a result, grant aid military assistance deliveries commenced in 1956. A further Grant Aid Bilateral Agreement was made in 1962 relative to furnishing defense articles and service to Guatemala for internal security purposes.[34] Cumulative grant aid military assistance through Fiscal Year 1965 has been approximately $8 million.[35] About $3 million of these deliveries were made prior to the 1963 coup.[36] This limited assistance did not cause or play a significant role in the 1963 bloodless coup. One can see from the figures that our grant aid military assistance to Guatemala has been but a modest effort.

Military Assistance has been provided for both internal security and civic action purposes. The civic action program warrants mention because it involves use of the military forces in a civilian role. The United States Agency for International Development and the Military Assistance Program have both contributed to civic action in a joint effort. Guatemala's widely publicized civic action program effectively furthers social and economic development

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[33]US Treaties, etc., Mutual Defense Assistance, p. 1.
[34]US Treaties, etc., Defense, p. 1.
[35]US Dept of Defense, Military Assistance Facts, p. 12.
[36]US Agency for International Development, op. cit., p. 40.

of rural areas. The Army helps military and civilian personnel to read and write. An Engineer battalion has performed road construction in the sparse and isolated Department of Peten. Medical civil action teams provide medical assistance to isolated areas of the country.

A significant contribution of military assistance for Guatemala is the training which is conducted in the Canal Zone and the United States, and by Mobile Training Teams visiting in Guatemala. Military assistance training furthers Guatemala's capability to operate and maintain equipment. It also provides Guatemalan military personnel an opportunity to understand democratic ideals and the American way of life as practiced in the United States. In speaking of military assistance training for all Latin America, General Andrew P. O'Meara former Commander-in-Chief, United States Southern Command commented: "This training assistance is the most important single element of the military assistance effort in Latin America."[37]

United States Service Missions in Guatemala are also instruments of United States policy. In 1945, the United States and Guatemala agreed that the United States would provide an Aviation Mission[38] and a Military Mission[39] to Guatemala to enhance the efficiency of the Guatemalan Air Force and Army. Together these missions constitute

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[37]US Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Foreign Assistance Act of 1964, p. 407.

[38]United States and Guatemala: "Agreement . . . of a Military Aviation Mission. . . .", United Treaty Series, Vol. 121, 1952, p. 133.

[39]United States and Guatemala: "Agreement . . . of a Military Mission. . . .", United Treaty Series, Vol. 121, 1952, p. 185.

a small contingent which advises the Guatemalan military in organization, training, internal security, and civic action. They also implement the United States military assistance program for Guatemala. These service missions provide a valuable means for coordinating United States and Guatemalan military interests.

CHAPTER 6

LOOKING AHEAD

What will be the future role of militarism in Guatemala? What should the United States do about it? First, we must analyze major trends in Guatemala and predict what lies ahead.

THE SHAPE OF THE FUTURE

The Guatemalan military will continue to play a significant role in politics during the next decade. Even if one anticipates optimistic results from the Alliance for Progress, political, economic, and social growth will not take place to the extent that a stable civilian government can exist without the support of the military. Civilian government and middle class leadership will be too weak to curb communism and extreme rightist opposition without encountering difficulties. The military will remain ever watchful on the scene, pursuing their function as guardians of the country.

Prospects of a civilian-controlled government in the near future are slim. The military are deeply involved in the forthcoming March 1966 elections. Two of the three major candidates are military. Colonel Juan de Dios Aguilar de Leon, a reserve officer, is the unofficial selection of Peralta, and a strong candidate. Colonel Miguel Angel Ponciano Samayoa, former Army Chief of Staff, represents an extreme right wing opposition. Julio Cesar Mendez Montenegro, the candidate of the leftist and democratic Revolutionary Party is a civilian. A civilian such as Mendez could win a fair and open

election; however, there is no assurance an open election will take place. Even if elections are held, the incumbent government may impose a military candidate on the politically backward Indians. If a liberal civilian does win, he will encounter opposition from the conservatives, agitation by the Communists, and scrutiny by the military. A civilian president in the next decade will be vulnerable to a coup, and will need the cooperation of the Armed Forces to remain in office.

Communism will continue to be a serious threat. The Latin American Communist Parties, in a November 1964 meeting at Havana, earmarked Guatemala as a prime target area.[1] As the March 1966 election approaches the press is making frequent reports of Communist guerrilla and terrorist activities, including murder and kidnapping. Peralta has been required to take a firm stand against these activities. His successor will also have to be firm to maintain law and order.

However, the most significant problem which Guatemala will face during the next decade will not be communism. It will be political, social, and economic instability which permits communism a chance to flourish. The Alliance for Progress, with its emphasis on social justice, will help as it points a way for the new government to look toward democratic solutions. However, social reform will be slow. Right wing conservatives will continue to resist liberal socioeconomic

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[1]US Congress, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Communism in Latin America, House Report 237, p. 3.

movements. Political parties will remain weak, personalistic, and devoid of any firm ideology. If a military clique remains in power, the government will remain stable, but will be more pragmatic. A civil service program is now under study.[2] If instituted, this program will help. The overall economy should improve as a result of Guatemala's participation in the Alliance for Progress and the Central American Common Market. There will be more light industries and greater diversification of agriculture. Yet, the rural economy will still be largely undeveloped.

The socioeconomic revolution will continue with a progressively greater involvement of the Indian population. Isolation of the Indians is the main deterrent to Guatemalan national unity. Modern advances in mass communication, together with improved air and highway transportation, will slowly break down the cultural isolation of the Indians and integrate them into national political and social activities. Population growth will make rural agricultural living more difficult and increase Indian migration to the cities, creating urban unemployment and social disharmony. Poverty, illiteracy, and lack of medical facilities will remain acute in rural areas unless accelerated advancements are made under the Alliance for Progress. The assimilation of the Indians into a national consensus could create tremendous social turbulence.

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[2]US Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Communism in Latin America, Hearings, p. 115.

Guatemala's future depends largely on what measures are taken to provide for the welfare of the large mass of Indians. The Alliance for Progress must be more than a stand against communism. The Alliance should focus on Guatemala's requirements for social and economic growth. However, if democratic processes do not gain the loyalties of the Indians, communism may flourish in both rural and urban areas. The Communists point out:

> . . . the workers, peasants and urban middle strata are the social forces that will promote the Guatemalan revolution. . . . Other elements, such as sections of the national bourgeois and the well-to-do petty bourgeoisie, will tend to become polarized as the struggle goes on.[3]

FUTURE UNITED STATES SECURITY POLICY

United States security policy toward Guatemala must anticipate that the military will continue their political maneuvering and that military coups will take place. What should the United States do about it? Controversy over United States policy centers around military coups, military rule of government, and United States activities which help make coups and military rules flourish.

The United States should pursue a general policy of being opposed to military overthrow of governments. Military coups impede social progress and create governmental instability. In Latin America, they place the Alliance for Progress in jeopardy. Without democracy

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"Organize and Unite the Masses, Develop the People's Revolutionary War," Information Bulletin, No. 56, 20 Oct. 1965, p. 45.

and social justice, the Alliance for Progress is a sterile, anti-Communist, business enterprise. In Guatemala we should encourage democratic government, free and fair elections, and social justice for all the people. However, specific action that the United States should take must be selective and be on a case-by-case basis.

We do not necessarily have to be against all coups. Guatemalan history shows that there can be good coups as well as bad coups. The United States policy of favoring the Castillo military uprising to overthrow the Arbenz Communist rule was sound. The Peralta coup also had merit as it provided political and economic stability and possibly averted the return of communism. The Castillo and Peralta governments both gained acceptance of the people. Thus the mere fact that a military coup takes place does not indicate social progress is impeded. The military coup is only one measure of a lack of social progress. United States action must consider the circumstances. If the Peralta or successor military governments meet their international obligations and reasonably pursue long-range objectives of the Alliance for Progress, then Guatemala warrants United States cooperation in the fight for social and economic justice.

Furthermore, in opposing coups and military rules, the United States must take cognizance of the policy of nonintervention. Our experience in Latin America with intervention has been harsh and unsuccessful. The Charter of the Organization of American States prohibits intervention and all Latin America despises it. United States intervention in the past has created anti-Yankee sentiments throughout the hemisphere. Guatemalans, particularly the military,

are proud of their sovereignty. If political activity in Guatemala, or any other Latin American state, becomes a menace to the Caribbean region, the United States should seek remedial action through the Organization of American States in accordance with the OAS Charter. The United States is neither the sole moral authority on political behavior in Latin America nor the judge as to what type government reflects the will of the people.

The fact that we do not intervene does not mean we approve a coup. Our policy cannot be rigid. We should use common sense. The Department of State, in speaking of coups, sets forth this view:

> Where the facts warrant it--where the situation is such as to 'outrage the conscience of America'--we reserve our freedom to register our indignation by refusing to recognize or to continue our economic cooperation.[4]

However, we must be sure the "outrage of conscience" against coups or military rules is morally provoking and not just a flare of impatience. Political maneuvering of Arana, Castillo, and Peralta, if not desirable, were at least morally defensible. We can and should announce a general policy of being anti-coup. We should educate and encourage Guatemalans to refrain from coups, and to encourage development of civilian governmental processes. Overt political, military, or economic intervention may solve a temporary crisis, but will not provide the long-range political and social growth which is so sorely needed in Guatemala.

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[4]US Dept of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Democracy vs. Dictators in Latin America - How Can We Help?, p. 5.

Military and economic assistance provided to Guatemala must be geared to Guatemala's requirements and intentions for political, social, and economic growth; not on whether her government is military or civil, constitutional or unconstitutional. Providing or withdrawing aid will not be an effective method of persuading Guatemala to adopt a preferred type of government. Coups and military rule have taken place in the past in Guatemala, and will more than likely take place in the future, regardless of whether or not the United States furnishes aid. Economic and military assistance has not been a major contributing factor to the coups in the past. Depriving Guatemala of aid will slow down economic and social reform, the very thing Guatemala needs to curb militarism. Secretary Martin aptly commented:

> Nor can we, as a practical matter, create effective democracy by keeping a man in office through use of economic pressure. . . . A democracy depending on outside physical support of this kind is a hollow shell which has no future.[5]

Economic and military assistance programs should pursue a long-range objective of enhancing the civilian sector of government and deemphasizing the military role. However, a stable government is needed before long-term economic and social growth is possible. At present, the Communist guerrilla activity and urban terrorism are active and must be contained. In Guatemala the military is the only

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[5]Edwin W. Martin, "US Policy Regarding Military Governments in Latin America," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 49, 4 Nov. 1963, p. 699.

force now capable of resisting Communist subversion. As a result, it must remain strong, at least temporarily. Thus, military assistance is desirable on a selective basis that furthers internal security and social development.

Military assistance should be geared to the actual guerrilla threat. Sophisticated items which enhance the prestige of the military and prolong militarism must be avoided. Civic action assistance which encourages military forces to pursue social and economic development projects in rural areas of the country is desirable. Training assistance should offer formal courses and orientation tours that will contribute to fostering democratic ideals and subordination of the military to civilian government. United States Army and Air Force Missions are needed in Guatemala to insure that military assistance is realistically pointed towards Guatemalan requirements and does not create a drain on Guatemala's economy nor unnecessarily prolong Guatemalan militarism.

Guatemala's need for help is more socioeconomic than military. As a result, economic assistance is a more critical factor than military assistance. Militarism will be quelled only by social and economic growth. Thus it follows that United States assistance to counter militarism should be two-fold: first, short-term measures which support military forces as indicated above to contain communism and to insure national stability so that social and economic reforms can take hold; second, and more important, long-term measures to buildup the civilian sector of government. The United States must help Guatemala attain competent government officials, strong political

parties, and an effective civil service. Specific emphasis should be placed on building up civilian middle class government leadership.

Guatemala must provide democratic representation and welfare for the Indians. This should be accomplished by a slow and orderly means in keeping with the desires of the Indians. The Indians are resistant to cultural change of any type, but mass communications and improved transportation will make change inevitable. Slowly the Indians will encounter a "revolution of rising expectations." Democratic representation of the Indians is a myth--until the Indians are reasonably educated, understand why and how they are voting, and participate in federal politics. The Alliance for Progress provides a blueprint for this needed socioeconomic reform. Rural Guatemala needs land redistribution, education, health facilities, housing, schools, feeder roads, and improved agriculture. These should be provided within a framework of social justice and human freedom. The Indian society will undergo either an orderly democratic evolution or a chaotic Communist revolution.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS

1. Guatemalan military officers participate heavily in politics because they sincerely consider themselves as patriotic guardians of the country. The inept, weak civilian sector of society has helped militarism to flourish.

2. Guatemalan militarism has thwarted communism and provided temporary political and economic stability. However, military governments have done little to furnish long-term political and social growth.

3. Military overthrows of government in 1954 and in 1963 were advantageous to Guatemala. The uprisings illustrate that Latin America can have good coups as well as bad coups.

4. A stable government is needed now in Guatemala to counter Communist guerrilla and terrorist activity. United States military assistance should be provided to help Guatemala meet this current internal security threat. Military assistance should be selective to insure that it does not encourage prolonged military rule of government.

5. Guatemala's most significant long-term problem is political, social, and economic instability. Development should be attained through the Alliance for Progress. The Alliance for Progress is Guatemala's main hope.

6. The United States should pursue a general policy of opposing coups and military rule by force in Latin America. Military coups

and dictators usually impede social progress. Therefore, we should encourage democratic institutions. However, specific action to be taken against Guatemalan militarism must be on a case-by-case basis, tempered by a policy of nonintervention. If a coup takes place which is a threat to the whole Caribbean region, the United States should take remedial action through the Organization of American States.

7. As a general policy, the United States should not withhold economic and military assistance for the purpose of coercing Guatemala to adopt a specific type of government. Stopping assistance to impose an anti-coup policy will more than likely impede rather than help Guatemala's political and social development.

8. United States economic assistance to counter militarism in Guatemala is needed. Specific areas which warrant emphasis are: developing political parties, training civilian government officials, instituting a civil service, and improving health, wealth, and education of the Indians.

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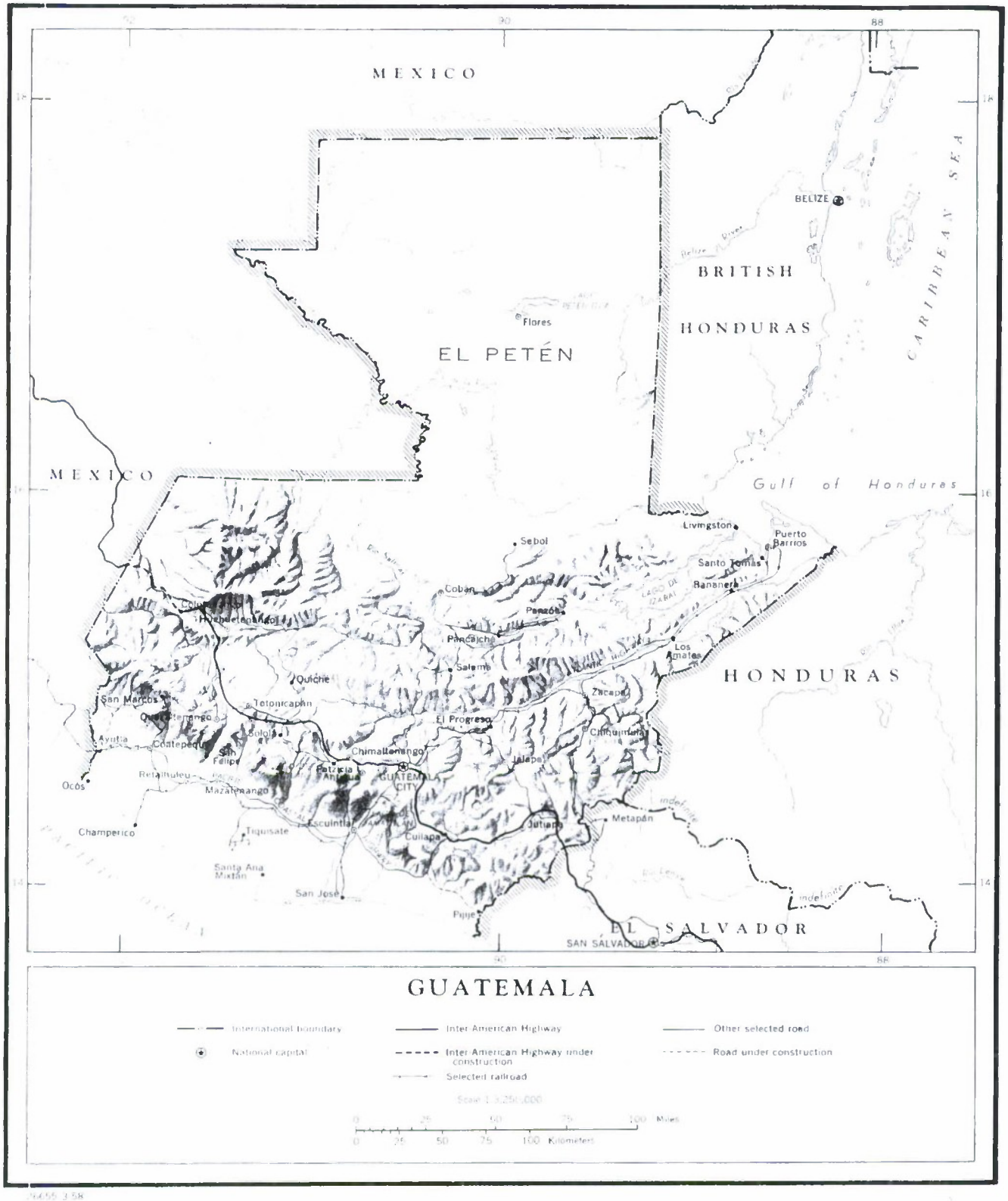
ANNEX A

MAP OF GUATEMALA



ANNEX B

CHIEF EXECUTIVES OF GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT

Name	Military or Civilian	Years Ruled	Means of Attaining Power	Type Government
Jorge Ubico	Military	1931-1944	Elected under constitutional processes.	Authoritarian dictatorship. Permitted little political and social growth.
Juan Arevalo	Civilian	1945-1951	Elected after military-civilian coups.	Leftist. Progressive and liberal, but permitted influx and growth of communism.
Jacobo Arbenz	Military	1951-1954	Elected under constitutional processes.	Communist-controlled.
Carlos Castillo Armas	Military	1954-1957	Liberation movement overthrew Arbenz.	Extreme rightist. Extremely anti-Communist. Gained national stability and economic reform, but little long-term political and social growth.
Miguel Ydigoras	Military	1958-1963	Elected under constitutional processes.	Middle of the road conservative. Anti-Communist. Plagued by large political, social, and economic unrest.
Enrique Peralta	Military	1963-	Coup d'etat overthrew Ydigoras.	Rightist and anti-Communist. Provided marked economic upswing. Encountering considerable Communist activity and social unrest.