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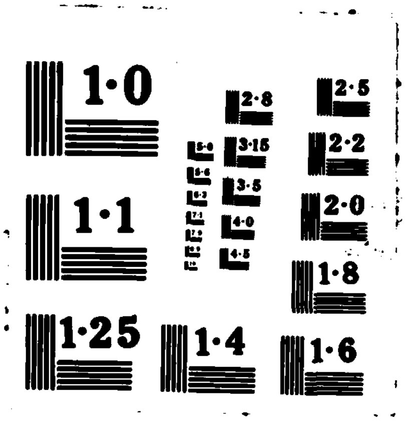
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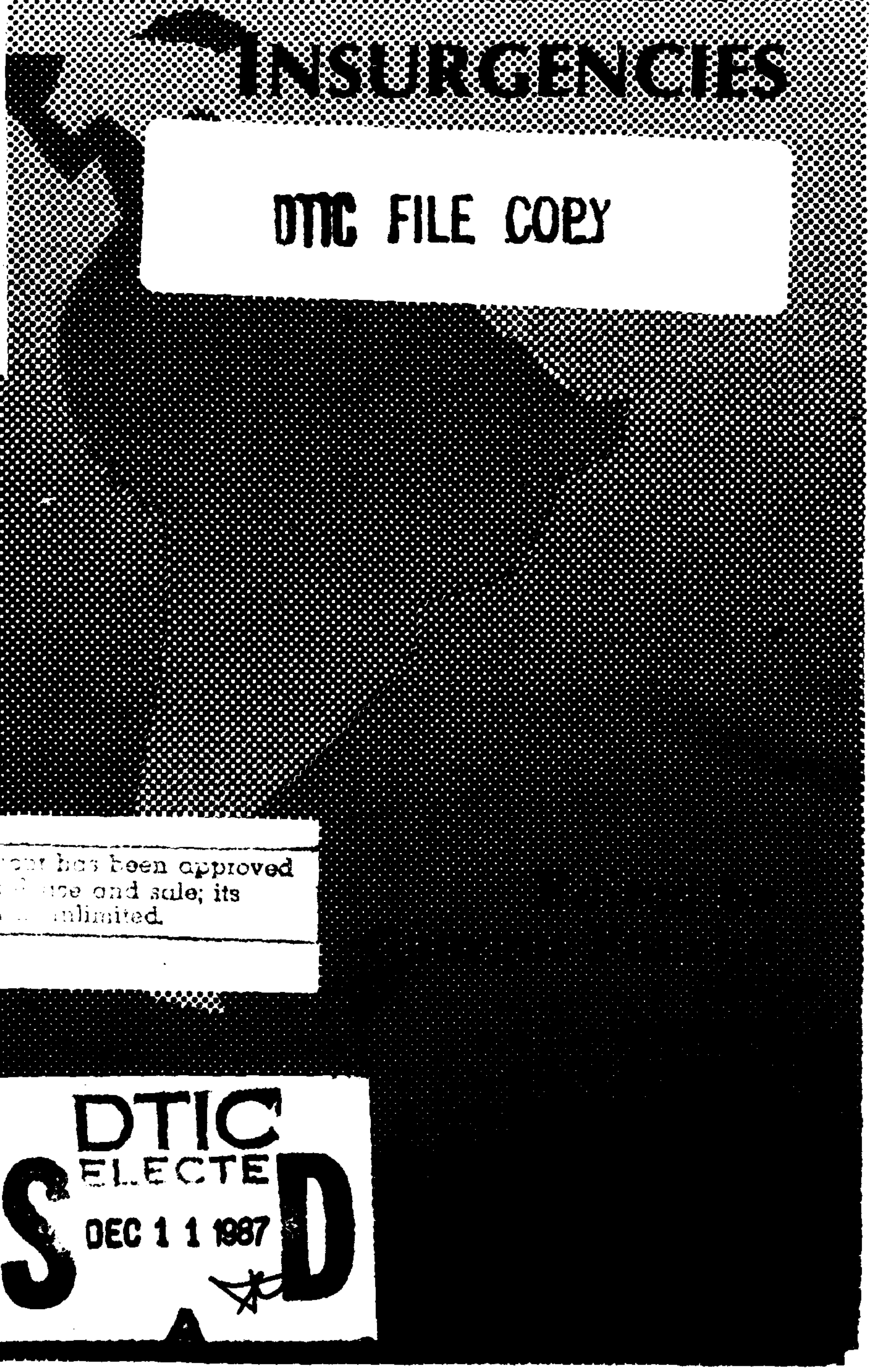

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LATIN AMERICAN INSURGENCIES

LATIN AMERICAN INSURGENCIES

Edited by
Georges Fauriol

1985

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FOREWORD

During their wars for national independence, their internal struggles and revolutions, Latin American countries have survived many forms of insurgent violence. The nature of modern insurgencies in Central and South America and the Caribbean, however, seems to distinguish them from earlier Latin American conflicts. Whereas previous struggles were contests to decide *who* would govern, recent insurgencies are more ideological, seeking to change the *form* of government itself. This trend, coupled with involvement of powers outside the region—such as the Soviet Union, Libya, and the Palestine Liberation Organization—make Latin American insurgencies a subject of growing concern.

To examine this issue, the National Defense University and the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies co-sponsored a series of meetings in the spring of 1984. The papers presented at those meetings are published here. In addition to case studies of specific insurgent movements in Peru and Guatemala, this book includes discussions of Latin American insurgent activity in its broad historical and present-day contexts, US policy options, and the likely course of insurgencies in the future.

The increasingly political nature and persistence of insurgent movements call for careful consideration of how best to contain them. This collection can help us better understand specific national cases and perhaps better formulate US policy toward the general region.

Richard D Lawrence

Richard D. Lawrence
Lieutenant General, US Army
President, National Defense
University

PREFACE

Within the past three decades the nature of Latin American insurgencies has changed dramatically. The ideological underpinnings of revolt have become formalized and more openly aligned with extra-hemispheric objectives. Furthermore, Latin American insurgencies have captured the imagination of portions of the American public and its counterparts in Western Europe. And finally, the transformation of tactics, scope of operations, ideological composition, and levels of foreign involvement have generated two salient results: first, occasionally successful revolutionary experiments (Nicaragua is the most current example); and second, painfully slow in its formation, a heightened sense of the region's importance to US strategic policy. The ensuing responses of the United States to increasing incidences of insurgency and varying forms of terrorism have generalized a new range of low-intensity warfare. The latter intermingles, uncomfortably, conventional politico-military concerns with unconventional socioeconomic and even human dimensions. This topic is an important item on the US-Latin American agenda.

In the spring of 1984 the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) of Georgetown University and the National Defense University sponsored three working meetings on the subject of Latin American insurgencies. Two background papers were presented at each session, critiqued, and ultimately expanded for publication in this volume.

The initial meeting addressed the concept of insurgency in its regional and historical context. The second session capitalized on two case studies (of Peru and Guatemala) to examine the Andean and Central American regions. The third meeting was geared toward policy considerations and a forward look. To generate original thinking—and we trust this is reflected in the volume—the initial background papers were couched in terms of thought pieces rather than conventional research studies.

Arriving at the present product was very much a group effort. The bulk of the credit goes to the book contributors themselves and the conference participants. The interest and support displayed for this project by Colonel John Endicott, US Air Force, then Director of Research, and others at the National Defense University was crucial to the project's execution. Finally, the valuable contributions of the CSIS Latin American staff—Lisa Frangos' performance of various management functions, Eva Loser's shepherding of the manuscript to completion, and others' work on various tasks—need to be highlighted.

LATIN AMERICAN INSURGENCIES

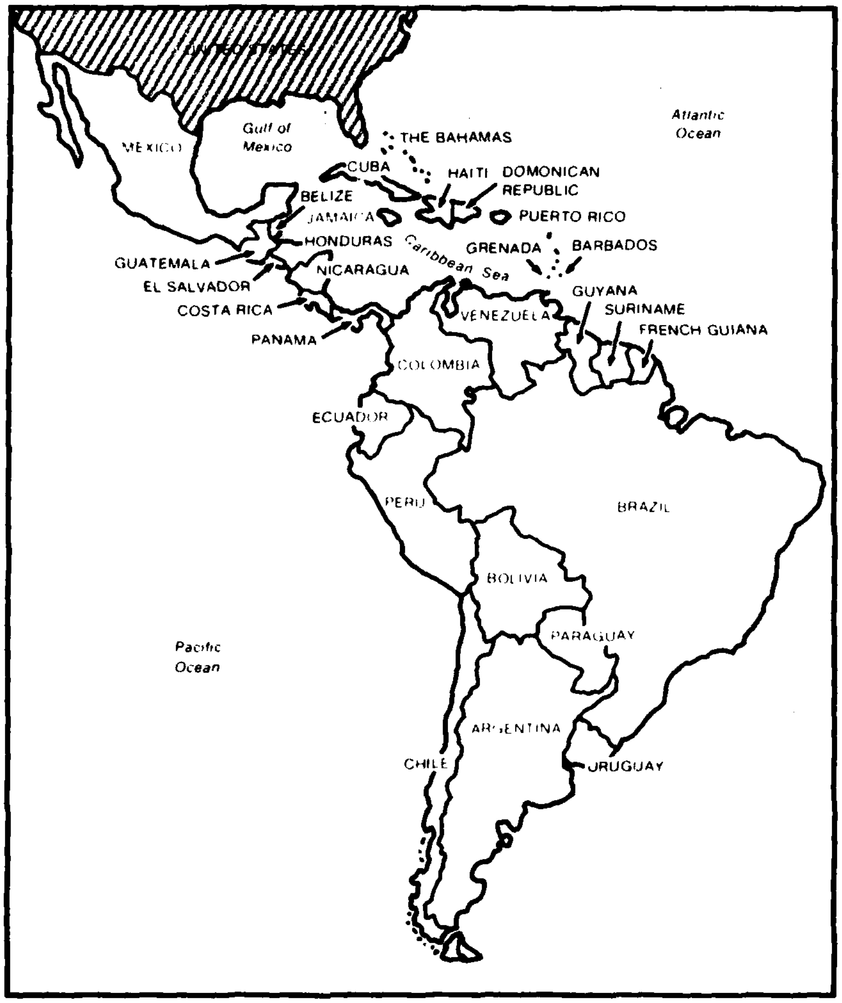
INSURGENCIES AND THE LATIN AMERICAN ENVIRONMENT

Georges Fauriol

GUERRILLA WARFARE AND LATIN AMERICAN REVOLT

The impact of guerrilla warfare on post-World War global relations poses one of the great ironies of recent military history. In an era when rapid technological development can render state-of-the-art prototypes obsolete before final production, the origin of the most popular mode for making war in the twentieth century predates Christianity. The tactics of guerrilla insurgency, while shifting to adjust to the proliferation of military technology and communications, have remained essentially the same since their infancy. Modern refinements notwithstanding, the efficacy of small, mobile assault groups operating behind enemy lines to harass the enemy, disrupt his supply lines, and hamper his mobility remains the impetus behind guerrilla strategy.

The first mentions of guerrilla tactics appear in the records of the ancient Egyptian and Chinese dynasties, as well as in the Bible and the prose of ancient historians. The Empire of Ancient Rome is said to have endured long and bitter insurgencies in Spain and later in North Africa. From the fifteenth to the early part of the twentieth century the Ottoman-dominated Balkans were rife with violent conflicts, primarily rooted in socially or nationally based insurgency movements.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Latin America

However, it was during Spain's resistance to French imperialism in the early nineteenth century that the Spanish word "guerrilla" (little war) and its impact on modern military strategy first attained global significance. Following their rout at the hands of Napoleon's crack regular troops, the remnants of Spain's forces splintered into small pockets of resistance in the mountains of the south, the Basque regions of the north, and the highlands of Castile and Aragon. These renegade troops capitalized on their enemy's mistakes—mistreatment of the local population; failure to split up their cumbersome phalanges into small, mobile units to root out guerrilla bands; and disregard of any possibilities for a political solution. As a result, despite inflicting almost forty-five thousand casualties, the French eventually succumbed to the guerrillas' relentless piecemeal attacks, losing ten to twenty times as many soldiers as their adversary.

However, while the French hold on Southwestern Europe was crumbling, Spain's control over its own colonies was being challenged by a similar "little war" in South America. Those who had become rich and successful in the Americas now pushed for independence from the excesses of the Empire. Guerrilla revolutions spread from Argentina to Chile, and under the leadership of Simón Bolívar to Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Bolivia.

Bolívar adopted guerrilla tactics upon his return to Venezuela in 1816. Leading his Republican Army across the Andes into the viceroyalty of New Granada (later Colombia), he entered Bogotá as liberator within six weeks. In 1820 he defeated the Spanish Army in Venezuela, and two years later he liberated the region that would later be Peru. Despite Bolívar's conquests, however, the ravages of war and incessant bickering between colonial leaders prevented any chances for a united empire to emerge out of his victories. His frustrating lament that "America is ungovernable" bears a disturbingly prophetic tone.

Nevertheless, within the brief historical span of two decades, Spain fostered the tradition of guerrilla strategy—ironically, as both its beneficiary and its victim. It is a tradition Spain has long sustained, from the Carlist Wars of the 1840s and 1870s, to the Cuban insurgencies, to the Civil War of 1936-39, to the Basque separatist movement and ETA today.

Yet the nature of dissent that has evolved into revolution in Latin America has changed substantially since the Bolivar crusades against Spanish domination. Those wars of national liberation against a colonial power or foreign occupier have been replaced by civil wars, waged by revolutionary groups fighting against a present and national regime. The most significant of these revolts occurred when Fidel Castro's guerrilla forces overthrew Batista's discredited regime in late 1958. However, the campaigns that followed met with mixed success. Providing the conceptual impetus for these later insurgencies was Che Guevara's "foco" theory—built around the faulty premise that spontaneous revolutions could be generated in nations where the environment simply was not ripe for rebellion. The fallacy of the foco theory was confirmed by Guevara's death in Bolivia in 1967 in the wake of a failed insurrection.

In his book, *Guerrilla Strategies,** Gerard Chailand blames the weakness of these movements from the late 1950s to mid 1960s on three key factors: 1) the inadequacies of the foco theory; 2) the rifts within the rebel groups themselves; and 3) the Latin machismo cultural tradition in the face of conflict that assumed either quick victory or glorious death, making for colorful but truncated revolts at best. In addition, Chailand cites the absence of clear-cut foreign intrusion, an element that had so effectively united the indigenous population against Spanish rule in the early part of the nineteenth century.

From the 1960s on, Latin America experienced a period of economic modernization. A surge of regional growth, expansion of capital cities, and the gradual emergence of a modern social class between the elites and the traditional society contributed to rising expectations. While the region neared the threshold of modernization—very unevenly—economic progress generated new socio-political demands. The climate that emerged of friction between the old and the new brought to the fore an intense ideological competition in the Caribbean, Brazil, the Southern Cone, the Andean countries, and most recently, Central America.

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*Gerard Chailand, *Guerrilla Strategies: An Historical Anthology From The Long March to Afghanistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), various pages.

The relative quiescence that seemed to prevail at the time within US policy is therefore somewhat surprising. With the major strategic initiative of the early 1960s (the Alliance for Progress) remaining incomplete and American attention turning toward Southeast Asia, a deceptive calm shaped US perceptions of Latin America. Washington's failure to detect the coming storm is perhaps reflected in the Rockefeller Report. President Nixon chose Nelson Rockefeller to chart a policy course for the region in part because of Rockefeller's involvement there as a State Department official during the New Deal and World War II. Although acknowledging the social injustices and the latent strategic threat they posed to the region, the report expressed only a marginal interest in economic aid, to "bring about the best long term hope for the improvement in the quality of life for the people." The political implications of social discontent thus went untended, and the stage was set for the wave of insurgencies in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Fundamentally, with attention turned elsewhere, the flaw in US policy was one of omission—there was no policy for Latin America, as opposed to really faulty policies. Latin America was simply not part of US global strategic thinking.

A NEW BRAND OF REVOLT

The present round of turmoil is characterized by several developments that clearly distinguish it from previous Latin American guerrilla movements. The most outstanding of these are an emerging external penetration in the region for the first time since the 1820s, and a significant reduction in US will, influence, and capabilities.

Some time ago an idea emerged warning that the Soviet Union had changed its global perspective to one in which the world is a roulette wheel and Moscow is trying to cover bets on all slots. Although such an analogy may seem an oversimplification of a complex scenario, there is no denying the growing Soviet presence in Latin America. Before World War II the Soviet Union had diplomatic relations with only two nations in the region, Mexico and Uruguay. But over the years the USSR has cultivated economic and political ties with all the leading Latin American nations, and with the lesser states as well. This official presence has generated Soviet influence in the area and has provided the Soviets with resources for information on and communications with the ever-changing face of Latin American affairs.

The Soviets' diplomatic mobility in Latin America, together with their strategic access to Cuba and Nicaragua, has provided the USSR with major platforms for active support of insurgents throughout Latin America at a level that was not possible before the early 1960s. Through sea- and airlift routes and overland covert transportation systems, Latin American revolutionary groups have been provided with advanced weapons that, for the first time in the history of guerrilla activity in the area, are not necessarily inferior to those of the governments they oppose. Furthermore, these activities take place in the context of coordinated Eastern Bloc-wide political and ideological action, often operating with relative impunity, and in fact with receptivity from indigenous political classes. For example, for years the USSR and Cuba have had a major intelligence capability operating out of Mexico City with diplomatic cover.

Commensurate with the Soviet Bloc's burgeoning capabilities in Latin America was a simultaneous decline of US influence. The "loss" of Nicaragua in 1979 appeared to leave the United States in a diplomatic quagmire—limited in policy options and restrained by domestic pressure against US involvement in the Third World. This public apprehension concerning Third World involvement is rooted in two factors that hang over the United States' shrinking role in Latin America.

First, the visual trappings of insurgencies in Central America are disturbingly reflective of the legacies of Vietnam: brutal military regimes fighting to stave off guerrilla revolts, the horrible specter of terrorism, "pacification" programs based on land reform and elections, incremental military aid from a divided US Congress, even the haunting tableau of "Huey" helicopters hovering over tropical landscapes. Such impressions serve as grisly reminders of the ten-year Asian conflict and have established a connection in the public psyche between Latin American involvement and the doomed course that led to the horrors of Vietnam.

The second factor involves the historical incompleteness of US Latin American policy. The Kissinger Commission Report freely acknowledges the disproportionate levels of attention recently given to the Central American Isthmus, considering the size of the region and its previously low priority on the US foreign policy agenda. The region demands the greater attention because, in tandem with the problem of insurgencies, Latin America's other major crises range from issues of financial stability to concerns over competing diplomacies. But US-Latin American relations have been conducted within an invisible foreign policy sphere for so long that the general public in the United States simply does not perceive Latin America to be a serious concern.

It is this background of domestic constraint and confusion that has plagued proponents of a realistic policy in Latin America—that is, one that both addresses US interests in the region and is generally sustainable among the American public. Apprehension over security matters is leading to congressional hesitation and producing a form of piecemeal policy to deal with critical issues. This book is intended to provide information US policymakers need in order to begin formulating a more effective policy toward Latin America as a whole and specific countries within the region.

OVERVIEW OF LATIN AMERICAN INSURGENCIES

Andrew Hoehn
and
Juan Carlos Weiss

Insurgency in Latin America has long and distinct historical roots. Spanish colonial rule was successfully challenged and defeated in the early nineteenth century by means of insurgent and guerrilla activities. Political change in Latin America has often been promoted through subversion and insurgency; democratic change by means of a ballot has few historical antecedents. The fact, therefore, that political power has shifted as the result of insurgent activity should come as no surprise. The weak have traditionally employed guerrilla and insurgent tactics in opposition to the strong. Possessing neither material strength nor sophisticated organization and support, weaker parties have used insurgent techniques to harass and confuse established governing bodies while avoiding direct confrontation. The insurgent hopes eventually to severely weaken the opponent so that a political victory can be won. In few instances is the insurgent able to develop enough strength to achieve military superiority.

Insurgent activities are often regarded as isolated events involving bands of disgruntled partisans and local governmental forces. The potential impact of insurgent activity on international political relations has been judged to be insignificant. Change has historically been effected through violent acts; hence the presence of guerrilla forces presents no new concerns. Nevertheless, times do change and patterns do emerge.

Today, insurgent movements are no longer sponsored solely by isolated bands of disgruntled partisans seeking to bring about change. They have evolved into sophisticated political-military operations that enjoy extensive and complex international connections. Moreover, insurgent activities have assumed an ideological character that has impacts on all levels of international affairs. Local battles for the "hearts and minds" of the people now receive much greater attention and take on much greater international significance. Whereas the success of an insurgent movement may have at one time meant little more than a change in leadership, the potential now exists for a shift in the balance of international forces as a result of successive guerrilla victories.

Within the past two decades the nature and scope of Latin American insurgencies has changed dramatically. Only fifteen years ago, leftist insurgents in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay threatened the stability and existence of their liberal democratic societies. At the same time, Central American insurgents were just beginning a contemporary revival. Today, Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay have outgrown the insurgent challenges, but they have paid for their victories with the loss of their liberal democratic regimes. Only in 1983 has Argentina returned to civilian rule; Chile and Uruguay remain tied to their military dictatorships. The Central American situation is quite different: Nicaragua has undergone revolution and the subsequent radicalization of its regime; El Salvador is in the midst of a civil war; Guatemala is suffering from the challenges of guerrilla activity; and Costa Rica is experiencing both internal dissent and external disputes.

Not only has the geographic location of insurgent activity shifted, so too has the nature of operations. Latin American insurgents of the 1960s and 1970s had not yet developed a sense of unity and political organization, nor did they receive extensive support from external sources. Guerrilla bands thought that conditions could be ripened for revolution because change was inevitable. To them, organization was less important than action. Today, insurgents have learned from their predecessors—most of whom are now deceased—and emphasize organization, in both the military and the political spheres. Rather than compete among themselves for rank and authority, contemporary insurgents have learned to compromise so that their forces can be coalesced against the enemy. Outside assistance for these movements has proliferated in terms of both material support and political-military training. Legitimate governing bodies are now threatened by rebellious groups of ever-increasing power.

What follows is a background analysis of Latin American insurgency movements. The historical roots, including theoretical developments, and the contemporary focus of insurgent activities receive particular attention. Trends and patterns do emerge, but the experience of the past three decades suggests that caution must be exercised when depicting them. Latin America is not a homogenous unit. Each situation presents its unique conditions and circumstances. Nevertheless, insurgents often emulate their peers, borrowing from the successes and learning from the failures of their predecessors. Thus, the patterns that emerge will be more iterative than cyclic. Moreover, an analysis such as this might help to dispel some myths surrounding insurgent activities and focus attention instead on the dangers and opportunities that these activities present.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Insurgent victories in Cuba and Nicaragua and those nations' subsequent radicalization have rekindled American policymakers' interest in Latin American insurgency. Though Cuba and, to a lesser extent, Nicaragua represent contemporary milestones, they are but two examples from a long history of insurgency and insurrectionist activity within the region. The actual pattern of Latin American insurgency can be divided into two major branches: struggles for national liberation and revolutionary struggles based on social and political demands.

Beginning in the late eighteenth century and throughout much of the nineteenth century, Latin American insurgency movements were primarily struggles for national liberation. As Spanish and Portuguese control of the area waned, successive movements developed, seeking liberation from the colonial rulers. One of Latin America's greatest heroes, Simon Bolivar, led numerous insurrectionist movements that ultimately brought independence to Venezuela, Colombia, and Bolivia. Others continued these struggles throughout the nineteenth century. By the end of the Spanish-American War, which secured Cuba's independence from Spain, Latin America had escaped from Iberian colonial domination.

In the years following the wars for independence, insurgent activity did not disappear. Instead the focus shifted toward revolutionary struggles based on social and political demands. Often without recourse to legal or semilegal avenues for change, insurgent movements would arise in opposition to established governing bodies. In other instances insurgent groups would develop in opposition to American or other foreign interests whose influence was seen as detrimental. Since insurgent and guerrilla tactics were employed by groups from both the right and the left, few ideological labels were attached to these activities.

Following the Bolshevik revolution, Latin American insurgents began identifying and being identified with Marxist-Leninist concepts of class structure and social inequalities. As such, their revolutionary activity attracted greater international attention, though international support was not always in the offing. Among the most significant contributions provided by Marxist-Leninist doctrine was Lenin's concept of the "vanguard" party. This helped unify disjunct factions and justified the formation of a new competing elite.

Nevertheless, insurgent activities based on ideological grounds were overwhelmingly defeated by better trained, better equipped government armies. In addition, insurgent groups often defeated themselves through dissension and disloyalty. If left to fight among themselves, Latin American insurgents often caused more damage to each other through acts of mutual sabotage emanating from leadership struggles and competing objectives than did governmental counterinsurgency efforts. In some respects, ideologically oriented insurgent activities provided stronger unifying themes to those who were opposed to the spread of communist influence in the Western Hemisphere than it did to those who supported it. Nonetheless, insurrectionary movements in Latin America assumed greater and greater identification with leftist ideological struggles. By midway through the twentieth century, insurgent activities were no longer seen simply as the tool of the weak against the strong; rather, they were perceived to be the tool of leftist insurrectionary elements.

After Castro's victorious march into Havana, leftist ideology gained even greater significance, despite the fact that Castro's victory was not the result of a vanguard-led proletarian revolution. Castro emerged as the leader of a broad-based political struggle guided more by pragmatic maneuverings than by ideological drive. In effect, Cuba had two revolutions in recent history. The first was a broad-based movement, led primarily but not exclusively by Castro, which brought about the collapse of the Batista regime on 31 December 1958. The primary motive was the overthrow of Batista and the corrupt, repressive political system he represented. The second revolution replaced the first through the incorporation of a self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist dictatorship. The resulting political climate stood in contradiction to many of Castro's original ideals: the economy was not diversified, human rights were systematically abused, and an inequitable relationship with the United States was replaced by a greater dependence on the Soviet Union.

For both the contemporary insurgent and Latin American governments, the Cuban model represents a milestone in revolutionary activity. The significance of the Cuban revolution vis-à-vis subsequent guerrilla movements and the established governing bodies lies in the fact that Cuba was the first instance in modern Latin American history in which a pro-American political system was successfully and completely overthrown and replaced by a radical, revolutionary, and vehemently anti-American regime. Since that time, the Cuban model and the myths that surround it have both encouraged would-be revolutionaries and warned suspecting governmental authorities. What is often overlooked by both friend and foe of the Cuban revolution is that the conditions contributing to its success were in many ways unique to Cuba.

When Castro returned to Cuba in 1957 he stepped into a deteriorating political climate that not even he had envisioned. The Batista regime was extremely weak, far weaker than most had expected. US support for Batista had waned—financial and military support was eventually suspended—and internal loyalty, even among the urban middle class, had all but collapsed. Though

Castro orchestrated his activities from the outlying rural area of the Sierra Maestra, he enjoyed support and sympathy from urban dwellers. Without this rural-urban coalition, the success of Castro's endeavors would have remained doubtful. Moreover, Castro fortuitously benefited from a long tradition of Cuban revolutionary heroes. His efforts were seen as paralleling those of earlier freedom fighters. In sum, Cuba was ripe for revolution; Castro rode atop a wave that, even without his adept leadership, would have inevitably crashed down upon the Batista regime.

In the immediate aftermath of Batista's downfall, Cuba was upheld as the model for all Latin American insurgencies. Although Castro's victory depended more on pragmatism than on ideology, doctrinal theories of revolution based on the Cuban experience proliferated. Circumstances unique to Cuba were overlooked. The Cuban revolutionary victory, through a retrospective interpretation, became the model of Latin American revolutionary behavior. Inasmuch as that model has guided the direction of contemporary insurgency movements, it is useful to consider the theoretical developments that came to characterize the Cuban revolution.

Ernesto "Che" Guevara and Regis Debray stand out among guerrilla strategists because of their writings on rural revolutionary warfare. Maintaining that Latin America was ready, though not necessarily "ripe," for revolution, they both offered prescriptive solutions. Revolution, according to Guevara and Debray, was contagious and needed only to be ignited by small bands of highly trained, highly committed guerrillas, whose efforts would flare up into massive campaigns. Both Guevara and Debray believed a "foco" (mobile strategic base) could launch a successful revolutionary struggle with little preparatory political organization. Because of their intense desire for change, the peasants would emulate the efforts of the foco and continue the revolutionary armed struggle. In effect, Guevara and Debray were challenging the basic premise of Marxist-Leninist revolutionary struggle.

In a Marxist-Leninist tradition, revolution could only be effected by progressing through necessary stages. Revolutionary struggles succeeded by having popular support, which was to be acquired through political preparation. Political parties had to be established in order to direct popular discontent. Though a vanguard would lead the revolutionary effort, popular sympathy had to be cultivated. Above all, organization, including hierarchical leadership, was imperative. Without structured guidance, revolutionary efforts would lose direction and easily become disbanded.

In contrast to this tradition, Guevara and Debray maintained that organization is important but not necessarily imperative; in essence, action is more important than planning. Revolution was planned and promised for far too many years without tangible results. What appeared more important was the initiation of military conflict so that progress toward revolution could be made. Once the revolution was in progress, political planning could then be considered.

Guevara and Debray borrowed from Mao Zedong in that they opted for rural- rather than urban-based insurgent activities. The rural-based foco would create revolutionary momentum that would then sweep into urban centers. Small groups would generate large groups, which would, in turn, produce massive assaults against government rule. Rural initiatives would give way to urban initiatives, which would succeed in the complete and uncompromised rejection of unwanted reactionary governmental institutions. In many ways Guevara's and Debray's optimism implied that any formula for revolution would succeed so long as action took the place of prolonged meditation. What they did not envision, however, was that not all Latin American governments were as fragile as Cuba's.

Between 1960 and 1967 at least twenty foco type movements appeared in Latin America. Not one even came close to success. By 1967 Che Guevara, himself, was struggling not for victory but for individual survival. Eventually he, too, was killed while fighting in Bolivia. Despite revolutionary optimism, the focoist theory of revolution sorely lacked political considerations; therefore, it yielded surface activity without an underlying infrastructure. Lacking an alternative infrastructure, it was impossible to translate military victories into political power. Furthermore, disjointed military activities emanating from focoist groups were easily contained by trained governmental forces who were better prepared for "action" than were their zealous counterparts.

Following Guevara's death (and Debray's move away from revolutionary politics) guerrilla strategy shifted away from rural-based foco attacks toward urban-centered terrorism. Yet in many ways urban-centered terrorism retained a focoist character, because the confines of an urban environment and the presence of many more governmental troops restricted mass organization. Unlike rural struggles against government forces, urban guerrilla warfare depends upon terror and remains hidden from direct confrontation. The most common activities of urban guerrillas include bank robberies, bombings, kidnappings, and assassinations. The intensity and atrocity of these activities brings more attention to the urban guerrilla, more at least than rural skirmishes do. However, this expanded attention is not always positive; oftentimes national and international audiences react unfavorably to a particular event, or worse, they dismiss it as banditry. Therefore, the urban insurgent is forced to affix political significance to every violent act. Yet without overall coordination and cooperation among the subversive elements, political rationales often come about only as an afterthought.

The shift from rural- to urban-centered activity brought with it a shift in the area of focus. Rather than targeting Bolivia, which offered a prime location for rural-based activities, urban guerrillas centered their efforts in countries, such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay, with major urban centers. New tactics were employed as new groups emerged (i.e., the Montoneros in Argentina, the Tupamaros in Uruguay, and the Action for National Liberation in Brazil). Nevertheless, urban insurgents were no more politically prepared than were their rural predecessors. Therefore, the shift in geographic targeting was not accompanied by any real progress toward political power transformation.

By the mid 1970s both the rural foco and the urban terrorist movements had been defeated and discredited. The inadequacies of Guevara's and Debray's interpretations of the Cuban revolution were all too clearly revealed. Subsequent attempts at reforming the focoist strategy by adapting it to an urban environment also failed. In both cases action took precedence over planning. The establishment of a sound political infrastructure was seen to be irrelevant, thus it was ignored. In retrospect, this oversight proved, quite literally, to be fatal.

More recently, in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Peru military action has been linked to political organization. Nicaragua's Sandinista revolution succeeded, in part, because of its provision for an alternative ruling body. With each military success—not to mention political successes, of which there were many—the Sandinistas were able to replace the old with the new by creating "liberated zones." Military activity was not an end in itself; it served as a means to an end. In El Salvador, Guatemala, and Peru insurgents have actively sought to combine political and military functions. Coalitions are both vigorously and sincerely pursued, and efforts are coordinated, at least to the greatest extent possible.

Since most insurgent movements lack the strength and support necessary for a complete and decisive military victory, they must—and in successful cases do—direct their efforts toward a political conquest. This can only be accomplished by integrating all economic, political, and military resources into a coherent, singular functional unit.

THE CONTEMPORARY SETTING

As opposed to foco type rural movements and the urban-based activity that followed, contemporary insurgent movements are less singular in both character and description, thus displaying a sophistication not found in earlier groups. This third wave of insurgents has come to understand the necessity of political planning and the inapplicability of overly strict, dogmatic theoretical paradigms. Flexibility and technical sophistication, in both materials and organization, best characterize the insurgents of the 1980s. Heeding the mistakes of the past and benefiting from strong coordination and support, especially international support, Latin American insurgents now present a strong and ever-growing challenge to established governmental bodies. Despite temporary setbacks to insurgent movements in several Latin American countries, such as Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, insurgent activities threaten stability in many other nations, including El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru, and Colombia.

In 1979 the Sandinista National Liberation Front (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional—FSLN) coordinated the successful overthrow of Nicaragua's Somoza regime. The FSLN victory represents the first insurgent defeat of a Latin American government since the 1959 fall of Fulgencio Batista in Cuba. Having suffered from years of strategic miscalculation, the FSLN eventually overcame the corrupt Somoza regime and initiated the most recent wave of Latin American insurgent activity. In many ways Nicaragua presents the model for Latin American revolution in the 1980s as Cuba did in the 1960s. This time, however, the model is much more complex.

An overwhelming factor distinguishing the Sandinistas' victory was their ability to align forces from among divergent, competing guerrilla groups. Moreover, the FSLN reached out beyond traditional constraints, courting favor with moderate elements instead of seeking only to cooperate with radical groups. Therefore, radical pronouncements were tempered, resulting in the conspicuous absence of Marxist-Leninist rhetoric. Major targets of the FSLN's coalition efforts included labor unions, professional associations, and religious leaders. The Sandinistas realized that their success depended on the support of all Nicaraguans, not just the efforts of a select few.

Militarily, the Nicaraguan revolution represents a major departure from earlier Latin American insurgent activity. Unlike earlier insurgent groups, the FSLN avoided, almost at all costs, a direct confrontation with Somoza's army. Rather than risk military defeat, Sandinista guerrillas preferred retreat when direct confrontation seemed inevitable. In so doing, the FSLN was never forced to expend resources on what might possibly—or would most probably—have proven to be a losing cause.

This tactic not only prevented major FSLN losses, it also created morale problems among government forces. Wars against an unfound, unidentifiable enemy create serious problems for military leaders. Despite an ever-growing and undeniable presence, government troops were often unable to locate the enemy they were to confront.

Additionally, the Sandinistas benefited from a broad range of international support. Among their regional neighbors, most supported and few opposed an FSLN victory. Furthermore, most Western European governments and many groups within the

United States viewed the FSLN's struggle against Somoza favorably. Finally, Cuban and Soviet support, including material goods, provided further momentum to an already strong movement.

The FSLN success can also be attributed to the fact that the Nicaraguan revolution was fought on the FSLN's own terms. The revolutionary leaders did not succumb to the temptation of emulating an earlier model. Having suffered previous defeats through mimicry, the Sandinista leaders became convinced that Nicaragua must be its own model. The conditions that allowed for Castro's success were not necessarily present in Nicaragua. More than likely, fighting the Cuban revolution—at least as it was subsequently interpreted—in Nicaragua would have brought to the FSLN the same fate Guevara met in Bolivia. The fact that the Sandinistas developed a strategy and tactics applicable to their own setting accounts for much of their success.

Since the FSLN's 1979 victory, the focal point of Latin American insurgent activity has been Central America. Though the insurgent challenge is still felt, and will continue to be felt, in areas such as Peru and Colombia, Central America is now the primary battleground; a civil war is being fought in El Salvador, and Guatemala is encountering increased insurgent activity.

Salvadoran insurgents have borrowed heavily from the successes of Nicaragua. Realizing the significance of both military and political struggles, Salvadoran activists have united their efforts under the general Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front–Democratic Revolutionary Front leadership, with the former group responsible for military activities and the latter, political affairs. The emphasis by the Salvadoran left on political as well as military affairs has resulted in an uncertain domestic climate that favors their ultimate objectives and an international climate that, in many ways, sympathizes with their pursuits.

In search of a political victory, which was all too often ignored by the previous generation of military activists, the Salvadoran guerrillas have adeptly exploited the greatest tool at their disposal: the mass media. El Salvador's insurgents have not only exalted their cause by carefully recording and disseminating information concerning all violent acts connected to governmental and quasi-governmental forces; they have also succeeded in creating the illusion that their own actions are purely defensive and that they, the guerrillas, bear little if any responsibility for the violence that permeates their society. We should not belittle the horrors of death squad activity, but El Salvador has experienced atrocities from both ends of the political spectrum.

Salvadoran guerrillas are also the beneficiaries of an international support system that has slowly but consistently developed as a means of assisting insurgent movements in Latin America. Though previously at odds with regard to the proper course of Latin American revolutionary activity, Cuba and the Soviet Union have since reconciled their differences and now jointly support regional insurrectionist movements. More recently, Nicaragua has allied itself with these efforts. By providing advisers, weapons, sanctuaries, organizational and military training, and propaganda, Cuba, Nicaragua, and the Soviet Union have helped to enhance the prospects of Latin American insurgency movements, especially in El Salvador. Furthermore, the web of international support is growing. In addition to the countries mentioned above, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Libya, North Korea, and Vietnam have been linked to a vast support structure stretching across the globe. This network has internationa*lized the revolutionary conflicts of Latin* America, transcending the isolated insurgent activities of but a decade ago.

INSURGENT MOVEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

This section attempts to classify the major insurgent movements found in Latin America and, when possible, account for their strengths and weaknesses, including ideological perspectives and material and numerical support. All groups are not equally well known, nor are all Latin American countries discussed. This, however, should not imply that other groups have not formed, nor should it suggest that international attention is a precondition to successful insurgent activity. Rather, this overview focuses on those groups whose activities present real and immediate challenges to established governmental structures and whose efforts might further undermine regional stability. Latin American insurgency is a dynamic phenomenon, hence a discussion such as this requires periodic updating and review.

The Andean Group

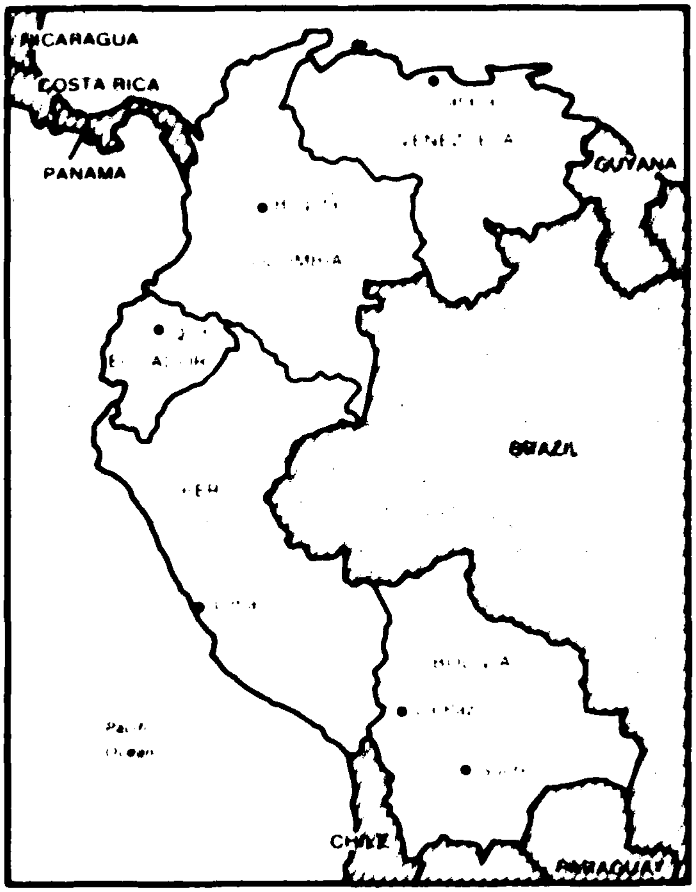
The Andean group, including Venezuela, has been plagued by insurgent activity for decades. This region, and specifically Bolivia, was the target of Ernesto "Che" Guevara's ill-fated attempts at revolution. Since Guevara's death insurgent activity has moved away from Bolivia and is now more predominant in Peru and Colombia. Despite the recent wave of attention given to Central American insurgents, the Andean region remains volatile.

Colombia

Guerrilla violence has been a feature of Colombian life since civil war left tens of thousands dead in the late 1940s and early 1950s. More recently Colombia has been challenged by a new wave of guerrilla violence, including both rural and urban attacks. The most prominent of Colombia's guerrilla organizations, Movimiento 19 de abril (M-19), received large-scale international attention as a result of its 1980 kidnappings, which included that of the US ambassador to Colombia. The sixty-one day ordeal ended with the ambassador's release and the kidnappers' escape to Cuba.

In June 1981 the Colombian military carried out a large-scale campaign against the guerrillas that was partially successful. In 1982 newly elected President Belisario Betancur offered to negotiate with the guerrillas concerning amnesty in response to a previous guerrilla request. Acting on Betancur's proposal, the M-19 and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia—FARC) agreed to negotiate while the Popular Army of Liberation (Ejército Popular de Liberación) and the Army of National Liberation (Ejército de Liberación Nacional) declined.

As conditions for accepting amnesty, the FARC and M-19 asked for 1) demilitarization of their operational zones, 2) dismantling of a right-wing counterterrorist group, 3) protection for the guerrillas, and 4) government aid for guerrillas accepting amnesty. In response the government lifted the previously imposed state of siege and proceeded with negotiations by soliciting congressional support.


NICARAGUA
COSTA RICA
PANAMA
VENEZUELA
GUYANA
COLOMBIA
ECUADOR
BRAZIL
PERU
BOLIVIA
Pacific Ocean
CHILE
PARAGUAY

The Andean Group

Because of distrust by both the military and the guerrillas, the negotiations did not fully succeed. The military was unwilling to fulfill the demilitarized zone clause and the guerrillas were unwilling to surrender their arms. Instead the M-19 offered to negotiate a truce, which was rejected on the grounds that it meant nothing less than a guerrilla political victory.

At present the fighting continues. Though Betancur's efforts for an amnesty were sincere, there were groups on both sides who saw little to gain from negotiations. In the absence of guerrilla surrender, the military would not relent; in the absence of political victory, at least partial victory, the guerrillas had more to gain by fighting.

> Colombia's major guerrilla movements:
>
> *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia)*: Established in 1964, with extensive links to the pro-Soviet Colombian Communist Party.
>
> *Ejército Popular de Liberación (EPL) (Popular Army of Liberation)*: A splinter group of the Marxist-Leninist Colombian Communist Party, and the first group to pursue a "revolutionary people's war" in Latin America. At present the EPL focuses primarily on urban assaults.
>
> *Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) (Army of National Liberation)*: A pro-Cuban group that formed to foment Cuban-style revolution in Colombia. Though once Colombia's largest and most active insurgent group, the ELN has never recovered from the toll exacted on its leadership and urban network by government forces in the mid 1970s.

Peru

1980 marked both the return of civilian government to Peru after twelve years of military rule and the perhaps unrelated commencement of guerrilla violence, which currently threatens the government's survival. Fearing a return to military rule, the civilian government has been unwilling to disturb an aura of stability. Hence, the government initially ignored increased insurgent activity. But the civilian leaders were later forced to take action. Though reluctant to use military force, by 1982 the Peruvian government initiated emergency measures and has since employed military operations.

Peru's major guerrilla movement:

Partido Comunista Peruano—Sendero Luminoso (Peruvian Communist Party—"Shining Path"): A Maoist group seeking to spread armed revolution from rural areas to urban centers. Since 1971 it has operated along a five point program:

- Conversion of backland areas into bases of support.
- Use of terrorist activities to obtain arms and publicity.
- Expansion and generalization of violence into full guerrilla war and urban sabotage.
- Conquest and expansion of support bases.
- Siege of cities and collapse of the state.

Even by Marxist standards, Sendero Luminoso is extremely radical. To this point it has been unwilling to align itself with other leftist organizations.

Bolivia

After Guevara's death in 1967, Bolivian insurgents shifted their activities to urban areas. Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s sporadic guerrilla and terrorist activities have taken place. These have targeted primarily US diplomats and businesses. As a result of a 1980 military coup, political-military insurgent movements were driven underground and many leaders were either arrested or exiled. In 1982 insurgent leaders once again received attention when the newly elected president, Hernán Siles, appointed them to high-ranking positions. Among the appointees is Vice President Jaime Paz Zamora of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria—MIR).

Bolivia's major guerrilla movements:

Ejército y Liberación Nacional (ELN) (Army and National Liberation): Founded by Che Guevara in

1967 for the purpose of establishing a Cuban-style revolutionary movement and regime. After both Guevara's death and an effective government-led counterinsurgency campaign, the ELN regrouped into an urban movement with strong Soviet links.

Partido Comunista de Bolivia (PCB) (Communist Party of Bolivia): An ideologically diverse organization with Soviet and Chinese links. It originally evolved as an adjunct to the old pro-Stalinist Communist Party.

Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR) (Movement of the Revolutionary Left): Established in 1971 by members of the centrist Christian Democratic Party. Most recently, the MIR has been reintroduced into mainstream politics with the appointment of Jaime Paz Zamora as vice president.

Partido Socialista de Bolivia (PSB) (Socialist Party of Bolivia): Formed in 1970 as a dissident offshoot of the center-left National Revolutionary Movement.

Ecuador

Ecuador has experienced limited insurgent activity. That which has occurred has been directed at US diplomats and property. Marxist groups pose only a minor threat to Ecuador's constitutionally elected government. The largest communist party, the Communist Party of Ecuador, has less than 1,000 members and minor electoral influence, but has acquired significant influence within the country's labor and student unions.

Venezuela

Despite a turbulent period of insurgency led by Douglas Bravo in the 1960s, guerrilla activity in Venezuela has generally subsided to one of the lowest levels in any major Latin American country not under military rule. Following a flurry of incidents in 1982, orchestrated by Venezuela's only surviving guerrilla organization, Bandera Roja ("Red Flag"), the Venezuelan military took effective action against the group's leadership, decisively crushing the group's organizational apparatus.

The Southern Cone

The Southern Cone became the target of urban guerrilla uprisings in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Groups such as Argentina's Montoneros and Uruguay's Tupamaros terrorized urban populations and contributed extensively to a wave of military coups and the subsequent militarization of what were previously liberal democratic regimes. Lacking political infrastructures, these urban insurgent movements were all but eliminated when defeated by military counterinsurgency campaigns. However, vestiges of these movements have recently appeared in Chile, suggesting that the potential for future violent activity remains.

Argentina

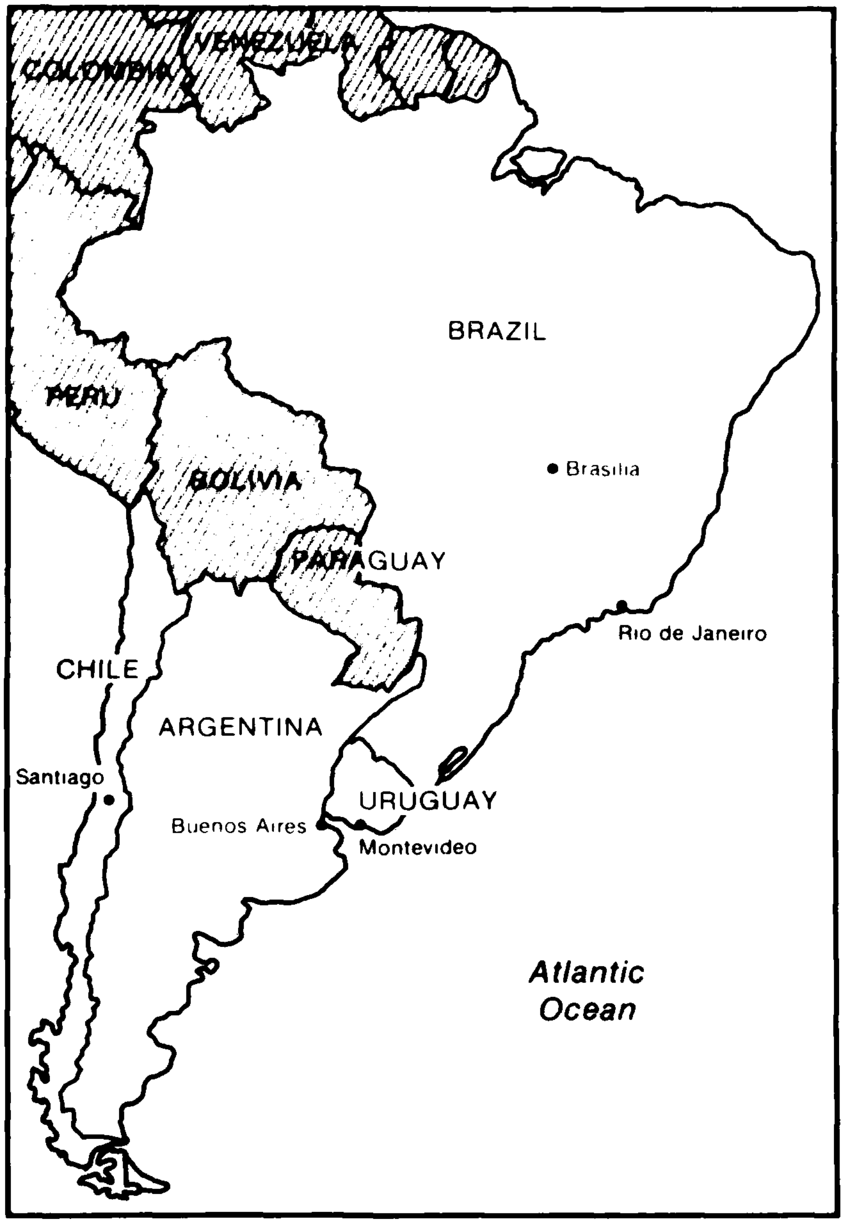
During the early 1970s Argentina was shaken by a phase of political violence that threatened to explode into virtual civil war. Insurgent activities emanated from two major groups, the Montoneros and the Revolutionary Army of the People (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo—ERP). The Montoneros were established in 1970 as the youth branch of the Peronist Party but later disassociated themselves in favor of more militant urban-based activity. The ERP centered its organization in rural areas and focused its attacks on urban centers.

Following the military coup of 1976, a brutal counterterrorist campaign put a virtual end to insurgent activity in Argentina. Since the reestablishment of civilian rule under President Raúl Alfonsín's leadership, guerrilla activity has remained quiet, though the issue of insurgency has not completely disappeared.

Argentina's major guerrilla movements:

Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP) (Revolutionary Army of the People): A rural-based group in Tucumán province. Though inspired by Guevara's concept of rural warfare, the ERP has been most active in urban centers. During Argentina's counterterrorist campaign, the ERP's strength was greatly reduced.

Montoneros: Began as the youth branch of the Peronist Party and later emerged as a militant urban terrorist group. With numbers reaching nearly 7,000,


VENEZUELA
COLOMBIA
BRAZIL
PERU
BOLIVIA
Brasilia
PARAGUAY
Rio de Janeiro
CHILE
ARGENTINA
Santiago
URUGUAY
Buenos Aires
Montevideo
Atlantic
Ocean

The Southern Cone

the Montoneros were among Argentina's strongest guerrilla organizations. Though disbanded in Argentina, the Montonero leadership survives in exile and is active among other Latin American insurgent organizations. The Montoneros' current headquarters is located in Havana.

Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias (FAR) (Revolutionary Armed Forces): A smaller pro-Cuban organization founded in 1967. Since 1971 it has attempted to unite Argentina's insurgent movements into a common front.

Chile

Insurgent activity has long been present in Chile. Following the 1973 military coup, all leftist parties were outlawed and their leaders arrested, killed, or exiled. Underground activity continued through the 1970s and 1980s but at a much lower level of intensity, certainly insufficient to threaten the Pinochet government. More recently, however, insurgent activity has increased considerably. Constitutionally, the Chilean president is empowered to exile persons propagating revolutionary doctrines or even reputed to be doing so. The press is censored, public meetings are prohibited, and detentions for up to fifteen days without formal charges are permitted.

Chile's major guerrilla movements:

Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionario (MIR) (Movement of the Revolutionary Left): A pro-Cuban party first established in 1965. Throughout the 1970s the MIR suffered from governmental counterterrorist campaigns. But by 1980 at least 100 of its members had been trained in Cuba and were reported to have reentered Chile.

Milicia Popular de Resistencia (MPR) (Popular Militia of Resistance): An urban-based group claiming responsibility for many terrorist attacks, the most celebrated of which was the 1983 assassination of Santiago's governor. This pro-Cuban party is known to have links with the Bolivian ELN, the Argentine ERP, Uruguay's Tupamaros, and the Italian Red Brigades.

Brazil

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Brazil was plagued by several small foco groups that were mainly active in the Amazon Basin region. Also in the early 1970s, Carlos Marighela, famed urban guerrilla strategist, led an ill-fated urban assault that paralleled the overall trend away from rural activity. Since 1973, when the military deployed 10,000 troops in the Amazon region, guerrilla activity has subsided considerably. There have been scattered urban incidents, but in no way do militant leftist groups pose a serious security threat.

Brazil's major guerrilla movements:

Popular Revolutionary Vanguard: Most active in the 1960s, focusing its attacks primarily on US citizens. Since then they have retained a pro-Cuban stance but are now much less visible.

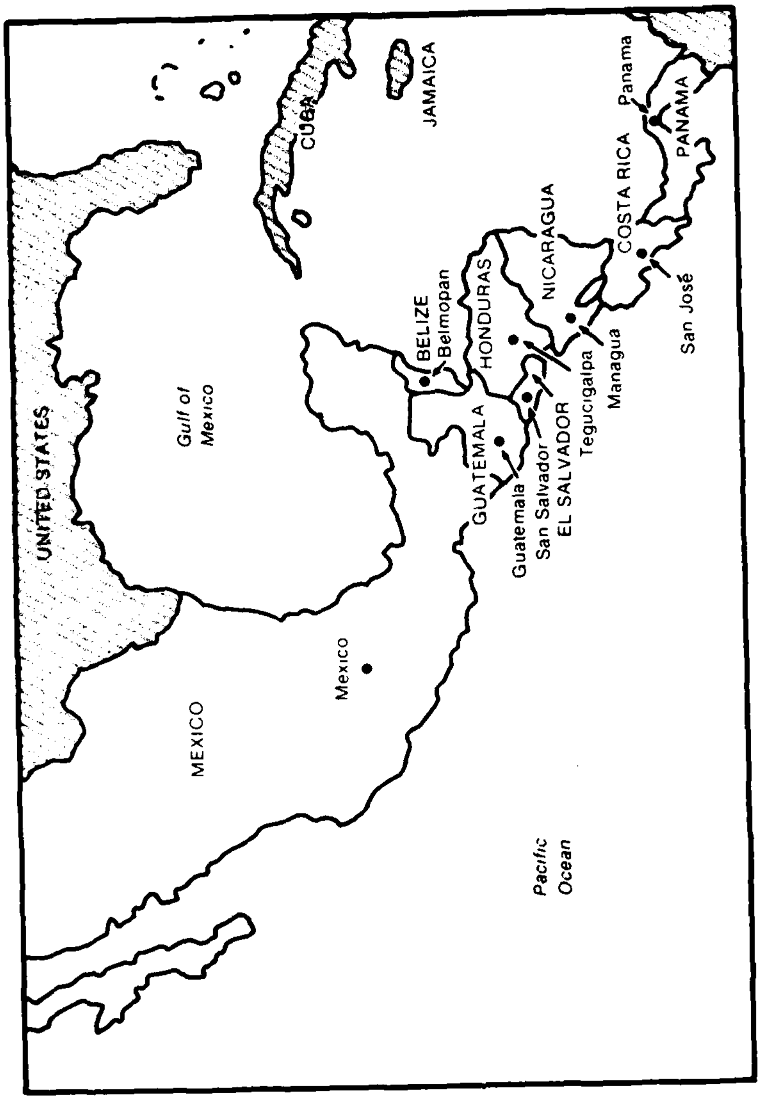
Action for National Liberation: Has focused mainly on kidnappings and other urban terrorist acts. It is primarily known for its abduction of the US Ambassador to Brazil. The group was founded and led by Carlos Marighella.

Uruguay

Uruguay's military has been in power since 1973, following five years of urban-based terrorism led by the leftist Tupamaros. Because of the Tupamaros' resistance to political organization and to working with or establishing political parties, a counterinsurgency campaign that ended their armed activity also marked the disappearance of their direct influence in Uruguay. More than ten years of military control has all but eliminated insurgency activities from the Uruguayan scene.

Central America

Of all Latin America, Central America is most heavily plagued and thoroughly scarred by insurgent activity. Since the


UNITED STATES
MEXICO
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Gulf of Mexico
CUBA
JAMAICA
BELIZE
Belmopan
HONDURAS
GUATEMALA
Guatemala
San Salvador
EL SALVADOR
Tegucigalpa
NICARAGUA
Managua
COSTA RICA
San José
PANAMA
Panama
Pacific Ocean

Central America

mid 1970s guerrilla warfare has constantly been directed toward at least one, if not several, Central American governments. Following the Sandinista victory in 1979, Nicaragua has become the mentor and often the provider for local leftist revolutionary movements. At present both El Salvador and Guatemala are in the midst of bitter struggles with insurgent groups. Even Costa Rica, long heralded as the bastion of democracy and development in the region, is facing serious upheaval. The potential for overall instability remains high and will continue well into the future.

El Salvador

El Salvador has suffered from insurgent struggles dating back to the early 1930s and has been in the midst of civil war since 1980. The combatants comprise government forces backed by the United States and leftist guerrillas guided by several radical parties under varying degrees of Nicaraguan, Cuban, and Soviet influence. Following the 1980 unification of major guerrilla groups under the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (Frente Farabundo Martí de Liberación Nacional—FMLN) banner, large-scale support, including military training and supplies, arrived from Cuba and Nicaragua. Since then the FMLN has united with the political Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR). Despite outward signs of strength, there is ample evidence of deep divisions within the FMLN-FDR over objectives, strategy, and tactics, including the extent to which international support should be accepted. During five years of armed conflict, neither the guerrillas nor the government has been able to demonstrate overwhelming strength. However, the May 1984 election of José Napoleón Duarte may well have marked a new era of support for the government's pacification efforts.

El Salvador's major guerrilla movements:

Frente Farabundo Martí de Liberación Nacional (FMLN) (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front): Created as a guerrilla umbrella organization in 1980 and has orchestrated and directed the insurgent campaign since that time.

Partido Comunista de El Salvador (PCES) (Communist Party of El Salvador): Founded in 1925 and currently under the leadership of Shafik Jorge Handal, who also holds a high-ranking leadership position in the FMLN.

Fuerzas Populares de Liberación (FPL) (Popular Force of Liberation): The largest of El Salvador's guerrilla organizations. It is currently engaged in bitter disputes over both strategy and tactics.

Ejército Revolucionario Popular (ERP) (People's Revolutionary Army): The second-largest guerrilla organization in El Salvador and the most violently oriented of all the insurgent movements. The ERP has recorded links with Nicaragua's FSLN and Guatemala's Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP).

Fuerza Armada de Resistencia Nacional (FARN) (Armed Forces for National Resistance): Organized by dissident ERP members. The FARN is the most visible Salvadoran terrorist group.

Partido Revolucionaria de Trabajadores Centroamericanos (PRTC) (Central American Revolutionary Workers' Party): First organized in 1979. It has been linked to operations in Honduras and Guatemala as well as El Salvador.

Guatemala

During the past few years insurgent and counterinsurgent activity has dominated the Guatemalan political scene. In July 1982 President Ríos Montt announced a general offensive against guerrillas in the Quiché region, the beginning of a "rifles and beans" campaign intended to defeat the insurgents in their areas of greatest strength before expanding the campaign countrywide. Largely effective, the counterinsurgency operation led to a propaganda war concerning responsibility for the deaths of many Indian peasants.

Recent counterinsurgency programs are much more systematic in their use of intelligence, allowing for more effective troop responses. In addition, the military has established civil action programs and organized civilian self-defense units for the purpose of gaining greater Indian support. Although the government has succeeded in eliminating large-scale guerrilla activity in many rural areas, the guerrillas have by no means been eradicated.

In 1982 Guatemala's four major guerrilla organizations united under the general command of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Front.

Guatemala's major guerrilla movements:

Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes (Rebel Armed Forces): Traditionally active in Guatemala City but has also expanded its operations into rural areas. Much of the organization was destroyed by government forces in the 1970s, though recently it has exhibited new-found strength.

Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias (FAR) (Revolutionary Armed Forces): The armed branch of the Guatemalan Communist Party.

Organización del Pueblo en Armas (ORPA) (Armed People's Organization): Began its activities in 1979, primarily focusing on military action without distinct political organization. It is identified with Indian affairs and is seen as distinctly non-Marxist. Over the past five years it has been involved in hundreds of military initiatives, including ambushes inflicting nearly 2,000 army casualties.

Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres (EGP) (Guerrilla Army of the Poor): Guatemala's largest and most active insurgent group. By 1980 it had developed an extensive national organization with approximately 1,500 active members.

Honduras

Ongoing regional and domestic tensions have led to an increase in guerrilla activity in Honduras since 1981. Nevertheless, the scope of activities and size of guerrilla groups remains small, albeit with a large foreign component, particularly from Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Cuba. Efforts to unite Honduras' guerrilla movements into a unified front have had limited success.

Honduras' major guerrilla movements:

Unión Revolucionaria del Pueblo (URP) (Revolutionary Union of the People): Formed in 1978 and has since established extensive links to Nicaragua, Cuba, and Libya.

Movimiento de Liberación Popular ("Chinchoneros") (Movement of Popular Liberation): First gained international attention in 1981 with the hijacking of a Honduran airliner. This was followed by the 1982 takeover of the Honduran Chamber of Commerce. Later the group took eighty Honduran businessmen and several government officials hostage before fleeing to Cuba.

Lorenzo Zelaya Revolutionary Command: An obscure group, it has been particularly active against exiled Nicaraguans in Honduras. Consequently, it has been cited as an arm of the Sandinista government.

Costa Rica

Costa Rica has recently been subjected to both growing internal political violence and tensions with its Central American neighbors. Beginning in 1980 the number of terrorist acts within Costa Rica increased, ranging from the bombing of a US embassy vehicle to attacks on the Honduran embassy. Costa Rica has also charged Nicaragua, Cuba, Libya, and the PLO with providing arms, aid, and training for Costa Rican leftist parties. Moreover, Nicaragua and Costa Rica are involved in border difficulties, Nicaragua accusing Costa Rica of supporting anti-Sandinista rebels and Costa Rica charging Nicaragua with supporting terrorist activities within the Costa Rican borders. Though it has no standing army, Costa Rica has recently taken measures to strengthen its security forces.

Costa Rica's major guerrilla movements:

Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo (MRP) (Revolutionary Movement of the People): A pro-Cuban organization suspected of many terrorist attacks. Though relatively small in numbers (approximately 75-100 men), its impact has been felt nationwide.

Carlos Agüero Echeverría Comando: Named in memory of a Costa Rican who died fighting with the FSLN in Nicaragua. The group is currently headquartered in Nicaragua and has been linked to numerous bombings in San José.

Partido Socialista Costarricense (PSC) (Costa Rican Socialist Party): Known to have strong Cuban links.

Frente Popular Costarricense (FPC) (Costa Rican Popular Front): A small anti-Soviet democratic party of the extreme left.

Partido Obrero (PO) (Workers' Party): Known to have strong Nicaraguan links.

Mexico

Low-level guerrilla activity has afflicted Mexico during most of the past twenty years. Yet at no time has guerrilla activity risen to levels approximating those in other Latin American countries. Rural groups have operated sporadically, mainly in the south, particularly in Guerrero. Urban activity of various descriptions still occurs in Mexico City and Monterrey. Its primary targets are Mexican officials, foreign diplomats, and occasionally American businessmen. Most of the activities involve kidnappings, bank robberies, and bombings. Neither rural nor urban groups have been effective with political organization; hence, there is nothing resembling an umbrella organization.

Except for a brief period in the late 1960s, the Mexican government's response to insurgent activity has been neither dramatic nor severe, but rather it has involved consistent and systematic pressure. In southern Mexico the government has combined conventional counterinsurgency operations with civil and economic development programs.

The "special" relationship between Mexican governments and the Latin American left, particularly Cuba, along with the practice of co-opting the opposition's leadership, has contributed to the low level of guerrilla activity in Mexico. In return for Mexico's support there is little agitation by Latin American leftists. Mexican guerrillas have seldom received support from the

Latin American left, though they have had known links to the Soviet Union, North Korea, and the People's Republic of China.

Mexico's major guerrilla movements:

Acción Cívica Nacional Revolucionaria (ACNR) (National Revolutionary Civic Action): A pro-Chinese movement with relatively vague ideological objectives. It has confined its activities to the rural state of Guerrero and has engaged primarily in ambushes on military and police patrols.

23 of September League: An obscure urban group know primarily for a series of political kidnappings.

Fuerzas Revolucionarias Armadas del Pueblo (FRAP) (Revolutionary Armed Forces of the People): A Trotskyist guerrilla organization that gained notoriety for its 1974 kidnapping of the American Consul in Guadalajara.

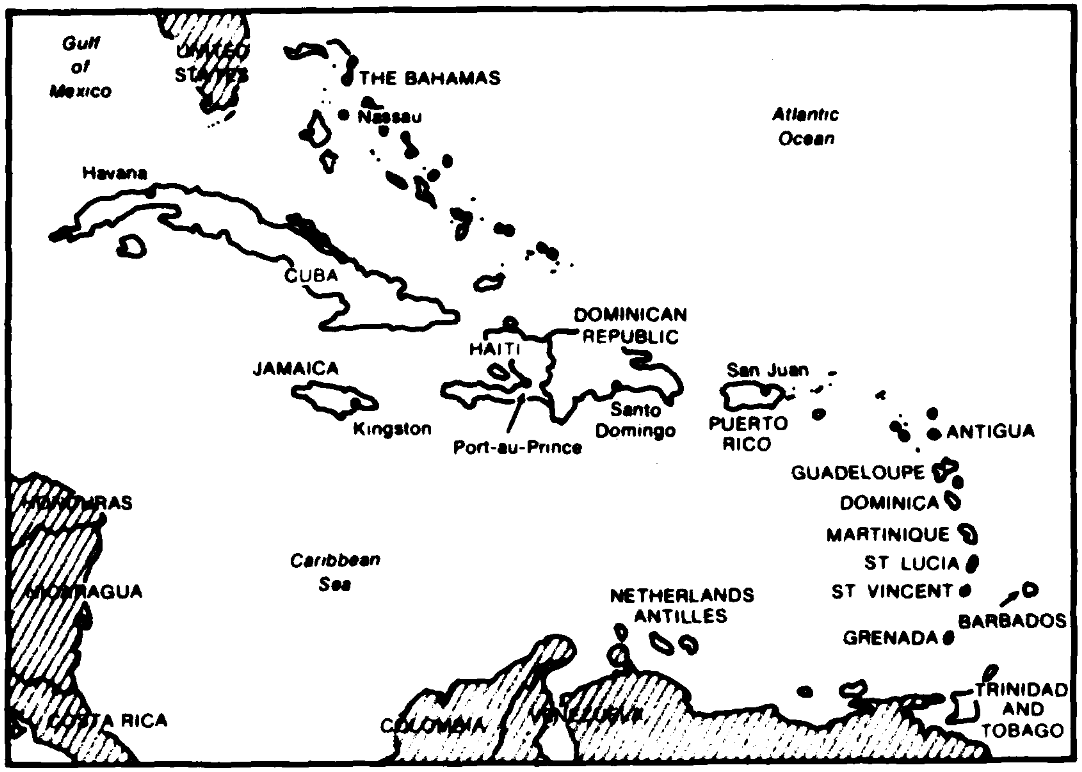
Frente Urbano Zapatista (FUZ) (Zapatista Urban Front): Mainly active in Pueblo and Monterrey, with bank robberies and kidnappings as the focus of its activity.

The Caribbean

By and large the Caribbean region has not been subjected to the same insurgent pressures as have the nations of Central and South America. Insurgent activity in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Grenada stand out as the most extreme cases in what has otherwise been a relatively tranquil environment. Nonetheless, the likelihood of future guerrilla and terrorist activity remains: recent food riots in the Dominican Republic attest to the potential for instability, which could easily be fomented by readily available external support.

Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico presents an interesting case for insurgent activity because of its relationship with the United States. Subversive forces have used and will continue to use "cries for independence" as a rallying call for revolutionary activity. Moreover,


Gulf of Mexico
UNITED STATES
THE BAHAMAS
Nassau
Atlantic Ocean
Havana
CUBA
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
HAITI
JAMAICA
Kingston
Port-au-Prince
Santo Domingo
San Juan
PUERTO RICO
ANTIGUA
GUADELOUPE
DOMINICA
MARTINIQUE
ST LUCIA
ST VINCENT
BARBADOS
GRENADA
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
HONDURAS
NICARAGUA
COSTA RICA
Caribbean Sea
NETHERLANDS ANTILLES
COLOMBIA
VENEZUELA

The Caribbean

Puerto Rico presents an inviting target to those seeking direct attacks against a US territory. However, large-scale insurgent activity would automatically invite US military intervention.

Puerto Rico's major guerrilla movements:

Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional (FALN) (Armed Forces of National Liberation): An extreme leftist terrorist group associated with over 100 bombings since 1974. It has been closely linked to the Cuban-backed Puerto Rican Socialist Party and an above-ground front organization, the Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee.

Partido Socialista Puertorriqueno (PSP) (Puerto Rican Socialist Party): An extreme leftist guerrilla organization known to have strong links to and receive material support from Cuba.

THE PAST AS PROLOGUE

Over the past three decades, the character of Latin American insurgent activity has changed considerably. In the wake of the Cuban revolution, insurgent activists focused their energies on rural areas, maintaining that the future fire of revolution could be started with only a spark. When this strategy proved fatal, revisions were developed, including a tactical shift toward urban centers. What neither wave of insurgents considered was that Latin America, at least Latin American governments, did not desire revolution as much as the activists did.

Following a long period of introspection, guerrilla strategists concluded that revolution not only must be incited, but also must be maintained; it is not simply a fire waiting to be ignited. Acting upon this realization, sophisticated political-military organizations were developed—consider, for example, the FSLN in Nicaragua—and external support was sought. Contemporary insurgents are now prepared for prolonged conflicts and have found willing supporters in Cuba and the Soviet Union. In sum, three decades of recent experience have yielded a climate of insurgent activity that presents a formidable challenge to established governmental authorities and their respective military forces.

The potential for insurgent activity in Latin America is great and will remain so far into the future. Latin America is a developing region; with development comes change, and change often is accompanied by instability. As the states of Latin America continue their development, established guerrilla movements and new organizations will persist in challenging the states' governing power base. In such a setting, struggles for the "hearts and minds" of the Latin American people are all but inevitable.

THE INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST NETWORK

Yonah Alexander
and
Richard Kucinski

Unlike their historical counterparts, present-day terrorists have introduced into contemporary life a new breed of violence in terms of technology, victimization, threat, and response. The globalization and brutalization of modern violence makes it abundantly clear that we have entered a new "Age of Terrorism," with all its frightening ramifications.

Tragically, the failure of the international community to fully recognize terrorism as criminal behavior has encouraged the growth of terrorist activity in the last two decades. Indeed, the statistics are staggering. The number of terrorist incidents involving fatalities has been increasing by about 20 percent a year since the early 1970s. In 1983—the bloodiest year yet—the number of casualties rose to more than 2,000.

Clearly, Latin America leads all other regions by a substantial margin. Although the high-intensity areas are El Salvador, Colombia, Guatemala, and Peru, there are now signs of future terrorist activity in Costa Rica, Mexico, and Venezuela, to name a few potential danger zones.

But despite national and international efforts to control these dangers, the level of non-state violence remains high. The reasons for these conditions are diverse, but include at least ten factors:

1. Disagreement about who is a terrorist.

2. Lack of understanding as to the causes of terrorism.
3. The role of the media.
4. The politicization of religion.
5. Double standards of morality.
6. Loss of resolve by governments to take appropriate action.
7. Weak punishment of terrorists.
8. Flouting of world law.
9. The support of terrorism by some states.
10. The existence of an international network of terrorism.

Clearly, the Soviet Union, Cuba, Nicaragua, Libya, and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) stand at the center of a web of Latin American terrorist and guerrilla organizations. Although the importance of this external support for the survival of these groups cannot be determined precisely, the existence of an international network not only facilitates terrorist and insurgent operations but also makes combating them more difficult.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the nature of the Latin American cross-fertilization between the Soviet Union, its proxies, and various leftist movements.

A DEFINITIONAL FOCUS

The disagreement concerning the definition of terrorism is a major impediment to the control and containment of this problem. Although some experts compare terrorism to pornography or romantic love—"It's hard to describe, but you know it when you see it."—a more precise definition is required. Interchangeable use of words like *terrorists*, *freedom fighters*, and *guerrillas* complicates the identification of and the battle against one of the greatest dangers of our age.

More specifically, *terrorism*, a form of low-intensity conflict, is defined by the US Department of State as "the threat or use of violence for political purposes by individuals or groups, whether acting for, or in opposition to established governmental authority when such actions are intended to shock, stun, or intimidate a target group wider than the immediate victims." [1]

Clearly, recent manifestations of the terrorist phenomenon suggest that it has become a vital part of the national policies of certain states. Thus, considerable attention has focused on the specific case of international terrorism. Transnational in nature, as the name implies, this mode of irregular warfare is "conducted with the support of a foreign government or organization and/or directed against foreign nationals, institutions, or governments. Indeed, terrorism has involved groups seeking to overthrow specific regimes to rectify national or group grievances or to undermine international order as an end in itself." [2]

The term *freedom fighters* refers to those who are engaged in selective forms of violence directed against colonial or dictatorial regimes when all political and legal steps, on both the domestic and international levels, have been exhausted. Such selective violence is directed against administrative and military targets and agents of the power being fought. This violence never includes civilians as targets and is used to the minimum extent possible, thus distinguishing the methods used by freedom fighters from the indiscriminate violence used by terrorists.[3]

Two other terms should be mentioned in this connection: *guerrilla warfare* and *insurgency*. Since a *guerrilla* is one who engages in irregular warfare, usually as a member of an independent unit carrying out acts of harassment and sabotage, *guerrilla warfare* refers to the "special kind of military activity in which hit and disappear tactics to disperse the enemy's military forces are employed to wear down and gradually defeat the enemy." [4] *Insurgency* is defined as

> a state of revolt against an established government. An insurgent group has a defined organization, leadership and location. Its objectives are acquisition of political power, achievement of participation in economic or political opportunity and national leadership or, ultimately, taking power from existing leadership. Its primary interests relate to one country. Its methods are military and paramilitary. Its targets are military, both tactical and strategic, and its legitimate operations are governed by the international rules of armed conflict. It operates in the open, and it actively seeks a basis of popular support.[5]

Clearly, these two terms are relevant in discussing low-level warfare in the context of Latin America because of the utilization of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist-Castroist-Guevara models by various revolutionary movements in this region.

THE SOVIET-LATIN AMERICAN CONNECTION

Soviet involvement in terrorism in Latin America is dictated by ideological and practical considerations. It follows the Marxist-Leninist teaching, which justifies the use of political violence when deemed expedient. Additionally, the strategic thinking of the Soviet Union calls for the manipulation of terrorism as a suitable substitute for traditional warfare when that warfare becomes too expensive and too risky.

The Kremlin's infrastructure of terror includes propaganda and political support, intelligence, funding, training, and supply of weapons. Its propaganda campaign gives a stamp of approval to various Latin American "national liberation movements" and deliberately spreads disinformation about the United States and the West.

Seeking to camouflage its direct support of international terrorism, Moscow operates on two levels: first, it denies any connection with ideological violence and denounces specific acts of terrorism when politically expedient; and second, it channels support to terrorists in Latin America through the transmission belt of Eastern Europe, Cuba, Nicaragua, Libya, and the PLO.

One of the broad goals the Soviet Union hopes to achieve from regional low-level conflict is to create trouble for the United States, particularly in situations where such activity entails no serious financial burden and little political risk. The current campaign of terrorism and guerrilla insurgency in El Salvador—supported by Soviet surrogates—is a potential threat to the whole Caribbean, Mexico, and Venezuela.

More specifically, experience has shown that the Kremlin desires to exploit regional conflicts, utilizing various forms of low-intensity conflict, to serve its own interests. Soviet support for "wars of national liberation," especially since the 1960s, illustrates Moscow's policy to secure its strategic interests in the Third

World. For example, on 21 December 1982 Yuri Andropov vowed Moscow's support "for worldwide liberation, the equality of nations [and] to facilitate their advance towards freedom and progress. [He concluded] this is well known to the peoples of Asia and Africa, the Arab East and Latin America."[6]

And yet, when charged with promoting terrorism and guerrilla insurgency, Moscow is quick to retaliate with a verbal counterattack. Typically, Kremlin officials argue that the charges against Moscow are intended to cover up Western subversion throughout the world. For example, Aleksandr Sukharev, First Deputy Minister of Justice of the Soviet Union, accused the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of direct or indirect involvement in the murders of Salvador Allende, president of the Republic of Chile, in 1973 and of Brigadier General Omar Torrijos, former president of the Republic of Panama, in 1981.[7]

Supplementing similar statements by the Kremlin's leadership, the Soviet media have conducted an intensive propaganda campaign aimed at audiences at home and abroad. The following examples illustrate how Moscow has described US "terrorist" efforts in Latin America:

- "Special attachment to dictatorial anti-popular regimes" in Chile and Paraguay.[8]
- Military assistance to the government of El Salvador.[9]
- A "CIA conspiracy against the Sandinistas."[10]
- Creation in the United States of several military camps where a foreign legion of emigrants, intended for "struggle against the Reds," is being trained and organized, whose purpose is to infiltrate Cuba and Nicaragua.[11]
- Kidnapping of leaders of Paraguay's Communist Party by US agents.[12]
- Plotting to assassinate Cuba's Fidel Castro and Grenada's leader, Maurice Bishop.[13]
- CIA kidnapping of children of Salvadoran refugees in Honduras. The poor peasants, the report went on to say, could only acquiesce since their children were threatened with death by starvation.[14]

- The CIA in Honduras, working with the Pentagon, "trying to use counterrevolutionary rabble and mercenaries to stifle revolution." [15]
- "The Honduran army is to be the U.S. 'main gendarme in Central America'," and "Somozaist gangs," trained and armed by the CIA, are mounting operations against Nicaragua.[16]

Soviet writers typically conclude that the United States uses terrorism to suppress popular struggles for liberation and social progress. For example, in outlining the contents of two books, *Pravda* notes further accusations against the United States. The most blatant, in *Secret War Against Cuba*, states that Washington has a "pathological hatred of the freedom island" and that it has waged "a secret war at the will and under the guidance of all American administrations—Kennedy to Reagan." In yet another publication, *Who Organizes and Directs International Terrorism?* the United States is named as the culprit "which turned terrorism into a tool of its policy from the beginning of the century." [17]

To be sure, Moscow's commitment to acts of political violence—specifically, support for the promotion of low-intensity conflict in the Third World—is inherent in Soviet politico-military strategy. Violence is justified in Marxist-Leninist ideology to promote the "inevitable" proletarian victory. Thus, in the 1930s the Kremlin undertook several subversive activities in Latin America, aimed at advancing the causes of the Communist International. Communist agents were linked to bandits attacking business targets in Nicaragua; later it was found that Argentine and Brazilian insurgents were financed and trained by the Soviet Union.[18] At that time, Moscow's Latin American involvement resulted in a diplomatic setback. Convinced that the Soviets had established Montevideo as the center for their subversive operations in the region, Uruguay severed its relations with the Kremlin on 27 December 1935.

It is evident that in subsequent years Moscow has continued its behavioral pattern of supporting low-level conflict in Latin America. Recently, the US Department of State issued a White Paper citing definitive evidence of support given to the Salvadoran rebels by the Soviet Union, East Germany, Cuba, and their allies in late 1979 and early 1980, immediately after the communist takeover of Nicaragua. "In short, over the past year," this document revealed, "the insurgency in El Salvador has been progressively transformed into a textbook case of indirect armed aggression by Communist powers through Cuba." [19] The evidence, drawn from captured guerrilla documents and war material and corroborated by intelligence reports, clearly indicates that the communist role was "to provide direct and decisive support to Marxist factions in their effort to install a Communist regime against the will of the Salvadoran people." [20]

The paper also describes the Soviet and Cuban pursuit of a long-term, coordinated campaign to establish sympathetic Latin American regimes. And this campaign involves nurturing organizations and groups that use terrorism in their efforts to undermine existing regimes. States such as Bulgaria and other Eastern European countries are said to "sell large amounts of military equipment to Third World governments—some of which support international terrorism—and to private arms brokers." [21] Surely, some of this material is eventually acquired by terrorist groups.

As the evidence suggests, the Soviet role in Nicaragua has been mainly to supply equipment while Cuba has provided military advice and training for personnel. For example, in March 1980 Sandinista Defense Minister Humberto Ortega made the first of several trips to the Soviet Union to seek military assistance. The Soviets have since provided over $125 million in military equipment for the Sandinistas; this includes between 45 and 50 T-54/55 tanks, missiles, transport aircraft, and anti-aircraft guns. Additionally, at least 250 Soviet personnel are now in Nicaragua.[22]

There has been growing concern over evidence that many of these arms shipments have been made through third countries. For example, well before the events which led to the United States' collective action in Grenada, it was feared that the island could be used as a staging area for subversion in nearby countries, interdiction of shipping lanes, and transit of troops and supplies from Cuba to Africa and from Eastern Europe and Libya to Central America.[23]

Secret documents captured during Operation Urgent Fury (on Grenada) testified to the fact that the island was being converted into a Soviet-Cuban base, endangering the stability of the region. A State Department report published immediately after the military operation described the findings:

> We found five secret treaties—three with the Soviet Union, one with North Korea, and one with Cuba—under which these communist countries were to donate military equipment in amounts without precedent for a population of 110,000. We found artillery, anti-aircraft weapons, armored personnel carriers, and rocket launchers. We found thousands of rifles, thousands of fuses, tons of TNT, and millions of rounds of ammunition. We found communications gear and cryptographic devices. We found agreements authorizing the secret presence of Cuban military advisers, some of them on a "permanent" basis.
>
> All of the agreements stipulated that arms would be delivered to Grenada only by Cuban ships through Cuban ports. And although the Soviet Union was providing the arms and training free of charge, it required the Grenadians to keep all military arrangements secret and delayed the opening of a Soviet Embassy in Grenada until 18 months after entering into such arrangements.[24]

CUBAN-LATIN AMERICAN LINKAGES

Cuba has been consistently active in its attempt to foment revolution in Latin America. Though it has not always been at the receiving end of Soviet support, Cuba has enjoyed sufficient Soviet backing to develop a considerable capability to project its military power in the region. Indeed, Soviet logistic and financial support to the island have created in Havana a regional headquarters for transnational Marxist terrorism. Thus, Moscow can boast a strategic asset in the Western Hemisphere. The Cuban strategic objectives in Latin America are controlling the Nicaraguan revolution, inducing the overthrow of governments in El Salvador and Guatemala, and destabilizing other governments in the region.

In its promotion of armed revolution by leftist forces in Latin America, Cuba supports groups that use terrorism to undermine existing regimes. In cooperation with the Soviets, the Cubans have facilitated the movement of people and arms into the region and have directly provided funding, training, arms, safe haven, and advice to a large number of guerrilla groups and individual terrorists.

At the 1982 International Theoretical Conference, Manuel Pineiro Losada, head of the American Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, reaffirmed Cuba's commitment to the revolutionary process, including support for groups that use terrorism. Pineiro stressed the fundamental Marxist-Leninist principle of the need to "destroy the repressive machinery of the state in order to achieve complete control and replace it with a new state." To this end, he identified the timely use of arms as indispensable for the triumph of any liberating revolution. The conflict in El Salvador is an example of a creative revolutionary formula incorporating the use of arms.[25]

Following the Tricontinental Conference in Havana in 1966, Colonel Wadim Kotscherigine of the KGB built a number of training camps for freedom fighters in Cuba's mountains. The Revolutionary Coordinating Junta has worked closely with Cuba, which has provided facilities for military training as well as funds. The Junta is a significant link because it is composed of Argentina's People's Revolutionary Army, Bolivia's National Liberation Army, Chile's Movement of the Revolutionary Left (Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionario—MIR), Paraguay's National Liberation Front (Frepalina), and remnants of Uruguay's National Liberation Movement (Tupamaros).

Clearly, Cuba has provided much more than training facilities for urban terrorists and guerrillas in Latin America. Other forms of Cuban involvement include—

- The M-19, a group closely allied with the Revolutionary Coordinating Junta and composed of Colombians who promote themselves as champions of the working classes. The M-19 took over the US embassy in Colombia on 14 April 1980. Interestingly, the Soviet Ambassador to Colombia and envoys from other Communist Bloc nations had arrived early and excused themselves only minutes before the M-19 forces appeared on the scene. "They certainly gave the impression that they knew something that the rest of us didn't know," one diplomat mused.[26]

- Providing safe haven and support to Nicaraguan leftists for almost twenty years.[27]
- The Cuban presence in Nicaragua, now about 6,000 civilians and between 1,500 and 2,000 military and security personnel. In addition, Cubans are providing military and other training to Nicaraguans in Cuba. Cuban advisers are present with every Nicaraguan military unit. At Salvadoran guerrilla headquarters near Managua, Cuban officers join Sandinista commanders and the Salvadoran guerrilla leaders in providing advice to the guerrillas in the field on tactics, targets, and communications.[28]
- Castro's appointment of Julio Diaz, a Cuban intelligence operative and adviser to the Sandinistas during the 1979 war, as Ambassador to Nicaragua.[29]
- Reorganization of the Sandinista military forces along Cuban lines, with thirty-six new installations under construction since 1979.[30]

In summarizing the Cuban link with the Soviet Union, Senator Jeremiah Denton, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, stated on 30 April 1983,

> The Soviets seem to direct certain Cuban activities and have assigned the United States as their ultimate number one target. Cuban operations include participating in the support of low intensity warfare and terrorist activity which is designed to destabilize and extend Soviet Cuban influence in the region by destroying existing governments and replacing them with Soviet puppets . . . . Some of this activity may not be definitely directed by the Soviet Union, but it is certainly supported by them.[31]

NICARAGUA'S ROLE

Cuba's major role in promoting transnational Marxist terrorism in Latin America is expanding. Many of the important functions of Havana, the regional headquarters, now are being transferred to Nicaragua. From there, an expansion is being consolidated into El Salvador and other neighboring countries with a view toward eventually covering all of Latin America.[32]

The Cuban-trained leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional—FSLN), which currently dominates Nicaragua, provides an example; clearly, this is the first triumph of the generation of Latin American guerrilla fighters trained and unified by communist Cuba. Linkages facilitated by Cuba between groups throughout Latin America, as well as in the Middle East, Africa, and Europe, have attracted representatives of international terrorist organizations from all over the world to Managua. Indeed, Nicaragua is a new center for the reorganization of insurgency and terrorism.[33]

In preparation for the first FSLN offensive in the fall of 1978, arms were flown from Cuba to Panama, then shipped to Costa Rica and supplied to Nicaraguan guerrillas based in northern Costa Rica. Within months of the installation of the new regime in Managua, up to 2,000 Cuban military advisers were sent to Nicaragua over the protests of many non-Marxist leaders who had sided with the Sandinistas against Somoza. One of Castro's chief counterinsurgency specialists, General Arnaldo Ochoa, made an inspection visit to Nicaragua in June 1983. He previously supervised Cuban military build-ups in Angola and Ethiopia. In Nicaragua he was responsible for assisting the Sandinistas in building a state apparatus with all political control in the hands of the FSLN and expanding Nicaragua's military and security forces to unprecedented levels. As a result, Cuban personnel have assumed key positions within the Sandinista government to direct subversive guerrilla activities in neighboring countries.[34]

Once Cuba had established its presence in Nicaragua, it then sent an "International Brigade" of terrorists to the country to fight with the FSLN. Drawn from such groups as the PLO, Argentina's Montoneros, Chile's Movement of the Revolutionary Left, Spain's separatist Basque Homeland and Liberty (ETA), and Uruguay's Tupamaros, this brigade runs training camps and provides a variety of technical services for the Nicaraguan military.[35] Clearly, the bases in Nicaragua form the backbone of insurgent and terrorist operations underway in the bordering countries of Central America, namely El Salvador, Honduras, and Costa Rica. For example, between October 1980 and February 1981 Nicaragua was the staging site for a massive Cuban-directed flow of arms to Salvadoran and Guatemalan guerrillas.

CUBAN AND NICARAGUAN OPERATIONS

To be sure, Cuban and Nicaraguan involvement with the main components and leadership cadres of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (Frente Farabundo Martí de Liberación Nacional—FMLN) in El Salvador predates the FSLN victory in Nicaragua. By July 1979, the date of the overthrow of Somoza, Cuba had trained an estimated 200 armed terrorist cadres of the Popular Liberation Forces to commence guerrilla operations in El Salvador.[36] Five months later, in December 1979, Cuba sponsored a meeting in Havana that resulted in a mutual unity agreement among the Armed Forces of National Resistance and the Communist Party of El Salvador. In May 1980 the Popular Revolutionary Army was admitted through Cuban mediation. Formation of a common front was furthered in June 1980 when the main guerrilla groups of El Salvador merged into the United Revolutionary Directorate. Cuban military specialists helped the Directorate develop its initial war plans.[37]

Other examples of Cuban-Nicaraguan support to Salvadoran insurgents include—

- Nicaragua's first major injection of arms into the FMLN (in El Salvador), undertaken almost simultaneously with the formation of the United Revolutionary Directorate in June 1980. M-16 rifles, ammunition, and other weapons from stocks of Somoza's National Guard that had fallen into the hands of the Sandinistas started to be transferred to the Salvadoran guerrillas. Cuba and other Soviet Bloc countries, in turn, agreed to replace the arms for the Sandinistas. Moscow reportedly promised the Sandinistas two AK-47s for every rifle they gave the FMLN.[38]
- The establishment of an extensive arms supply network between Nicaragua and El Salvador, using territory in Honduras. Honduran authorities have intercepted shipments on the Nicaraguan land route to El Salvador on several occasions. For example, in January 1981 a truck from Nicaragua passing through Honduras on its way to El Salvador was found to be carrying 100 M-16 rifles and several thousand rounds of ammunition, including rockets and mortar shells. This coincided with FMLN preparations

for a "final" offensive against the government of El Salvador.[39]

- The 1980 visit of an FMLN delegation to Havana, Moscow, Hanoi, East Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Ethiopia for the purpose of securing arms transfers from the Soviet Bloc to Nicaragua for use in El Salvador. In total, some 800 tons of military armament was committed to the FMLN by the Soviet Bloc in 1980 alone.[40]
- Cuban training of small numbers of Salvadoran guerrillas in Cuba, as well as the presence of Cuban advisers at Salvadoran guerrilla headquarters near Managua. There, Cuban officers join Sandinista commanders and Salvadoran guerrilla leaders in providing advice to the guerrillas in the field on tactics, targets, and communications.[41]

In Guatemala, Cuba—with Nicaraguan help—orchestrated the uniting of the different rebel factions: the Guerrilla Army of the Poor, the Rebel Armed Forces, the Organization of People in Arms, and the dissident faction of the Guatemalan Communist Party. These groups met in Managua and formed the National Revolutionary Union in November 1980. Later they met with Castro to present him with the documents formalizing their unification. Over 2,000 Guatemalan guerrillas have been trained in Cuba; they were given M-16 rifles left behind by US forces in Vietnam. Finally, there has been collaboration between Guatemalan and Salvadoran guerrillas, as illustrated by the circulation of a joint bulletin by the four guerrilla groups of the National Revolutionary Union, announcing the intensification of their activities in support of the general offensive in El Salvador.[42]

Undoubtedly, Nicaragua's role as a staging base for insurgent movements in other countries encompasses extensive operations to destabilize Central America's two main democracies, Honduras and Costa Rica. The objective is to complement operations of the Salvadoran Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (the FMLN) and to lay the groundwork for toppling the governments of Honduras and Costa Rica once a guerrilla victory is gained in El Salvador.[43]

Limited terrorist operations have begun in Honduras and Costa Rica with the support of Nicaragua. In Honduras, Nicaraguan and Cuban support has been instrumental in the development of a unified guerrilla movement. In April 1983 three Honduran terrorist organizations merged into the National Unity Directorate of the Revolutionary Movement of Honduras. The Mora Zanistade Front of Honduran Liberation, the Chinchonero People's Liberation Movement, and the Central American Workers' Revolution Party issued a message of unity through broadcasting facilities located in Managua.[44] It was estimated at the time that at least 250 Hondurans had been recruited to go to Nicaragua for guerrilla training; some of them were also sent to Cuba.

Nicaragua, with Cuban consent, has continued to undertake terrorist operations in Costa Rica. The Sandinistas have dispatched teams of international terrorists to Costa Rica in their campaign to eliminate prominent opponents of their regime who continue to work there. Several bombings, kidnappings, and other attacks that have disturbed the country can be traced to Managua. Indeed, Nicaraguan terrorism is a major threat to Costa Rica.

The following examples illustrate the Cuban-Nicarguan plan to destabilize Costa Rica:

- In March 1981 an RPG rocket was fired against a US embassy van. Police captured the four Costa Rican terrorists, belonging to the Carlos Echeverria Command. It was revealed that these terrorists were trained alongside Salvadoran guerrillas in Cuba.
- In July 1981 Costa Rican authorities intercepted a six-member international terrorist team that had entered the country from Nicaragua, intending to seize the Guatemalan embassy. The team included two Nicaraguans affiliated with the Sandinista front, a Salvadoran, two Guatemalans, and a Mexican.
- Managua has consistently sought to eliminate exiled Nicaraguan opponents living in Costa Rica. On 26 June 1982 former Nicaraguan Minister of Health Rodrigo Cuadra, accompanied by another undercover agent of the Nicaraguan Directorate of State Security, Francisco Martinez, entered Costa Rica to meet with Eden Pastora and Alfonso

> Robelo, two Nicaraguan defectors and leaders of the Democratic Revolutionary Alliance. The two officials were pretending to be Nicaraguan government defectors seeking to join the Democratic Revolutionary Alliance and had arranged to speak with Robelo and Pastora in San José. Cuadra and Martinez were killed when the bomb they were carrying in an attaché case accidentally exploded before they could leave it with the other two men.[45]

Many of the kidnappings in Costa Rica have been linked to Salvadoran terrorist operatives working through the Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers—undoubtedly with Cuban-Nicaraguan support.

THE LIBYAN CONNECTION

Since the mid 1970s, support to terrorist groups—including political encouragement, funding, and supply of weapons—has been an important element of Libya's foreign policy under Muammar Qaddafi. Libya has been linked by overwhelming evidence to terrorist attacks and assassinations in Western Europe, the United States, Latin America, and the Middle East and is known to support terrorist groups and liberation movements worldwide. In March 1982 the United States imposed an embargo on Libyan oil imports and curbed high-technology exports to Libya, citing Qaddafi's influence over international terrorism.

Links with the Libyans have provided Sandinista and Salvadoran guerrillas with significant amounts of arms and training, and there have been numerous visits by Nicaraguan leaders to Libya. In May 1981 Qaddafi provided a $100 million six-month deposit to the Sandinistas, which has since been renewed.[46]

Qaddafi has concentrated his recent efforts on providing arms. Brazil's capture of four aircraft carrying Libyan arms to Nicaragua in April 1983 is only the latest of a series of Libyan shipments to the Sandinistas. The Brazilian press has reported that aircraft with spare parts, five tons of grenades, missiles, anti-aircraft guns, radar, ammunition, and other spare parts were in the shipment. Quite recently, Qaddafi again denounced the United States, calling it "the leader of international terrorism," and pledged to aid Nicaragua in its struggle with the United States by working to form a wide front with such anti-American countries as Iran, Afghanistan, and Cuba. Recent US government releases indicate that the Sandinistas have received four Italian-made support aircraft, believed to have come from Libya, as well as helicopters and approximately 20 Libyan pilots and mechanics.[47]

Libyan efforts also include the provision of military training for the Sandinistas and the Salvadoran guerrillas. For example, Salvadoran guerrilla leader Cayetano Carpio returned from Libya (where he had undergone intensive training) to attend the funeral of his second-in-command. Other Libyan efforts in the Eastern Caribbean included partially funding the Point Salines airstrip in Grenada, which the Marxist regime there was building with Cuban help, and establishing a "people's bureau" in the capital city of St. George's. Libya used the bureau as a center for distributing funds to leftist groups on other islands.[48]

THE PLO CONNECTION

The terrorist Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) constitutes another external force escalating its interference in Latin America. The PLO, primarily through Fatah and the Habash Front, has created operational ties with various Latin American underground groups. Its close working with Nicaragua's radical Sandinista regime and rebels in El Salvador and its active training of cadres of Latin American terrorists in Cuba and the Middle East clearly indicate the group's desire to exploit the problematic situation in Latin America.

PLO ties with terrorist and guerrilla groups in the region are ideological, based on the common principle of the struggle against imperialism, Zionism, and capitalism and a shared ideological commitment to world revolution. Its penetration into Latin America has been gradual. It was initiated in Cuba in 1966, at the first conference of the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America (OSPAAL). As a result of contacts established there, PLO-Cuban cooperation began on a limited and individual basis. For example, in 1968 Cuban intelligence and military personnel were sent to assist the PLO in

North Africa and Iraq. In 1969 PLO and Cuban officers were jointly trained in the Soviet Union. That June they were dispatched to Egypt to raid Israeli outposts in the Sinai Desert.[49]

At a meeting in Algeria in May 1972, Fidel Castro and several PLO leaders cemented their ties and began a program of joint PLO-Cuban training of Latin American guerrillas with specialized instruction in Lebanon, South Yemen, and Libya. Later that year Moscow solidified its commitment to support the PLO. In September 1972 the Soviets made their first direct arms shipment to the group—a number of SAM-7 anti-aircraft missiles.[50]

In the mid 1970s the PLO was committed to the destruction of Nicaragua's Somoza regime. As early as 1969, contacts were formed between the PLO and Nicaraguan rebels. At that time, Sandinista leaders Pedro Arvaez Palacios, Tomás Borge, and Eduardo Contreras were given PLO training in Lebanon; later, joint Cuban-PLO training of Sandinistas began in Lebanon, Algeria, and Libya. Borge was responsible for funneling Libyan money and PLO technical assistance into Nicaragua, as well as for the shipment of arms from North Korea and Vietnam to Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Honduras.[51]

After seizing power in July 1979, the Sandinistas signed a "government-to-government" agreement with the PLO, allowing it to open an "embassy" in Managua. To date, the PLO has continued to train Sandinistas as well as arrange for the provision of arms; it has loaned the Sandinista regime over $12 million.[52]

El Salvador is the immediate cynosure of PLO efforts. Since 1979, terrorist groups in El Salvador are known to have maintained intimate contact with the PLO. The following examples are indicative of the PLO-Salvadoran ties:

- In January 1980 a group from El Salvador was one of a number of terrorist delegations visiting Lebanon. They were briefed by local military commanders about the joint forces in southern Lebanon.[53]
- In May 1980 a delegation from the Revolutionary Coordination of the Masses conferred in Beirut with Arafat's deputies Abu Jihad and George Habash. Agreements were reached for training programs and arms purchases.[54]

- In July 1980 one of the leaders of the United Revolutionary Directorate (Shafik Handal) met with PLO representatives in Beirut. At the same time, Arafat met with United Revolutionary Directorate leaders in Managua to discuss further logistic and arms agreements.[55]
- In September 1980 a Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR) delegation led by Manuel Franco visited Lebanon to discuss joint political and military affairs.[56]
- In February 1981 one of the leaders of the FDR visited Lebanon to see Habash Front bases and met with commanders of Fatah, the Liberation Movement Department, and the Lebanese Communist Party.[57]

PLO support of the rebels also includes the provision of weapons and training in the techniques of terrorist warfare. In 1980 the Fatah transferred weapons—mostly light arms and mortars—to terrorist groups in El Salvador via Cuba. Additionally, that year the first group of Salvadoran trainees concluded an instructional course in terrorist warfare at a Fatah camp.[58] Arafat's confirmation that Palestinian revolutionaries were in El Salvador helping local revolutionaries [59] and that the PLO "especially assists national liberation movements in El Salvador and Nicaragua" [60] clearly illustrate the PLO's interests in the region.

In addition, the PLO has penetrated other Latin American countries. Since 1979 it has had a formal representative in Brazil and has established logistic and financial ties with Brazil's Popular Revolutionary Vanguard (Vanguarda Popular Revolucionária—VPR). The VPR has received training in PLO camps in Lebanon.[61] Other Brazilian guerrillas have also been trained at PLO camps in Lebanon and Libya. Fared Fawan, PLO representative in Brazil, has actively recruited Brazilians of Arab descent for the PLO.[62]

Fatah and the Liberation Movement Department (PFLP) have also trained members of Chile's Movement of the Revolutionary Left (Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria—MIR). Manuel Cabiass, fugitive leader of the MIR, frequently arranged for members of South American underground movements to be trained at PLO camps.[63] Since 1972 the PLO has also maintained logistic ties with the Argentine Peronist-Marxist Movimiento Peronista Montonero. The PLO has supplied arms to the Montoneros, and in 1978 leaders of the Abu Jihad met with a Montonero delegation that toured PLO bases in southern Lebanon and later trained at these bases.[64]

PLO documents captured by the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) in Lebanon in June 1982 attest to these PLO-Latin American linkages. According to a report of the International Department of the PFLP for the month of June 1980, the PLO had hosted an Argentinian delegation for a period of six months. During that time, comprehensive meetings and courses were held to familiarize the delegation with the struggle of the Palestinian and Argentinian peoples.[65] The PFLP report for July 1980 revealed that a delegation consisting of members of Chile's Communist Party and its Workers and Farmers (Leninist and Marxist) Party had visited Lebanon. While there, the Chileans were acquainted with the military activity of the PFLP and signed an agreement of cooperation between the two parties.[66]

In Colombia the PLO has conducted operations with both the Colombian Guerrilla Group 4 and, via the PFLP, the M-19's Marxist-Leninist terrorists.[67] Furthermore, Costa Rica's National Security Agency revealed that Libya and the PLO had provided joint courses in military training and indoctrination of young Marxist-oriented Costa Ricans in Libya, Lebanon, and Costa Rica. This was discovered when, in January 1982, Costa Rican authorities disclosed the existence of at least twenty terrorist cells and "safe houses" equipped with arms, food, and medical equipment.[68]

* * *

Clearly, the Kremlin's principal objective is to erode US leadership in Latin America. This has challenged Washington's geostrategic interest in the region, which is to keep its resources and lines of communication accessible and safe from Soviet-Cuban subversion. The deliberate fomentation of conflict in already troubled areas is an important instrument of Soviet global strategy. In short, instability in the non-communist world is a helpful end in itself from the Kremlin's perspective.

Given the destructive capabilities of nuclear weapons and the prohibitive costs of traditional conventional warfare, the Soviets seek to avoid a direct military confrontation with the United States and its allies. Instead, Moscow has emphasized a lower cost, lower risk power projection in the Third World in support of its proxies. The instruments of this strategy include terrorism, insurgency, and guerrilla warfare, frequently cloaked by the term "national liberation movement." This linkage between the USSR and Third World national liberation movements is spelled out in an article by Boris Ponomarev, head of the International Department of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU):

> Whenever such forces exist and fight, they can rightfully count on our solidarity and support. Those who raise the banner of struggle . . . are considered by us to be representative of a just cause.[69]

Undoubtedly, the support and use of indigenous terrorist groups by external state and sub-state actors is well established in Latin America. This network receives assistance in various forms from the Soviet Union, Eastern Bloc states, and Cuba, as well as from Syria, Iraq, Libya, and South Yemen. Also included in the network is the PLO, whose growing activism in Latin America compounds the already existing threat posed by the Soviet Union and its communist proxies.

Clearly, Moscow possesses the motivation as well as the means to destabilize the region. It has made a calculated effort to exploit willing surrogates who sponsor their own brands of terrorism. Thus, Castro, often referred to as the "godfather of Latin American revolutionaries," actively trains, equips, and counsels many of Latin America's terrorists and guerrillas. Similarly, the PLO serves as an immensely valuable surrogate for the KGB in its dealings with various Latin American "freedom fighters."

This "alliance of convenience" is largely derived from common ideological values combined with the desire to undermine the "imperialist, capitalist, and Zionist" West. Its dogmatic insistence on acts of terrorism, national insurgencies, and eventual "world revolution" aims to alter the existing international order. Classic examples of this bond appear among the documents captured by the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) in Lebanon in June 1982. In one document, a recent speech by a PLO representative in

Havana expressed sympathies for revolutionary Cuba and its goals and voiced support for the Nicaraguan people. The PLO representative asserted,

> We all stand united until the defeat of imperialism and zionism . . . . Long live the PLO, sole representative of the Palestinian people; Long live the Cuban Revolution; Long live Yasser Arafat; Long live Fidel; Revolution until victory.[70]

Notes

1. US Department of State, *Patterns of International Terrorism: 1982*, September 1983.

2. Ibid.

3. This definitional distinction was made at the Inter-University Conference on Terrorism (Jerusalem), 31 January-2 February, 1984.

4. David Rapoport, "The Politics of Atrocity," in *Terrorism Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. by Yonah Alexander and Seymour Maxwell Finger (New York: The John Jay Press, 1977), p. 47.

5. This definition was provided by a representative of the Department of State before the Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and before the House Foreign Affairs Committee during June 1984 hearings on the Reagan administration's anti-terrorism legislative package.

6. Y.V. Andropov, *Speeches and Writings* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1983), p. 5.

7. TASS, 21 July 1982.

8. Moscow International Service, 10 July 1981.

9. Moscow Domestic Service, 17 July 1981.

10. Radio Moscow, 26 January 1982.

11. TASS, 8 February 1982.

12. *Pravda*, 19 July 1981.

13. *Izvestia*, 30 June and 18 July 1981.

14. Radio Moscow, 5 February 1982.

15. *Pravda*, 5 November 1982.

16. TASS, 1 February 1983.

17. A. Aseevskii, *Who Organizes and Directs International Terrorism?* (Moscow: Political Literature, 1982).

18. Great Britain, Foreign Office Documents 371 15072 (1931), 371/20342, N. 5360, 1936.

19. US Department of State, *Communist, PLO, Libyan Support for Nicaragua and the Salvadoran Insurgents*, 25 May 1983.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. US Department of State, *The Larger Importance of Grenada*, 4 November 1983, p. 3.

24. Ibid.

25. US Department of State, *Patterns of International Terrorism: 1982*, September 1983.

26. *Wall Street Journal*, 15 April 1980.

27. US Department of State, 25 May 1983.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Unpublished paper by Senator Denton's staff, p. 3.

32. Unpublished paper, "*The International Terrorist Network in Latin America and its Cuba-Nicaragua Support Base*," by Martin C. Arostegui, p. 1.

33. Ibid.

34. From unpublished paper by Martin C. Arostegui, p. 18.

35. Miguel Bolanos Hunter, interviews conducted with the *Washington Post* 16-17 June 1983 at the Heritage Foundation, and with Risks International at the State Department, November 1983.

36. Ibid.

37. US Department of State White Paper, *Communist Interference in El Salvador*, 23 February 1981.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid.

40. US Department of State White Paper, *Communist Interference in El Salvador*, 23 February 1981.

41. Based on informal briefing by US Department of State, 25 May 1983.

42. Ibid.

43. Unpublished paper by Martin C. Arostegui, p. 15.

44. *Barricada* (Managua, Nicaragua), 31 April 1983, and *La Prensa* (San Pedro Sula, Honduras), 18 April 1983.

45. These examples were provided by an unpublished paper by Martin C. Arostegui.

46. Based on informal briefing by US Department of State, 23 May 1983.

47. *Washington Post*, 2 September 1984.

48. Jack Anderson, "The Qaddafi Watch," in the *Washington Post*, 20 November 1983.

49. *The PLO's Growing Latin American Base* (Washington, DC: Heritage Foundation (Backgrounder #281), 2 August 1983), p. 2.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid., p. 3.

52. Ibid., p. 4.

53. Briefing, Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 16 May 1982, p. 3.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid., p. 4.

59. PLO Radio, Beirut, 12 January 1982.

60. Interview with Al-Biyan (UAR), 12 March 1982.

61. *The PLO's Growing Latin American Base*, Heritage Foundation (Backgrounder #281), p. 6.

62. *Daily Telegraph*, London, 24 December 1979.

63. Ibid.

64. PLO Radio, Beirut, 12 September 1978.

65. Report of the International Department of the PFLP for June 1980. (Document captured by IDF in Lebanon, June 1982).

66. Report of the International Department of the PFLP for July 1980. (Document captured by IDF in Lebanon, June 1982).

67. "PLO Activities in Latin America," Anti-Defamation League, International Report, revised May 1982, p. 17.

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70. Speech by PLO representative in Havana, Cuba. (Document captured by IDF in Lebanon, June 1982.)

THE SENDERO LUMINOSO REBELLION IN RURAL PERU

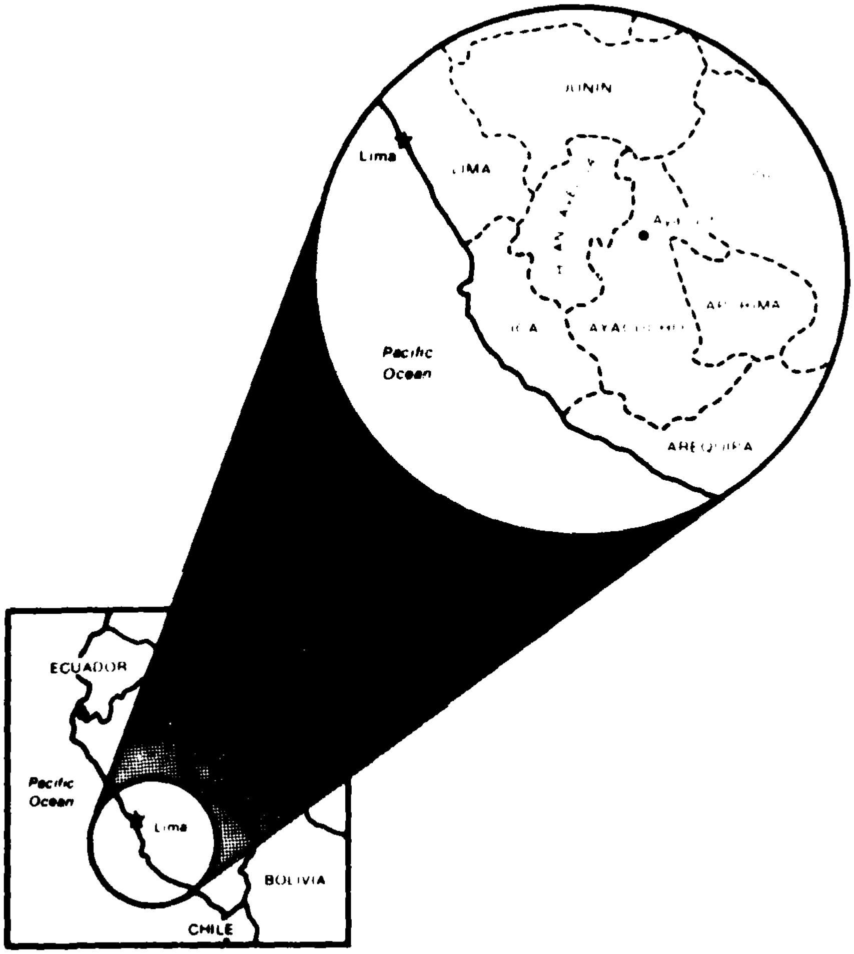
David Scott Palmer

When yet another splinter group of the Marxist-Leninist left burst onto the national political scene in Peru in 1980, the occurrence evoked little more than mild ridicule. By 1982, however, the extremists of Sendero Luminoso were taken very seriously, and they continue to be taken seriously today. This essay is intended to review the national and local contexts within which the organization evolved and to offer an assessment of Sendero's quite remarkable staying power in the face of multiple obstacles and of limitations inherent to the movement itself.

In terms of the theory of revolution, it is the central thesis of this analysis that Sendero evolved in a *sui generis* manner and is unique in a number of ways. It evolved in the context of a marginal region of Peru, a historically exploited Indian population, an increasingly isolated provincial university, and charismatic intellectual and tactical leadership. Although generalization of Sendero's specific evolution to other parts of the world is a risky and perhaps impossible enterprise, the combination of circumstances that gave rise to this particular guerrilla movement is repeated in a variety of Third World settings.[1]

DEVELOPMENT OF SENDERO LUMINOSO ("SHINING PATH")

What is today known as Sendero Luminoso began in the rural department capital of Ayacucho in 1962 as the National


JUNIN
Lima
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AYACUCHO
APURIMAC
AREQUIPA
ECUADOR
Pacific Ocean
Lima
BOLIVIA
CHILE

Peru: Ayacucho Region

Liberation Front (Frente de Liberación Nacional—FLN), Huamanga command. It started in the National University of San Cristóbal de Huamanga, a colonial university of Ayacucho, founded in 1677 and newly reopened after a lapse of almost eighty years. The organization was led from the outset by a philosophy professor in the Education Program, Abimael Guzmán Reynoso. Over the first few years, Professor Guzmán recruited some of the university's most talented students for trips to Cuba and for various extension programs in literacy, farm techniques, and health and nutrition out in Ayacucho's surrounding countryside. By 1964 there were about 50 students and faculty members (out of a total university population at that time of about 700 students and 50 faculty) who regularly participated in such activities. These included individuals who eventually emerged as leading members of the Sendero hierarchy, such as Luis Kawata, Osman and Katia Morote, and Julio Casanova.

The Huamanga command of the FLN broke with the national organization in 1965 over the issue of opening guerrilla fronts in the Peruvian highlands at that time. FLN leaders Guillermo Lobatón and Luis de la Puente Uceda went to their deaths, and Héctor Béjar to capture and jail, in the massive military response to their misguided attempts at applying the Cuban "foco" theory of rural revolution in Peru. However, the Huamanga group became more identified with a longer term rural strategy, based on Chinese revolutionary theory and experience.

By 1966 Guzmán and his followers at Huamanga were part of the Maoist Communist Party of Peru-Red Flag (Partido Comunista del Perú-Bandera Roja—PCP-BR) organization in Peru.[2] The relationship between the center and periphery in the party was an uneasy one, with the withdrawal or expulsion of the "country bumpkins" of Huamanga occurring between 1968 and 1970.[3] It was at this time that the Guzmán faction adopted the title of Partido Comunista del Perú en el Sendero Luminoso de Mariátegui (after the Peruvian Marxist intellectual who founded, in 1928, the original Communist Party of Peru) and hence came to be known to outsiders as Sendero Luminoso. During the 1970s Sendero turned inward, concentrating on theory building from within its academic haven at the University of Huamanga and on expanding its relationships with peasant communities in outlying districts of the department of Ayacucho, particularly in the province of Cangallo. In 1978 the leadership disappeared from public view, perhaps in part as a result of University of Huamanga elections that year, which overturned the radical group in power and replaced it with more moderate leadership.

In 1980, as Peru was returning to civilian rule via elections after twelve years of military government, the first public manifestations of Sendero's concerns began to appear—burning ballot boxes in the Indian community market town of Chuschi, Cangallo province, and dogs hanging from lampposts in both Lima and Ayacucho.[4] Bombings of public buildings and some private companies in late 1980 and 1981 slowly gave way to attacks on and assassinations of local public figures, and then to violence on a much larger scale after a massive raid on and jailbreak from the Ayacucho department prison in March 1982. In December the escalation of violence, bombings, and power blackouts by Sendero, mostly in Ayacucho but increasingly in Lima as well, turned official indifference to deep concern.

By New Year's Day 1983 a state of emergency had been declared in five provinces of the Ayacucho region and administrative control by the armed forces had begun. Violence and counterviolence escalated and spread to other parts of the country, with deaths now ranging in the hundreds. While military authorities claimed control over the area once subject to deep Sendero influence, most of the Sendero leadership remained intact and at large.

Subject to Guzmán's continued influence, Sendero remained committed to its five point program for gaining power—even if it took seventy-five years! The points of the program were the following:[5]

1. Convert backward areas into advanced and solid bases of revolutionary support.
2. Attack bourgeois state and revisionist element symbols.
3. Generalize violence and develop guerrilla war tactics.
4. Conquer and expand bases of support.
5. Besiege the cities and bring about the total collapse of the state.

Over time Sendero has become more militant, more dogmatic, and more violent. However, its capacity to harass has not been translated into a capacity to control; if anything, Sendero's ability to effectively occupy territory has been reduced by the extensive military operations in the Ayacucho area—expanded by mid 1984 to include thirteen provinces in three highland departments under a state of emergency.

Even so, a substantial reservoir of support (or fear) remains in the core areas of Sendero's historic activity. In the 1983 Ayacucho municipal elections, for example, fully 56 percent of the votes cast in the province of Huamanga were blank or spoiled and over 50 percent of the eligible population abstained. Essentially, 75 percent of the eligible voters knowingly or unknowingly followed Sendero instructions to stay away from the polls or to place an unmarked or spoiled ballot in the urn if voting was unavoidable. The winning party, PADIN, received only 27 percent of the vote, compared with 43 percent spoiled and blank ballots.[6] PADIN's platform included such goals as peace, rural development, and amnesty for Sendero members. Furthermore, the government was unable to hold municipal elections in the neighboring provinces of Cangallo, Victor Fajardo, La Mar, and Huanta on the November 1983 day appointed for nationwide elections, an admission of its inability to protect declared or potential candidates for local offices in those districts.[7]

While there seems no reasonable prospect that Sendero can gain full regional power, much less national, there also seems little likelihood that government forces can fully impose order. The situation remains very delicate for a fragile civilian democracy. The government is beset by a number of serious social, political, and economic problems in addition to Sendero's unwavering commitment to the armed struggle for the glory of Marx, Mao, and Mariátegui.

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT: SOCIOECONOMIC AND POLITICAL TURBULENCE

Peru is a nation of sharp contrasts and great complexity that has been changing rapidly over the past thirty years. Literacy levels have gone from below 50 percent to over 75 percent. Urbanization has been similarly rapid; Lima is an extreme case, its population increasing from less than 300,000 in 1940 to over 5.5 million in the early 1980s. Gross national product per capita was $526 in 1960 and $1,294 in 1981.[8] Total population has increased at close to 3 percent per year in recent decades, with the number of Peruvians rising from 9.9 million to 17.7 million between the 1961 and 1981 censuses. Barriers to voting included both sex and literacy requirements well into the twentieth century; only in the 1980s was the literacy restriction abolished. As a result, voting levels increased from less than 5 percent of the population in 1939 to almost 25 percent in 1980.[9]

The major effect of the changes within Peru over the past forty years, which are represented crudely by the aggregate figures, was to bring into the national system a much larger proportion of the total population. This means that the vast majority of Peruvian citizens are now in a position to make demands on the system—and do so. A government's staying power is thus increasingly dependent on its ability to respond to the concerns of the Peruvian citizenry.

How well has the system responded to these needs? Between 1950 and 1975 fairly sustained net economic growth, along with limited but real "spontaneous" and "directed" income redistribution, did occur. Government employment more than doubled between 1965 and 1975, and both the informal and formal private sectors increased substantially. Unions and union membership burgeoned in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and wages tended to keep pace with or move slightly ahead of the cost of living. Infant mortality declined modestly and caloric intake increased.

Beginning in 1976, however, the picture began to change, much for the worse. With the exception of the 1979-1981 period, Peru has experienced net economic decline, wage settlements have fallen behind the cost of living, and inflation rates have increased from a 20-30 percent range to a 75-125 percent range. The promising changes in both infant mortality and caloric intake have been reversed. While income does not appear to have become more concentrated, the lower strata of society have clearly lost their incremental gains with the shrinking of the economic pie.[10]

That recent misfortunes have not resulted in revolutionary ferment may be attributed to several significant developments over the past several years. One is the presence of a very large "informal" economic sector based largely in Lima. Two-thirds of the Lima work force, according to one study, is employed in the "underground" economy, much of which appears to operate profitably.[11] Some 85 percent of the city's public transportation, 90 percent of the textile manufacturing business, and 60 percent of housing construction are to be found in this informal sector. As a result, actual per capita income may be as much as 45 percent above official figures. This suggests that much of the massive urban migration to Lima over the past generation has indeed been absorbed in economically productive activity even though the fruits of their labor do not appear in the national accounts. Even though the "official" system has been less able to meet popular needs since the mid 1970s, the "unofficial" system appears to have picked up much of the slack. In other words, the "revolutionary gap," with its attendant increased violence and susceptibility to extremist organizations, may in fact be much smaller than official figures suggest (at least for Lima).[12]

A second factor, whose effect on defusing revolutionary activity should not be underestimated, is the legitimation of the Marxist left within rather than outside the established political and economic system. The Marxist parties, now mostly grouped within the umbrella organization United Left (Izquierda Unida—IU), went from a 3.6 percent share of the vote in 1962 to 13.7 percent in 1980 (with 24 percent in the 1980 municipal elections and 30 percent in 1983).[13] The Marxist union confederation, General Federation of Peruvian Workers (Confederación General de Trabajadores del Perú—CGTP), in existence only since legalization by the military government in 1971, now counts within its ranks about 46 percent of Peru's 473,000 unionized workers.[14] Both the IU and the CGTP are committed to Marxist principles, but within rather than outside existing systems. Their success to date—including the mayoralty of Lima in the 1983 municipal elections—has encouraged them to continue on this track and to decry guerrilla activity, especially as practiced by Sendero. This incorporation into the system rather than forcing outside it of a new generation of progressive forces may be the most significant and enduring legacy of the *docenio* (twelve-year period) of military rule between 1968 and 1980.[15]

A third element is the return of civilian government through various elections between 1978 and 1983 (in 1978, for a constituent assembly; in 1980, for the presidency and congress; and in 1980 and 1983, for municipal officials). Since Peru had gone without a presidential election since 1963 and municipal elections since 1966, their reestablishment provided the adult population with a tangible symbol of a direct relationship with the government and of influence within it. The military *docenio*, in spite of its reformist goals and policies, never succeeded in building an acceptable substitute for elections in terms of citizen-system relationships.[16] The reestablishment of these relationships gave both citizens and political parties a direct stake in the system once again and, along with that, an authentic infusion of legitimacy for that system.

By reelecting Fernando Belaúnde Terry, the very individual displaced from power in 1968, as president in 1980 with a substantial margin (over 45 percent of the total vote in a fifteen candidate race), the population of Peru delivered to its military establishment a specific rebuke. This, on top of the military's internal divisions, over-extension of its members in both political and military responsibilities, and belated recognition, through governing, that it was in fact much harder to run a country than to criticize its running, combined to substantially raise the threshold of intervention.[17] In other words, the Peruvian armed forces would be much more reluctant to come back into politics through the *golpe de estado* (coup d'état) unless circumstances were truly compelling. From the perspective of the citizenry, their elected civilian government, even with its multiple flaws and difficulties, was preferable to its military predecessor.[18]

Another important development that served to lessen the growing gap between popular expectations and government capacity was the somewhat unexpected reemergence of the long-established American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana—APRA) party. With the election of a new party head in 1982, youthful Alan García, APRA simultaneously overcame a potentially devastating split between its left and right wings after its 1980 electoral defeat and a twenty-six year legacy of having compromised its reformist principles in order to gain political power.[19] By reemerging as a reformist party with an attractive potential presidential candidate for 1985, APRA was now in a position to compete for the center-left as well as the center vote. This would give the populace a choice between Marxist and non-Marxist reformist alternatives, and some expectation that their needs might be satisfactorily attended to in the fairly near future. The military, in turn, might avoid a dilemma that would be created by a Marxist victory in 1985.

Another consideration concerns the strategy and tactics of Sendero. Its revolutionary approach for taking power is based on consciousness-raising and mobilization of the rural Indian periphery rather than the urban *cholo* or mestizo center. Sendero's leaders have made little attempt to mobilize support in the sprawling capital of Lima, even among organizations sharing at least the core elements of their own ideological perspective. Efforts by the more radical youth wings of some parties within the IU to join up formally with Sendero and its violent path to power apparently have been rebuffed, at least for now.[20] Sendero's commitment to the Indian peasantry appears to inhibit any expansion of its support within the urban proletariat, except perhaps among the more recent migrants from Indian areas who retain both family and economic ties to their communities of origin.[21] With rare exceptions, Sendero has shown little interest in pursuing any kind of public relations campaign to gain either sympathy or support from the center. Rather, its announced program involves the progressive isolation of the center, to be followed by frontal attacks.

A factor that is difficult to measure precisely, but which undoubtedly has some effect on the continued willingness of a population to suffer adversity rather than rise up against its government is the degree to which Peru's present difficulties may be blamed on forces beyond the government's control rather than on the system itself. The combination of the high and largely inherited debt burden, international recession, and rising interest rates with the El Niño and disastrous floods and drought in different parts of the country can be attributed to misfortune rather than to misguided policies. Even though the democratic government has made its share of mistakes, the system (as distinct from the Belaúnde administration) retains more legitimacy than it would if the problems persisted in the absence of such major external and environmental setbacks.

The net result of this combination of factors is that the system keeps going, even as it lurches from one crisis to another. Popular despair shows itself, thus far, in strikes and protests and in substantially increased support for opposition parties as electoral opportunities are offered. Popular discontent has not yet manifested itself in a generalized willingness to overthrow the current system. Paradoxically, some of Sendero's more brutal actions, combined with its unwillingness to explain or defend them, may well serve to push citizens on the brink of collective violence back toward a more moderate approach in trying to resolve their problems.[22] Sendero has won neither the minds nor the hearts of the urban proletariat because it has not tried to do so. The net result is system maintenance and system stability, at least for now.

THE LOCAL CONTEXT: POVERTY, ISOLATION, AND FRUSTRATED REFORM INITIATIVES

The south-central highland department of Ayacucho, where Sendero Luminoso originated, has long suffered from neglect by central government authorities.[23] Although founded in 1540, the city of Ayacucho was not connected to the rest of the country by road until 1924. The railroad originally designed to link Ayacucho with the rest of the central sierra only reached as far as Huancavelica, a long day's journey away. The arrival of air service in the 1940s provided a tenuous link with the national capital of Lima via a short dirt runway for the very few who could afford the fare. A chronic shortage of water in and around the city of Ayacucho for drinking and agriculture stimulated numerous proposals and plans over the years, but they never quite materialized. As late as the 1960s there were fewer than 100 cars and trucks in the city and only two buses for local transportation.

Census figures for 1961 indicated an overwhelmingly rural population (90 percent), almost entirely Quechua-speaking, with an adult illiteracy level of almost 73 percent for the department as a whole. Outside the department and province capitals, schools were few and far between and public health facilities were even more limited. Per capita agricultural income for the core provinces of Huanta, Huamanga, and Cangallo, at just over $100 per year in 1961, was lower than for all but nine of Peru's 155 provinces.[24]

The name Ayacucho is Quechua for "corner of the dead" and derives from the many battles fought in the area among warring Indian groups before the Spanish Conquest. The name also has been synonymous with a lack of economic activity and opportunity. The colonial golden age of the city, when it served as a trading center, a resting place on the track from Lima to Cuzco, a university town, and the residence of numerous mine- and land-owning elite families, has long since passed.

Beginning in the late 1950s, however, and continuing into the 1970s, a number of changes were introduced from the outside that would come to affect the city of Ayacucho and its surrounding countryside in a number of ways. Together they served to upset the balance of power, which had rested for more than a century in the hands of a small white and mestizo elite, and served to make many others feel that it might be possible after all to improve their historically precarious situation.

One change was the building between 1960 and 1965 of an access road from the city of Ayacucho to its hitherto inaccessible jungle. Within a decade up to 30,000 families had settled the area, all the way to and even across the Apurimac River at San Francisco, in largely spontaneous rather than planned colonizations. Another important road, built with credits from Japan, was the Via de los Libertadores ("Road of the Liberators"), connecting Ayacucho directly with the coast at Pisco. Constructed in the mid 1960s, this road gave the previously isolated department capital and its outlying areas an all-weather road to population centers in addition to the precarious, often one-lane track tight against the mountains above the Mantaro River to Huancayo and Huancavelica. Products and people could now move more efficiently into and out of the area. Other communications changes included the installation of telephones within Ayacucho's city limits in 1964 and the establishment of a regional and national hookup soon thereafter.

The Alliance for Progress reached both Ayacucho and outlying areas as well, including a variety of small-scale projects for access roads, potable water, and health and educational facilities. The Alliance for Progress also embodied a substantial contribution to local self-help projects through the Food for Peace program, by which cash and food for oneself and one's family were provided in exchange for labor. Another initiative was a school lunch program, which, at its peak, operated in all of the province capitals and even some district capitals in the department of Ayacucho, serving more than 50,000 elementary school children a day. Beginning in 1962 a substantial number of Peace Corps Volunteers went to Ayacucho at the Peruvian government's request. More than 200 different individuals served in a variety of community development and self-help projects for two-year periods, many in small towns, villages, and Indian communities. Major activities included the development of an artisans' cooperative, oversight of the school lunch program, reforestation, irrigation, road building, and school teaching. The Peruvian government established its own domestic Peace Corps in 1963-1964, called Cooperación Popular. It trained and sent hundreds of Peruvian volunteers each year, mostly urban students, to the sierra for the three-month summer holiday to work in a variety of community projects.

The much-heralded agrarian reform of the 1963-1968 Belaúnde administration never lived up to its nationwide promises. Fewer than 20,000 families received titles to expropriated land—in Ayacucho only one property was expropriated and only 54 families became beneficiaries. However, several thousand land "certificates" were distributed to tenant farmers in Ayacucho so that the bearers might "prove" that they were entitled to be beneficiaries if and when the land they were working was expropriated.

More substantively, in 1963 the Belaúnde government reinstituted municipal elections down to the district capital level for the first time since 1917. In both 1963 and 1966 literate adults had the opportunity to select their mayor and town or city council rather than have them appointed by the central government.[25]

In another important initiative, the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, established over thirty bilingual elementary schools during the 1960s, both in the city of Ayacucho and in a number of the small villages and communities in the area. SIL personnel set up a special training facility on the outskirts of Ayacucho to prepare teachers for these schools.[26]

Although some of these initiatives had mixed or unanticipated results, their basic thrust was to foster modest but demonstrated change in the daily lives of many citizens of both urban and rural Ayacucho. There was a sense of progress and development, along with a perception among many that the center was concerned about the periphery and was willing to infuse some resources and personnel, domestic and foreign, into the area. Self-help and local initiative activities predominated rather than decisions imposed from the capital. Clearly beneficial to Ayacucho during the 1963-1968 period was the fact that the majority party in the department at the time was Acción Popular, the party of President Belaúnde.

One of the first and perhaps the most important of all the changes was the reopening of the National University of San Cristóbal de Huamanga in 1959. Closed in 1886 as a result of Peru's economic collapse after defeat at the hands of Chile in the War of the Pacific (1879-1883), the university's reopening was viewed as a historic opportunity to revitalize the area. From the beginning, San Cristóbal de Huamanga was to be different from the rest of Peruvian universities—it was to serve as an agent for change by simultaneously educating local sons and daughters in subjects and at levels appropriate for the area and providing some assistance for the many problems that the region confronted. In the words of the first rector of the reestablished university, Dr. Fernando Romero Pintado, "The educational philosophy . . . (is) based on . . . concepts that derive from the unique role of this university. To break the inertia of almost a century, it is not sufficient to train professionals; we must train leaders who will have an intimate understanding of the part they must play . . . . We are preparing our students for bringing about the socioeconomic development of our area . . . ."[27]

These goals were to be accomplished by creating special programs related to local problems, like nursing, education, applied anthropology, and rural engineering. Unlike other Peruvian universities, there was to be no law school or medical school. Quechua was required (for the few students not fluent in this main Indian tongue of Peru). Professors were to be full-time. Extension programs, whether adult education in Ayacucho, applied anthropology in Pampa Cangallo, or university demonstration and practice farms at Alpachaca or Huallapampa, were fundamental components. In a variety of ways, the initial commitment to a public institution of higher learning that would have as its goal the transformation of one of Peru's most traditional and isolated regions developed its own dynamic over time. In terms of its commitment to change, San Cristóbal de Huamanga went well beyond the objectives of the legislators who authorized the university's reestablishment and funded its first rector's pay. This commitment to change resulted from the belief among many of the university's faculty and student leaders that socioeconomic change was possible only in the context of political change.

During its first years, the University of Huamanga attracted, with much enthusiasm, teachers and programs connected with the Summer Institute of Linguistics; the Peace Corps; the United Nations; the Fulbright Commission; the Danish, Dutch, and Swiss governments; and the full range of Peru's political parties. From all areas of the university, opportunities to work with local residents proliferated. Students and faculty alike contributed to the university's extensive service mission.

Increasingly, however, issues concerning the types of change, its ends, and its organizers grew in importance. In spite of the rector's commitment to keep politics out of the university, political questions came to dominate programs and services.[8] A pluralistic mélange of initiatives gradually succumbed to increasingly radical political criteria by which the university was perceived as fulfilling its responsibilities only if it was a committed institution (*"la universidad comprometida"*), that is, committed to Marxist principles. While the extension work continued and at times stayed above the partisan fray, it was more and more subjected to radical precepts and staffed by committed radicals.

As a result of the 1966-67 economic crisis, funding for Huamanga was cut back, some programs were eliminated, and all the while many of the more moderate faculty abandoned their idealistic quest. Furthermore, the 1968 university elections delivered the institution's key positions into radical hands. By the end of the first decade of renewed operations, the University of Huamanga had become yet another radical university along Latin American lines, with open admissions (and up to 15,000 students in a physical plant that could only handle one-fifth that number), constant political turmoil, and frequent strikes. Huamanga's distinctive extension services became yet one more instrument through which radical political goals could be accomplished.[29]

The combination of the October 1968 military *golpe de estado* and US government aid cutbacks soon brought to an end a number of local development initiatives in Ayacucho that had expanded under the previous civilian government. These included the department development corporation; Cooperación Popular; the Alliance for Progress programs, including Food for Peace and the school lunch initiatives; and within a few years both the Peace Corps and the SIL. The elimination of these programs paralleled increasing radical control of the university's outreach and extension programs. While university programs, whether official or unofficial, never became the only opportunity available in Ayacucho, the decrease in other opportunities increased their importance.

Furthermore, Sendero Luminoso's separation from the national Maoist party during the same period (1968-1970) gave Abimael Guzmán and his local colleagues the opportunity to combine their own emerging conceptions of theory and praxis rather than those of their erstwhile comrades at the center, who had little familiarity with Ayacucho's problems. Sendero's success in gaining bases of support in the countryside, especially among some of the Indian communities of Cangallo, dates from this period. As early as 1971 Sendero exercised sufficient influence over a group of communities in the Vischongo-Vilcashuaman area of Cangallo province to keep out by force, if necessary, agrarian reform representatives of the Peruvian government.[30]

In mid 1969 the reformist military government that took over in 1968 began to implement an agrarian reform of major significance. Upon its completion in the late 1970s, almost half of the previously landless agricultural population had received property, usually in the form of cooperative ownership. In Ayacucho, however, the proportion of eventual beneficiaries to needy farmers was much lower—in the neighborhood of 15 20 percent—and the results even for those who did receive land were generally less satisfactory than in other parts of the country.[31]

In part this was because Ayacucho was different. It had smaller and less prosperous *haciendas* and many more Indian communities (303 that were officially recognized and many others that were not). Also, the department received low priority for agrarian reform implementation from the national government. As a result, central authorities devoted fewer resources and fewer personnel to the area. Therefore, implementation did not benefit many marginal agriculturalists. Furthermore, the new rural organizations to be established under the agrarian reform required a profitable, dynamic center in order to distribute gains to other members, especially the Indian communities. But very few *haciendas* in Ayacucho were profitable, and those that were, were stripped of their movable assets before the reform was implemented.

The large number of Indian communities posed special challenges. In areas where they bordered on affected *haciendas*, they were often included in the agrarian reform but rarely benefited from it because of historically low levels of production and the inevitable dislocations that occurred in the process of transferring ownership. Rarely were agrarian reform personnel able to provide the technical assistance needed to facilitate transferral or to increase production in the new cooperative enterprises. Where Indian communities bordered only on other communities, which was frequently the case in Cangallo, Victor Fajardo, and parts of Huanta, there was no effective government program at all. An early effort in 1970 and 1971 to reorganize communities along "made in Lima" criteria died after strenuous objections were raised by hundreds of Indian community leaders nationwide.[32] For these, the major change effected by central authorities was in name only: Indian communities became peasant communities.

In effect, then, the agrarian reform brought little change to the Indian communities of Ayacucho. Most of the change that did occur was negative and even counterproductive. Government policy in the area during the late 1960s and early 1970s unwittingly played into the hands of Sendero. Peasant situations at the local level were deteriorating, partly because of the cutbacks in and terminations of earlier programs and the ineffectiveness of the reformist military government's initiatives. Government personnel actually declined in number during the first years of the new regime. Those assigned to Ayacucho often did not speak Quechua, suffered from low pay, and had almost no infrastructure support for their official activities.

Sendero activities, whether as part of university extension programs or not, became the one continuing and positive outside contact many peasants had. Sendero's developing ideology and commitment logically led it to concentrate its efforts in areas where Indian communities were most numerous. Hence, the points of greatest contact between the peasantry and Sendero tended to be those of least contact between the peasantry and the government. Given Sendero's provision of such needs as paramedical service, farm techniques, and literacy; its provision of education in the local language (for those members who did not already speak Quechua); and its members' marrying into peasant community families, it is not surprising that they often gained both the confidence and the support of many Indian community residents.

The impact of these experiences on Sendero activists should not be underestimated. Most of their leaders, both professors and students, were brought in from areas outside the region, areas often very different from the urban environment of the coast. The opportunity to put radical principles derived from university studies into practice required a dedication and commitment rarely seen in Peruvian radical movements. Both a new language and the totally different daily routine of a peasant farmer needed to be learned. The sacrifices required were enormous. It should not be surprising, therefore, that those who successfully passed through this gauntlet would come to have a very special view of themselves as the true vanguard of the peasant proletariat, and would see themselves as superior to their fellow teachers, students, and even

Marxist colleagues who had not tempered their principles in the fire of peasant reality. When Maoist leader Saturnino Paredes expelled Abimael Guzmán and his Huamanga colleagues from the PCP-BR party in 1970 as hopelessly out of step with the "proper" ideological approach—largely because of their isolation in Ayacucho—he failed to appreciate that they alone had the opportunity to combine ideology with practice in a truly Maoist rural setting.

From 1959 onward, the majority (70-75 percent) of students at the University of Huamanga were from Ayacucho. Many came from peasant backgrounds and had grown up in Indian communities. Almost all were bilingual; most had learned Spanish as their second language. With the growing influence of Marxist and Maoist perspectives in the university, these students often were exposed to a world view that exalted their class origins and to a series of programs that gave them opportunities to assist their own people. It is not at all surprising, therefore, that Sendero's leaders in the university could develop over the years a cadre of militants from among these students who were prepared to follow them where requested—even into the armed struggle.

The university's Education Program and accompanying Escuela de Aplicación (teacher training school), which began in 1962, became popular vehicles by which students from Indian communities could become elementary school teachers and thus make a contribution to their home areas. From the standpoint of Guzmán and his radical colleagues, the Education Program was an ideal vehicle for building a cadre of supporters, paid by the state as teachers, in the very areas that were the focus of Sendero attention. Teachers were in most cases the only continuing government presence at the local village and community level; a good teacher was very much respected there, all the more so if he or she was bilingual and came from an Indian community background.

As things turned out, in Ayacucho education was perhaps the only area that was not slighted by the central government after 1968. According to the 1981 census, literacy in Ayacucho as a whole had increased from 27 percent in 1961 to 46 percent for the total population and to 56 percent for those five years old and older. Of the school-age population, ages five to fifteen, more than 75 percent could read and write. In 1981 there were 4,741 teachers and 1,450 schools in place in the department.[33]

In most areas the central government was unable or unwilling to maintain or expand programs. In 1981 the department of Ayacucho, with just over 500,000 inhabitants, had only 30 doctors and 366 hospital beds, 827 telephones, and 44 kilometers of paved roads. Furthermore, life expectancy was estimated at 44 years, only 7 percent of the residents had running water, and only 14 percent had electricity. Although Ayacucho had 3 percent of the country's population, it received only 1 percent of central government expenditures over the 1968-1980 period.[34] Because expenditures in education were expanded rather than cut back, other areas of need suffered disproportionately.

Beginning in mid 1980, the elected civilian government appears to have continued the neglect of Ayacucho. Among the causes, three factors stand out: economic crisis has all but eliminated increased government expenditures, bureaucratic inertia has interfered with attempts to redress policy neglect, and Sendero's increasing popularity has not received serious attention. The lack of attention to Sendero's influence may have resulted from civilian concerns regarding military intentions and a fear that insurgent threats may precipitate another *golpe de estado*. It is also related to Ayacucho's continuing status as a low priority area for central government policies. Whatever the explanation, the government did not reverse the general pattern of fiscal neglect, nor, in the press of conflict, did it appear to do so after militarizing the area in 1983.

In retrospect, the government's approach was mistaken. Sendero's leadership had committed itself to armed struggle in 1979, had proceeded to the second stage of its strategy (attack on the symbols of the bourgeois state) in 1980, and had reached the third, more violent stage (generalization of violence and development of guerrilla war) in March 1982 with a massive attack on the Ayacucho jail and the release of all prisoners, including over fifty suspected *senderistas*. Levels of violence steadily escalated during this period, from two deaths attributed to Sendero activity in 1980, to eight in 1981, to 171 in 1982.[35] Only at the very end of 1982 did the central government declare a state of emergency in the five most affected provinces and put the region under military control.

Far from ending the violence, however, the military presence was associated with a dramatic increase in civilian and combatant casualties. Almost two-thirds of the 3,028 deaths attributed to Sendero and counter-Sendero activity in 1983 throughout Peru occurred in Ayacucho and neighboring provinces of Huancavelica and Apurimac included in the Emergency Zone during that year.[36] This included the widely publicized January 1983 massacre of eight journalists, ostensibly mistaken for *senderistas*, by the residents of the Indian community of Uchuraccay in the province of Huanta.[37] Because access to the region after the incident was virtually impossible, most subsequent news on events in Ayacucho depended on official accounts, which were often suspect in the eyes of local and foreign journalists.

The picture that emerged was of ebbs and flows of tension and violence, perpetuated by both Sendero and military police forces. Sendero militants seemed to be retreating at times, but acts of sabotage continued, along with dramatic violent strikes on both isolated police stations and the main *comisaría* in downtown Ayacucho. After a period of relative quiet in late 1983 and early 1984, the levels of violence escalated sharply in June and July. Pressure increased to unleash the full might of the armed forces rather than rely mainly on police (as casualty figures suggest, over five times as many police have been killed as military—92 Guardia Civil, 6 PIP, and 27 Guardia Republicana to 24 soldiers),[38] but neither the army nor the civilian political leadership seemed eager to pursue this course. In spite of programs of substantial economic aid announced for Ayacucho and the rest of the Emergency Zone, very little had materialized except for emergency repairs to sabotaged roads, bridges, and buildings.[39] While Sendero may have only a small chance for success in the long run, by mid 1984 the organization shows little sign of fatigue.

Furthermore, the concentration of military and police forces in the Emergency Zone since early 1983 seems to have produced a violent spillover into other parts of the country, especially the highlands. Another ominous development is the apparent association of Sendero with drug traffickers in both the jungle areas of Ayacucho and the Upper Huallaga River basin. What cannot be determined at this juncture is the degree to which Sendero itself is responsible. Many of the actions outside Sendero's core area in Ayacucho may be carried out by common criminal elements or by other radical imitators. In either case, the actions pose serious continuing problems for beleaguered central government authorities.

POSSIBILITIES FOR THE FUTURE

The Sendero Luminoso movement is in some ways the most recent manifestation of a historic pattern of periphery-center conflict. Indian groups opposed Incan hegemony imposed from Cuzco before the Spanish Conquest, and Incan and Quechua dissidents opposed Spanish rule emanating from Lima for almost 100 years after the Conquest. Local Indian rebellions frequently challenged Spanish rule in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, culminating in a massive uprising led by Incan descendent Tupác Amaru against corrupt local officials in the 1780s. Since independence, vicissitudes in the center's capacity to influence its periphery have frequently required local resolution of grievances, often by violence.

Sendero, however, deviates from the historic pattern. It is fighting not for adjustments in the system that will work for the benefit of the grievants at the periphery but for the total overthrow of the system itself. It differs in that it is the first full-blown rural rebellion in Peru guided by communist principles. In its ideology and in its strategy for taking power, it consciously and quite proudly follows the principles and practices of Mao. In its plan for Peruvian society after victory is won, it resembles the Indian millenarian movements and, most particularly, the precepts of primitive and pure Indian communism presented by José Carlos Mariátegui.[40] Sendero is also different in that its leadership has willingly taken a longer view of the revolutionary process. It has also been ready to work side by side with the Indian peasants and to educate their leaders before proceeding with the next stages of their struggle.

Sendero benefitted from several factors as it pursued its own plan of action. One was a local university that was committed to helping its region and its people and that easily succumbed to

Marxist influences. Another was the relative isolation of the region from the center culturally (as a predominantly Indian area), geographically (separated by rugged mountains and accessible by only two roads), and politically (as an area of low priority since the late 1960s). A further consideration was the continuing presence and commitment of an effective teacher and charismatic leader, Abimael Guzmán, along with several able colleagues. Control of the university by radicals, concomitant with a tolerant reformist military government that was trying to build allies on the left as counterweights to traditional parties, assisted in Sendero's development and consolidation in the 1970s. Sendero was able to build closer ties with Indian peasants in Ayacucho than would have been otherwise possible because government programs were both fewer in number in the countryside and less beneficial to most Indians in the area. By controlling and guiding the education of many teachers from the university, Sendero academics heavily influenced the one central government relationship with local communities that actually expanded during this period.

Sendero's move to implement the second and third stages of its strategy for taking power forced the movement beyond its own core area of Ayacucho. With few exceptions there were no truly peasant-based radical organizations in the country. Thus, Sendero's greatest strengths, a local peasant base of support and the purity of its ideology, became a significant limitation as Sendero tried to generalize the guerrilla struggle. Regional isolation and academic arrogance overshadowed the realities of alliances. Since compromise was beyond question, so too was the prospect of building coalitions. Thus, Sendero could use its superb clandestine organization to harass the establishment around the country—but that organization never grew beyond its Ayacucho (and now Apurímac) base. Furthermore, Sendero's appeals for pure, native peasant communism as the final revolutionary objective attract few who are now in the modern national economy and even fewer who are not Indian.

Sendero Luminoso is in many ways *sui generis* and no [illegible] ceptible to pigeonholing within the theoretical rubric of [illegible] tion. At the same time, a good measure of its success [illegible] attributed to worsening of social and economic [illegible]

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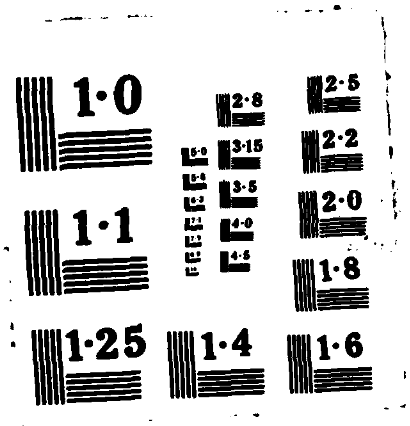
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the area of its operations because of both governmental neglect (declining budgets and programs) and governmental actions (especially agrarian reform). At the local level, a perception on the part of many Indian *comuneros* (joint tenants on collective farms) that their situation was worsening and that the central government was less concerned about them contributed to their willingness to work with and support Sendero. At the micro level, a sense of relative deprivation, reinforced by declining system responsiveness, made the peasant population susceptible to radical appeals. The catalysts were the core radicals at the university and individual Indian community members whose consciousness levels were raised by their university education or their work experience in the city.

Given this background and dynamic, a key element of the center's response to the challenge posed by Sendero should be economic assistance. An exclusively military response, which seems to be the dominant action to date, treats symptoms rather than causes. At present, the central government remains indifferent to the problems of Ayacucho and continues to follow misguided policies for the region; concern and feelings of desperation at the local level turn the population toward Sendero and its activists; as Sendero gains more support and sympathy, the potential for militancy and violence increases. Aid that responds to local needs and is locally controlled could serve to reverse this cycle.

Although Sendero by itself has little chance to bring about its ultimate goal, "the encirclement of the cities and the collapse of the state," its leaders thus far appear determined to persist by themselves. However, their actions and the publicity attached to them can have, and already give some evidence of having, serious consequences for Peru. Their frequency and persistence gradually give a perverse legitimacy to radical violence. Other Marxist groups, frustrated by their organizations' complacency and by Sendero's unwillingness to have them, may choose their own violent route. In addition, Sendero's actions may well serve as convenient cover for groups and organizations (e.g., criminals and drug dealers) who are using violent means for nonpolitical objectives.

The central authorities' tardy response to the developing crisis in the Ayacucho area, along with their emphasis on force and repression rather than economic and social development assistance, seem likely to prolong the cycle of violence. In the context of economic crisis, Sendero's long-term activity in core areas of its concern, the central government's long-standing neglect of the region, and a perception among some committed radicals that the other Marxist parties are bourgeois, Sendero will probably continue to attract new recruits on its own terms and continue to be a threat to authorities. Nevertheless, Sendero Luminoso's capacity to take power in Peru—in five, ten, or even seventy-five years—remains very much in doubt.

Notes

We don't really know a great deal about Sendero Luminoso beyond the visible external signs, given its penchant for secrecy and its unwillingness to engage in public relations. What we interpret or infer is based largely on previous experience in the area and acquaintance with some of the principals before they went underground, as well as on the persistent inquiries and research of a few journalists (chief among them, Gustavo Gorriti of *Caretas*) and occasional interviews.

I lived in Ayacucho for two years between 1962 and 1964 as Peace Corps Volunteer Leader (responsible for my own projects as well as for liaison with all the other Volunteers in the department of Ayacucho). My duties included teaching English and social science at the University for a year and a half, during which time I knew many of the individuals who would in due course emerge as Sendero activists. I also worked for six months on reforestation projects, in conjunction with the Peruvian Forest Service and Cooperación Popular, in three Indian communities in the isolated province of Victor Fajardo: Llucita, Circamarca, and Huancaraylla.

I returned to the area for several months between 1970 and 1972, on one occasion with a group of student assistants from the Catholic University of Lima, to carry out research for my dissertation on the effects of military government policies on citizen participation at the local agricultural cooperative or peasant community level. In 1977 I returned briefly to follow up on my earlier work, and in 1979, to lecture at the invitation of the University of Huamanga. Although I have been back to Peru several times since then, I have not returned to Ayacucho since Sendero became an active and open guerrilla force.

Much of the information presented in this paper is based on the daily journal I kept during my Peace Corps service; on field notes from subsequent research; and on conversations with Peruvian friends and acquaintances knowledgeable about Sendero, the key figures, and Ayacucho. The analysis and conclusions are my best inferences from these experiences and from the very partial public evidence available.

1. See Cynthia McClintock, "Why Peasants Rebel: The Case of Peru's Sendero Luminoso," in *World Politics* 35, October 1984, for a discussion of where Sendero Luminoso fits in the context of theories of peasant

rebellions and revolutions. She emphasizes the emergence of a threat to peasant subsistence as a central factor, in the context of geographical isolation, government neglect, and a local university intellectual vanguard.

2. See Héctor Béjar's analysis in *Peru 1965: Una experiencia guerrillera* (Lima: Campodónico Ediciones, 1969).

3. *Equis X*, 15 July 1981, pp. 38–40. Excerpt from Piedad Pareja Pflucker, *Terrorismo y sindicalismo en Ayacucho* (Lima, 1980), on the rise of Sendero Luminoso in Ayacucho.

4. For short presentations and analyses, in English, of the rise of Sendero from 1980 to the present, see the following: Cynthia McClintock, "Sendero Luminoso: Peru's Maoist Guerrillas," *Problems of Communism*, 32:5, September-October 1983, pp. 19–34; Cynthia McClintock, "Democracies and Guerrillas: The Peruvian Experience," *International Policy Report*, Center for International Policy, September 1983; Philip Bennett, "Peru: Corner of the Dead," *Atlantic*, May 1984, pp. 28–33; David Scott Palmer, "Peru," *Yearbook of International Communist Affairs 1982* and *1983* (Stanford: Hoover Institution, 1982 and 1983); and Sandra Woy-Hazelton, *Yearbook of International Communist Affairs 1984*. For the most complete discussion of Sendero in Spanish, see the periodic articles and analyses in *Caretas* (Lima) by Gustavo Gorriti.

5. As reported in *Caretas*, 20 September 1982, pp. 20–23 ff., and *Latin America Regional Report (Andean Group)*, 8 October 1982, p. 2.

6. Data from election results reported in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), 14 November 1983, pp. J4–J5.

7. Ibid., p. J4.

8. These are Inter-American Development Bank figures in 1980 dollars.

9. The 1939 figure is calculated from presidential election data in Kenneth Ruddle and Philip Gillette, eds., *Latin American Political Statistics* (Los Angeles: Latin American Center, University of California, 1972), p. 96. The 1980 figure is calculated from 1980 presidential election data as compiled in David Scott Palmer, "Peru," in Jack Hopkins, ed., *Latin America and Caribbean Record*, Volume I, 1981-82 (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1983), Table II, p. 345.

10. See the detailed summary of such disturbing trends in Cynthia McClintock, "Democracies and Guerrillas: The Peruvian Experience," p. 3.

11. The full study has been carried out by the Peruvian Institute for Liberty and Democracy, Hernando de Soto, President, but was not

available as of August 1984. Articles on the Institute's major findings appeared in the *Wall Street Journal,* 27 January 1984, and the *Washington Post,* 30 October 1983, among other newspapers and magazines. The data in the paragraph come from these articles.

12. The concept of the revolutionary gap is that of James C. Davis, originally elaborated in "Toward a Theory of Revolution," *American Sociological Review* 27, February 1962, pp. 1-19.

13. The 1962 figure is from Ruddle and Gillette, eds., *Latin American Political Statistics,* p. 96. The 1980 figure is from Palmer, "Peru," in Hopkins, ed., *Latin American and Caribbean Contemporary Record,* Volume I, p. 345. The 1983 datum is from *Latin America Regional Report (Andean Group),* 83-10, 16 December 1983, p. 5.

14. These figures appear in one of a series of articles on communist influence in Peru appearing in *O Globo de São Paulo,* 2 September 1984, p. 14. Other sources show significantly higher figures. For example, see David Scott Palmer, "The Changing Political Economy of Peru under Military and Civilian Rule," *Inter-American Economic Affairs,* 37:4, Spring 1984, p. 59, for an estimate of CGTP affiliation among organized workers of 80 percent. Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook—1982* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1982), p. 187, notes that 25 percent of the Peruvian labor force is organized, which would be about 1.3 million workers in unions or industrial communities in 1982.

15. For additional discussion of this point, see Palmer, "The Changing Political Economy of Peru," esp. pp. 54-55 and 61-62.

16. This is a theme of several of the studies of the military period in Peru between 1968 and 1980. See, for example, Henry Dietz and David Scott Palmer, "Citizen Participation under Innovative Military Corporatism in Peru," in John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, eds., *Political Participation in Latin America, Volume I: Citizen and State* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1978), pp. 172-188. But also see several of the articles in both Abraham F. Lowenthal, ed., *The Peruvian Experiment: Continuity and Change under Military Rule* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975); and Cynthia McClintock and Abraham F. Lowenthal, eds., *The Peruvian Experiment Reconsidered* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983).

17. For a fuller discussion of the basis of the argument that the threshold of military intervention in Peru (and in other Latin American countries recently experiencing long-term institutionalized military rule) has been raised, see David Scott Palmer, "The Military in Latin America," in

Jack Hopkins, et al., *Latin America: Perspectives on a Region* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1984), various pages.

18. In a February 1983 poll in Lima, only 9 percent of those expressing an opinion wanted military government, even though the popularity of President Belaúnde had plummeted from well over half the population early in his term to 14 percent. Presented in McClintock, "Democracies and Guerrillas," p. 5, from *Caretas*, 28 February 1983.

19. This is not to imply that APRA has overcome completely its recent divisiveness and leadership conflict. Internal differences continue to challenge the party, but since the 1982 elections, the García forces have been in control.

20. Some reports, however, indicate that Sendero, or at least some elements of Sendero, may be attempting to reorganize on a somewhat wider class and regional base. See, for example, *La Prensa* (Lima), 6 February 1984, p. 1.

21. Although the author has no firm empirical evidence for any formal Lima connection by Sendero through recent migrants from Ayacucho communities under its influence, other studies that suggest the historical importance of such ties between country and city make the hypothesis a plausible one. See, for example, William Mangin, ed., *Peasants in Cities* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970); and Billy Jean Isbell, *To Defend Ourselves: Ecology and Ritual in an Andean Village* (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, 1978).

22. See, among other theoretical discussions of how Sendero's violence affects its support, Chalmers Johnson, *Revolutionary Change* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966).

23. Two very different but most useful studies of Ayacucho, with copious documentation of central government neglect, are Luis R. Fowler, *Monografía histórico-geográfica del Departamento de Ayacucho* (Lima: Imprenta Torres Aguirre, 1924); and Antonio Díaz Martínez, *Ayacucho: Hambre y esperanza* (Ayacucho: Ediciones "Waman Poma," 1969).

24. Province-level income data was provided to the author by Richard Webb, and was part of the data base for Webb's larger study, *Government Policy and the Distribution of Income in Peru, 1965–1973* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977).

25. Ironic exceptions, fairly common in the sierra, were the district capitals, which were also Indian communities and which had for generations elected their local leaders by vote of their community assemblies.

26. This example and others presented above come from the author's

journal covering residence in Ayacucho between 1962 and 1964 or from research field notes covering the 1970-1972 period.

27. Fernando Romero Pintado, "New Design for an Old University: San Cristobal de Huamanga," *Americas*, December 1961, n.p.

28. For a discussion of the process of politicization of university programs in its early stages, see David Scott Palmer, "The Peace Corps and the Peruvian University," in Robert Textor, ed., *Cultural Frontiers of the Peace Corps* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1966), pp. 243-270.

29. For a most illuminating analysis of the University of San Cristóbal de Huamanga and its importance as the source of what came to be known as Sendero Luminoso, see Luis Millones, "Informe sobre Uchuraccay," in the *Informe de la Comisión Investigadora de los sucesos de Uchuraccay* (Lima: Editora Peru, 1983), esp. pp. 90-102.

30. The author happened to be in the Agrarian Reform offices in Ayacucho when the report arrived that two Agriculture Ministry employees had been shot while attempting to enter the area.

31. The agrarian reform program in Ayacucho is discussed at length and with a number of case studies in David Scott Palmer, *"Revolution from Above": Military Government and Popular Participation in Peru, 1968-1972* (Ithaca: Cornell University, Latin American Studies Program, #47), esp. pp. 203-227.

32. Enrique Mayer and David Scott Palmer, "They Won't Listen: Government-Campesino Relations in the Central Andes," paper presented at the Andean Consortium, Pennsylvania State University, 5 May 1972.

33. Instituto Nacional de Estadística, *Censos Nacionales: VIII de Población, III de Vivienda, 12 de Julio de 1981: Departamento de Ayacucho* (Lima, 1983), Tomo 1, pp. vii-xvii.

34. McClintock, "Democracies and Guerrillas," Table 3, p. 4.

35. *Caretas*, 9 July 1984, p. 11.

36. Ibid.

37. *Informe de la Comisión Investigadora* and Mario Vargas Llosa, "Inquest in the Andes," *New York Times Magazine*, 31 July 1983, pp. 18-23ff.

38. *Caretas*, 9 July 1984, p. 11.

39. The military governor of the Emergency Zone, encompassing Ayacucho and parts of Apurímac and Huancavelica, dismissed the head of the region's development corporation in July 1984 in a move to call attention to the failure of the government to provide promised economic assistance to the area (*FBIS*, 10 July 1984, p. J3). In August General

Adrian Huaman repeated his concern in a Lima newspaper interview, noting that he was promised up to $20 million to help with the problems of the region, "but nothing happened." His conclusion was that "the solution for Ayacucho is not the military, but the reversal of 160 years of abandonment" (*La República*, 27 August 1984, p. 1). General Huaman was dismissed from his post for his public utterances, but central government authorities also responded to his frustration by announcing a $26 million program for Ayacucho in the 1985 budget (*La Crónica* (Lima), 28 August 1984, p. 1).

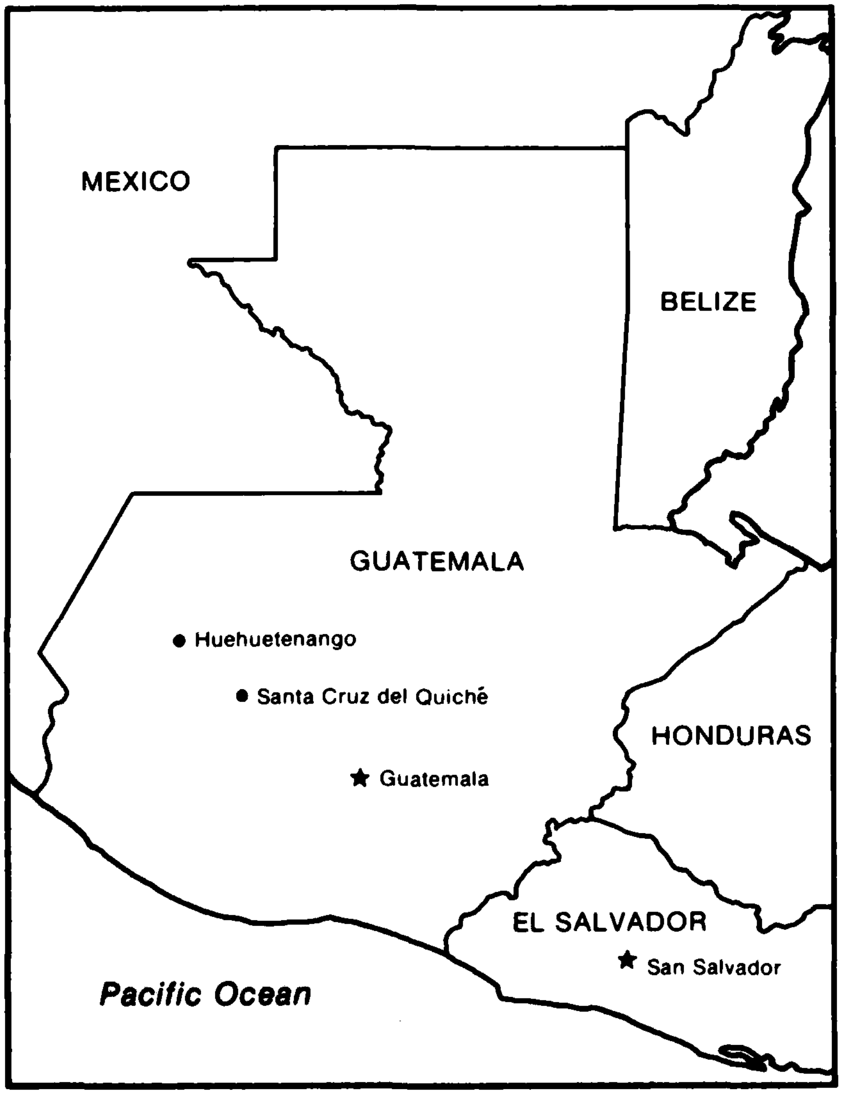
40. See Juan M. Ossio A., ed., *Ideología mesiánica del mundo andino* (Lima: Grafica Morson, 1973), which contains several articles on Indian messianism in Ayacucho communities. Also see José Carlos Mariátegui, *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (Lima: Empresa Editora Amauta, 1963), esp. pp. 29-43, 168-197, and 285-300.

THE HIGHLANDS WAR IN GUATEMALA

Cesar D. Sereseres

The revolutionary wars currently being fought in the Central American region involve a second generation of guerrillas. In Guatemala, Marxist-led insurgents and the armed forces have been in combat since 1962. During this two-decade period the region has significantly changed. Throughout the 1960s the United States was the dominant external actor—providing (without conditions) essential amounts of military, economic, and financial assistance. The governments from Panama to Guatemala were headed by conservative strongmen, closely linked (except in Costa Rica) to national military institutions. Membership in guerrilla movements numbered in the hundreds, not in the thousands as is the case in the 1980s.

In 1984 the United States is but one actor in the region. A Marxist regime has come to power in Managua by way of a protracted fifteen-year guerrilla war against Anastasio Somoza. Cuba, and to a lesser extent the Soviet Union, has established a political and military presence in Nicaragua. In El Salvador, 10,000 guerrillas continue to battle 50,000 government troops and security forces to a military stalemate. And the Guatemalan armed forces continue to fight the remnants of a 3,000-man guerrilla army in the Indian highlands—at this stage without US political support and military assistance, and with minimal economic aid. Between 1978 and 1982 Guatemala found itself with few allies, with limited resources, and treated by the international community as a pariah.


MEXICO
BELIZE
GUATEMALA
Huehuetenango
Santa Cruz del Quiché
Guatemala
HONDURAS
EL SALVADOR
San Salvador
Pacific Ocean

Guatemala

The following discussion focuses on describing the regional context of the Guatemalan insurgency, analyzing the roots of the guerrilla conflict, ascertaining the characteristics of the guerrilla movements and the strategy of the leadership, and examining the response of the Guatemalan armed forces. As will become evident, the Guatemalan case provides revealing "lessons" for insurgents and counterinsurgents alike.

THE REGIONAL CONTEXT OF THE GUATEMALAN INSURGENCY

Internal war and regional conflict are not new to Central America. An example illustrates this cyclical phenomenon:

> The Guatemalan coup was the last of a series of governmental turnovers . . . that installed new administrations in all five of the republics, completely changing the political atmosphere in the region. Most of the new governments were unsteady and had a common desire for external support against anticipated counterrevolution.
>
> The situation in Central America worsened, and soon the entire Isthmus seemed on the verge of explosion—revolts threatened the regimes . . . many of the uprisings were launched from neighboring countries. . . . Border raids among Nicaragua, Honduras, and El Salvador brought these nations to the brink of war. . . . Bandits were operating between the states, taking refuge across the frontiers when pursued, keeping all three republics in turmoil. Exiles from each nation were attempting to organize invasions behind the sanctuary of borders.
>
> The cruiser *Tacoma* was dispatched to the Gulf of Fonseca to provide an American "presence." [1]

Although this scenario is similar to the Central America of the 1980s, the events described took place between 1919 and 1923.

Today the Central American region consists of the following nations: Panama, with the Canal and the presence of US military bases and troops; Costa Rica, with a democracy under threat of economic stagnation and tensions along the Nicaraguan border; Nicaragua, with a Marxist leadership strongly supported by the Cubans and under heavy pressure from US-supported anti-Sandinista guerrillas ("contras"); Honduras, with a fledgling democracy feeling the burden of a growing US military presence (including a newly established base at Puerto Castilla to train Salvadoran military personnel) and under threat of a border conflict with Nicaragua; El Salvador, with a shattered economy as a result of four years of internal war and where the United States has pledged to "draw the line" against communist subversion; Guatemala, where a military government that came to power in March 1982 began to neutralize the guerrillas and restructure the government bureaucracy and political system *without* major US presence or resources; and Belize, the newly independent nation caught between the turmoil of Central America and its own more traditional political, cultural, and institutional orientations of the British Caribbean. Adding to Belize's split personality dilemma is Guatemala's historical claim to Belizean territory.

The region contains approximately 26 million inhabitants, with half the population under the age of 15 years. The societies of the region are European, Indian, and black—with the majority of the population of mixed heritage, including cultures from the Middle East and Asia. Although Spanish is the dominant language, some twenty-five Indian dialects are spoken, in addition to English. The economies of the region represented a total gross domestic product of $25 billion in 1980. Investment in the area (excluding Panama) amounts to $1 billion. US bank exposure has declined to less than $1 billion. The value of trade between the United States and the Central American region amounted to roughly $5 billion in 1980. No economic relationship with a nation of the region represents more than 3 percent of the total of US economic activity in the hemisphere.

This highly diverse and until recently ignored region offers few strategic resources (other than the Panama Canal) or major economic benefits for the United States. What it does represent, however, is a *historically* strategic region that is deeply embedded in the minds of public policy decisionmakers in Washington, Havana, and Moscow. The Central Americans, for the most part, see themselves as victims of the global pretensions, ideological ambitions, and parochial interests of actors outside the region.[2]

Throughout the twentieth century the Caribbean Basin was seen as an "American lake." However, by the mid 1970s the

United States began to curtail its presence in the region. The hegemonic position of the United States in Central America disappeared, resulting in subtle changes in the region's geopolitical dynamics. The American "withdrawal" motivated Central American elites and revolutionaries alike to seek new allies. Regional actors such as Cuba, Mexico, and Venezuela took a more active role in the region. European political rivalries were introduced into Central America; competition among the Socialist International, Social Democracy, and Christian Democracy emerged as a result of newly established links with Europe. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union strengthened its military ties to Cuba as it explored traditional diplomatic links with countries in the region.

The decline in the US presence and the subsequent change in the geopolitics of Central America became evident as public debate began in 1977 concerning a series of events in the region: the Panama Canal Treaty negotiations, the Nicaraguan revolution, the Salvadoran civil war, the Guatemalan insurgency, renewed Cuban activism in revolutionary struggles, and the increased number of Central American refugees seeking haven in the United States. The debate forced some to conclude that the decline in the US presence in the region, combined with the emergence of guerrilla conflicts and Cuban and Soviet willingness and ability to exploit these "targets of opportunity," posed a serious threat to the traditional political order of Central America.[3]

Beset by political instability, the region is affected by revolutionary activity ranging from consolidation of power by a Marxist-oriented leadership in Nicaragua and revolutionary warfare waged by leftist groups in El Salvador and Guatemala to an incipient insurgency in Honduras. Mexico may become similarly affected by revolutionary turmoil, but this is uncertain. Some analysts suggest that Mexico is vulnerable because of the deteriorated economic and social conditions of the country's southeastern region. Although the prospects of revolutionary conflict from Central America spilling over into Mexico are remote, the possibility prompts some US government officials to identify such "threats" to Mexico as a strategic concern of the United States.[4]

US interests in Central America are modest. The Central American nations do not possess raw materials or economic investments that are critical to the United States. And none poses a threat to Caribbean sea lanes or directly jeopardizes the military security of the United States.

The region assumes strategic importance, however, when viewed from a broader perspective that takes into account two factors:

- Central America forms an integral part of the larger Caribbean Basin, where developments are easily transmitted from nation to nation.
- The Soviet Union and its allies seek to exploit "targets of opportunity" along the southern perimeters of the United States.

Adverse regional trends could erode the global position of the United States, especially if conditions in Central America should deteriorate to the point where the Soviet Union gains a military position in the region or the United States has to divert its military power to intervene.

As such, three related threats to US interests exist in Central America:

- Low-intensity conflict is spreading by means of guerrilla warfare, leftist and rightist terrorism, government repression, and border conflicts. Guided by the experience of the Sandinistas, today's revolutionaries seek to internationalize local conflicts.
- An alignment hostile to the United States and its interests is developing between Cuba and Nicaragua, with Soviet support. Such a military alliance clearly would complicate US defense planning for crises elsewhere and would affect global perceptions of US power.
- Soviet-Cuban capabilities for power projection are growing because of improvements in their military forces and agreement on the conduct of revolutionary warfare.

In addition, a guerrilla victory in El Salvador would raise the specter of a domino-style spread of revolutionary conflict. Victorious guerrilla leaders could call for a protracted war to "liberate" all of Central America. Such a war would generate a refugee problem for the United States. It would also probably demoralize

Honduras, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Panama, and it would encourage further Cuban and Soviet activities in the region.

A guerrilla success in El Salvador would simultaneously narrow the range and raise the cost of US policy options. It would become more difficult for the United States to treat Central America as though its problems could be resolved, and insurgencies stemmed, mainly with economic and military assistance. Restoring stability to the region would require a US military presence. Yet a large military deployment to Central America could provoke widespread hostility throughout Latin America and thereby reduce the United States' ability to respond to crisis areas beyond the Western Hemisphere.[5]

The sources of domestic conflict in the Basin can be found in inequitable socioeconomic systems and weak political systems that persist in many countries. In addition, Cuba's role as a promoter of guerrilla movements is more effective in the 1980s than it was in the 1960s. Cuba has upgraded its institutional and logistical capabilities and enhanced its ability to draw upon international resources for the training and active support of guerrilla organizations. The Sandinista National Liberation Front (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional—FSLN) victory in Nicaragua vindicated Castro's commitment to revolutionary warfare as a political strategy. It also presented the Cubans with the opportunity to establish a footing on the Latin American mainland—after twenty years of political, diplomatic, and covert struggles. And after two decades of policy debate with the Cubans, the Soviets acknowledged the efficacy of revolutionary warfare along lines of the Nicaraguan experience. By 1981 the Soviets endorsed the new strategy of armed struggle for the communist parties in El Salvador and elsewhere in Central America. Thus, for the first time, Cuba and the USSR reached a general agreement on revolutionary strategy—limited, however, to the Central American region.

Guatemala's insurgency has thus evolved in a uniquely distinct Central American environment. Global relationships have changed. The United States has changed. Guatemala's own neighbors have changed. And of course, Guatemala itself has changed over the past two decades. To understand the domestic roots of the guerrilla war it is necessary to examine the role of Guatemala's most central national institution, the military, and the socioeconomic conditions of the nation.

MILITARY POLITICS, SOCIOECONOMIC PATTERNS, AND THE HIGHLANDS WAR

With the exception of Cuba, and now possibly Nicaragua, Guatemala has the best-equipped, best-organized and best-trained military in the Caribbean Basin. The military's acquisitions have given it the capability to operate for extended periods anywhere in the country, including the spacious and distant regions of Huehuetenango, Quiché, and Petén. As an institution, the military has abilities and mechanisms that are unmatched in Guatemalan society for selecting and training personnel at all levels, obtaining necessary material resources, instilling professional pride, and maintaining organizational cohesion.

However, the structure, resources, and cohesion of the armed forces do not explain how and why the military has assumed such a dominant role. The military is the most complex and stable institution in a nation that has a very small public sector. Moreover, it has filled the vacuum left by the debilitation of other national institutions. In addition to the violence, one-man leadership and the lack of sufficient popular bases hinder most if not all of the political parties. The business community forms no coherent, united front except in crises. Labor is weak and divided. And the Catholic Church has avoided playing a highly visible role in national politics.

The Guatemalan military has had its institutional growth spurred by the traumas of foreign intervention, political factionalism, military assistance from abroad, the responsibility of governing the nation, and prolonged internal warfare. At the same time, as it has grown, acquired more resources, and developed its own bureaucracy, it has assumed nonmilitary functions.

The military institution has, in a sense, been thrust into this position by the prevalent ideology of the powerful economic interest groups. The ideology is known as *iniciativa privada* (private initiative), not anti-communism. For example, the political link that binds the urban businessmen and the rural agriculturalists is not so much anti-communism as fear that the national government will expand into their respective domains. Small government in Guatemala is a consequence of the effective lobbying of these economic groups. As the fastest-growing element in an otherwise small public sector, the military necessarily dominates the public-private sector relationship and national development.[6]

Events in Guatemala are better understood in light of the military's institutional development and central role in society, the tendency of institutions to preserve and perpetuate themselves, and the ideology of *iniciativa privada* than in terms of "anti-communism" and "revolution." Guatemala is a country in which ideological labels have been used to undermine political opposition or to bargain with the United States for military and economic assistance, where the same individuals have fought for both "right" and "left," and where the armed forces have fought against both "right" and "left." The military's history since 1944 suggests that its actions have more often been dictated by the desire to preserve its institutional integrity—and the national welfare—than by ardently held ideologies.[7]

Guerrillas and the Military's Institutional Crises

By late 1981 the credibility and legitimacy of the electoral process and the government's counterinsurgency doctrine had dissipated. No change could be expected if the political process were allowed to continue. When the policies and practices of the General Romeo Lucas Garcia regime threatened the integrity of the military, that institution (or at least an element within it) had the instinct to reform itself.

The motives of the 23 March 1982 coup were rooted in the institutional values of the officers, whose efforts to fight the guerrillas were impeded by political corruption and governmental inefficiency. The seeds of the coup, however, were sown several years before. In 1980 the Army's general staff joined the National Planning Council to propose *Plan Ixil*, a multimillion-dollar socioeconomic program for the highlands that would have complemented the military's counterinsurgency operations. The president and his cabinet rejected the plan and thus restricted the army's counterinsurgency activities to solely military operations. The Guatemalan armed forces were left on their own to fight the guerrillas with principally one resource, weapons.

In mid 1981, after six months of work by twenty middle-ranking officers, Guatemala's Center for Military Studies produced an analysis of the political, economic, and diplomatic conditions that jeopardized the army's military efforts. It concluded that the March 1982 elections must strengthen the government's domestic and international legitimacy, and it recommended that no military officer should be a presidential candidate. The reaction from the high command was a severe reprimand to the Center for Military Studies for involving the military in "political" matters.

By late 1981, as military casualties increased and allegations of corruption became more prominent, captains in the field spoke to former military academy instructors. The junior officers expressed the concern that the high command was in the process of "wasting" them—"*nos van a gastar.*" And indeed, 90 percent of the more than 100 officers killed in combat between 1980 and 1982 were lieutenants and captains. For the young officers as well as sympathetic senior officers, the only salvation for the military institution and the nation was a return to *fundamentalismo militar*—basic military values, practices, and missions. When General Angel Aníbal Guevara won the 1982 election, the officers saw no recourse but to intervene in the political process.

The rebelling officers kept in mind both the Nicaraguan and El Salvadoran experiences. The coup was an effort to avoid the complete isolation of the armed forces from the population, a situation that had eventually led to the institutional destruction of Somoza's National Guard in July 1979. However, the young officers, and later the junta, also wished to avoid the political chaos and the radicalization that took place after the October 1979 coup in El Salvador. The officers involved did not engage in revolutionary rhetoric, nor did they seek drastic social reforms. They sought no alliances with political parties, the private sector, or other organized elements in society. Most important, those within the military hierarchy (not the advisory group) of junior officers made every effort to maintain the institutional unity and integrity of the armed forces and avoided the wholesale expulsion of officers. With the assistance of hand-picked civilian professionals and administrators, the military institution established full control of the reorganization of government and the political life of the country.

Latent Dimensions of the Insurgency

Guerrilla violence often results from social and economic inequalities, from conditions of injustice for the common citizen, and from the economic exploitation of the labor sectors of society. The affected groups provide potential recruits for guerrilla movements. In the case of Guatemala, economic and social conditions may be as responsible for the persistence (although not existence) of the insurgency as the government's counterinsurgency tactics during the 1978–1981 period. For example, while the nation's economy growth rate was substantial during the 1960s and 1970s, it is estimated that only about one-third of the population has significantly benefited from Guatemala's economic growth.[8]

There are fewer than 100 families (often related through marriages) at the center of Guatemala's private sector. They have diversified sources of wealth in commerce, agriculture, industry, and finance, and they significantly influence—not dominate—Guatemala's economy. With several hundred members, the families manage five banks, representing over 50 percent of the private banking system's assets. They own some 100 of the most productive industrial firms and about 100 of the country's 3,000 coffee plantations, which usually account for 20 percent of the nation's coffee production.[9]

Land ownership and personal income are characterized by skewed distributions. Of the farm land, 80 percent is held by 3 percent of the farm families. Nine out of ten rural inhabitants live on plots of land too small to support a family. Moreover, 25 percent of the rural families have no land at all. Although per capita income was above $1,000 by the beginning of the 1980s, the highland Indians have an annual average income of less than $200. Twenty percent of the population earns about two-thirds of the national income, and the poorest 20 percent earns less than 10 percent. In terms of absolute wealth, 5 percent of the population earns about one-third of the GNP. This is the most skewed distribution of wealth in Central America.[10]

Although no reliable data exist, one-third of the nation's labor force may be unemployed. In some rural areas, unemployment may range as high as 40 percent. These figures probably reflect the fact that, outside of Guatemala City and the agricultural zones of the south coast, development is limited. Sixty percent of the industrial firms are located in the metropolitan area, and they account for 70 percent of the nation's industrial production. The highlands have 25 percent of the nation's land mass and 50 percent of its population, yet the region receives minimal levels of economic and social investment. Indicators of life expectancy, mortality rates, health services, nutrition, and education demonstrate the stark differences between the highlands and the capital.

By 1968 the judicial system had become an ineffective mechanism for ensuring justice. The judicial process proved vulnerable to threats from political extremists. Retaliation against judges, lawyers, and witnesses became common practice. Average citizens, as well as the security forces, found their own extra-legal remedies for dealing with bad debtors, common criminals, or subversives.

Between 1966 and 1982 over 20,000 people were killed in politically-related violence. Several thousand had disappeared, and thousands of others had fled to Mexico, other Central American countries, or the United States. Between the actions of the guerrillas, the military, and paramilitary groups, virtually every organized segment of society and leadership group was subjected to physical violence and psychological coercion.[11]

The 23 March Coup

Although allegations of electoral fraud in the March 1982 election were the immediate cause, the coup of 23 March was actually a response to the high number of officer casualties, a growing insurgency, the loss of institutional and national prestige, and the lack of any prospects of change. The young officers made the following statement in their first radio communiqué after troops surrounded the National Palace:

> [Given] the situation to which the country has been taken by means of the practice of fraudulent elections, accompanied by the deterioration of moral values, the splintering of democratic forces, as well as the disorder and corruption in public administration, it has become impossible to resolve these problems within a constitutional framework. All of which makes it imperative that the Army assume the government of the Republic.[12]

General Efraín Ríos Montt, in one of his first public statements, noted that the coup was a political act that would lay the basis for political solutions for the nation. Later, in a major address to the nation, Ríos Montt provided an assessment of Guatemalan national security and the nature of the subversive threat, which, despite his removal on 8 August 1983, still influences military strategy:

> If we close our eyes, increase the number of soldiers and policemen, and we attack the subversives, we can do it [defeat the guerrillas]. And in three months the guerrillas will return. . . . Security does not consist of arms, tanks, and airplanes. This is not even five percent of the requirement for a national security policy. Security lies in the relationship between the state and the people. . . . Security lies in the sense of trust between state and people—that both will meet their respective obligations. . . . We have given the communists a flag. If we were, in fact, a democracy, Guatemala would be well today. But we have been corrupt. . . . We [the military] are here to complete a mission: institutionalize the state and channel resources and benefits to those in need. . . .[13]

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INSURGENCY

The Guatemalan insurgents of the 1980s trace their roots to the 1944-1954 "decade of revolution." Today's guerrilla leadership claims a special tie with the "unfinished revolution" of President Jacobo Arbenz. Even though the 1954 "liberation" did not return Guatemala to the pre-1944 era, or even undo most of the major legislation of the Arévalo-Arbenz regimes, it created a sense of "history denied" that has shaped the radical consciousness for twenty-five years. Idealized and romanticized by intellectuals, the "decade of revolution" and the radical leaders involved in it have provided today's guerrillas with a mythology and a sense of identity.[14]

While Guatemalan military officers and civilians were learning conflicting lessons from the successful counterinsurgency campaign of the 1960s, surviving guerrilla cadres of the Rebel Armed Forces/Guatemalan Workers' Party (Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes/Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo—FAR/PGT) and the FAR went through a self-criticism concerning the intellectual, political, and military assumptions that contributed to their failure.

After several years of travel to Cuba, Vietnam, and other Third World nations that had experienced revolutionary war, several of the survivors, joined by a cadre of new revolutionaries, formed the nucleus of the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (Ejército Guerrillero de Los Pobres—EGP) in the remote Indian region of Ixcan. Beginning with a cadre of twelve members in 1972, the EGP grew strong enough to operate as a military and political force in six highland departments by 1980. The leadership of the EGP began the highland-based insurgency with a revolutionary strategy distinct from that of the 1960s. The guerrilla leadership became more sophisticated than its predecessors about opponents, opportunities, and capabilities.[15]

The second-generation guerrillas rejected the *foquista*-insurrectionist ("foco") strategy of revolutionary warfare.[16] Although this model proved successful for Cuba's *fidelistas* in the late 1950s, it had since produced a series of failures throughout the hemisphere. Such a strategy had left the previous Guatemalan insurgents politically and militarily isolated. With no secure geographical and population bases to recruit from, the insurgents could use only one form of action—military. Because the guerrillas had little outside assistance and no international support network, it was easier for government forces to destroy the insurgents as a *military* force.

The EGP leadership carefully analyzed the failures of the past and developed a new strategy with the three following principles:

- Reject *foquismo* and plan for a *guerra prolongada*. Establish a guerrilla base and political infrastructure in a remote but populated area.
- Involve the Indian population (previously ignored by the radical left and orthodox communists) in the armed revolutionary struggle.
- Pursue a second, equally important "front" in the international community.

Three years elapsed between the arrival of the small political cadre in Ixcan in 1972 and the first major political act against the armed forces. By 1975 the EGP had established itself as the leading edge of the renewed guerrilla struggle. By late 1980 the EGP was joined in the armed struggle by three other groups: the Armed People's Organization (Organización del Pueblo en Armas—ORPA), the Rebel Armed Forces (Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes—FAR),[17] and a dissident faction of the Guatemalan Workers' Party (Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo). In November 1980 these four guerrilla groups signed an agreement to form the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG).

With this agreement the guerrilla struggle assumed a common and unified front—if only on paper. The appearance of unity was important because it was the price of assistance from abroad, especially from Cuba. The leaders of the respective guerrilla organizations also formed the Comandancia General Revolucionaria in order to coordinate internal and external activities, plan military strategies, and formalize links to front organizations and international solidarity networks in Mexico, Central America, the United States, and Europe.

Although little is known about the leadership cadre, the radical challengers' ideas and concepts have been widely published. Their "world view" is dominated by Marxist analysis of the conditions of society and the need for revolutionary conflict. In January 1982 the URNG issued a statement that provides the reasoning and objectives of the insurgents. The "Unity Statement from the Revolutionary Organizations—EGP, FAR, ORPA, PGT—to the People of Guatemala" declares that "it is a united struggle under the banner of popular Revolutionary War to defeat our enemies, take power and set up a Revolutionary, Patriotic, Popular and Democratic Government." The statement further elaborates on the five fundamental objectives of a revolutionary government: (1) guarantee the elimination of repression; (2) guarantee the provision of the basic needs of the majority of the people by eliminating the political domination of the repressive rich, both national and foreign, who rule Guatemala; (3) guarantee equality between Indians and ladinos; (4) guarantee the creation of a "New Society" in which all patriotic, popular, and democratic sectors will be represented; and (5) guarantee a policy of nonalignment and international cooperation.

During the formative years of the EGP there were few prospects for Cuban support. Although many of the leaders of the EGP had been trained in or traveled to Cuba and other socialist countries during the 1960s, there is little evidence of a concrete Cuban interest in the revolutionary struggle in Guatemala. The death of Che Guevara in Bolivia in 1967, closer relations with the Soviets after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, the courting of military "progressives" in Peru and Panama in the early 1970s, support for the "peaceful road to socialism" (as exemplified by Chile), and the desire to improve diplomatic relations in Latin America all contributed to a lessening of Castro's commitment to revolutionary armed struggle. After the period of accommodation, Cuba would focus attention on Africa beginning in 1975. Thus, the EGP developed and evolved virtually independent of Cuba, the Soviet Union, and the communist support network. The EGP and other guerrilla organizations had few prospects for significant and sustained Cuban assistance until the success of the Sandinistas in 1979.[18]

In the mid 1960s the FAR, the November 13 Revolutionary Movement, and FAR-PGT guerrillas operated effectively only in the capital and fewer than five departments, mostly in eastern Guatemala. Never numbering more than 300 to 500 armed guerrillas, never operating in a column of more than thirty, and never taking a department capital, their most destructive attack against the military was the 1966 ambush and killing of twelve soldiers in Zacapa. In contrast, the EGP began with a cadre of twelve in 1972, but by late 1980 guerrilla efforts and government counterinsurgency tactics had combined to increase guerrilla manpower to over 3,000 fighters.[19] By early 1982 guerrilla units operated in at least half the republic's twenty-two departments; maintained a deeply-rooted infrastructure in a six-department region of the northwestern highlands; sometimes operated in columns of as many as 200; and systematically attacked, and often occupied and destroyed, government municipalities, police stations, military outposts, and other symbols of public authority.

Between 1978 and 1982 guerrillas had killed over 1,000 national policemen and military and paramilitary troops. During the Zacapa insurgency government forces accounted for only a small fraction of the casualties. By 1982 the guerrillas had become a formidable political and military force in Guatemala and, just as important, had diplomatically extended their reach to the international community.

THE RESPONSE OF THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT, 1982-1984

Despite the replacement of General Ríos Montt with General Oscar Mejía Víctores by the Commanders' Council on 8 August 1983, the basic strategy of the military government has changed little. With Ríos Montt's removal, the military government took on a different style and tone. The personnel changes that followed (including the dissolution of the young officers' "advisory group") did not affect the fundamental objective of the military government's strategy to meet the guerrilla threat. Essential elements of this strategy included a more discriminating counterinsurgency effort, less dependent on military force. Just as important, the government sought to strengthen its political position in the region with a more positive, active diplomacy. To strengthen this position required developing legitimacy and wider support, and to do this required controlling extra-legal violence against the citizenry and minimizing public corruption. Finally, the government purposefully tried to establish a "public record" to make political dialogue with the United States possible—a necessary prelude to renewed military, economic, and financial cooperation.

The "Victoria '82" Operation, July-December 1982

The counterinsurgency strategy (begun on 1 July 1982 under the name "Victoria '82") had three essential elements. The first was to increase the number of men under arms and deploy and maintain larger numbers of smaller units throughout the "zones of conflict" in the highlands. The Chief of Staff also improved command and control in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of military operations. Along with this, a military code of conduct was issued in July 1982 to improve relations between the army and noncombatants.

The second element of the counterinsurgency strategy was to expand and intensify efforts to establish civilian defense forces

(CDFs) in the highlands. The military made special efforts to mobilize thousands of Indians into village CDFs in the "Ixil Triangle," a region in northern Quiché department located in the geopolitical heart of the EGP.[20]

The third element of the counterinsurgency strategy was to initiate a socioeconomic assistance plan in the "zones of conflict," a tactic reminiscent of the military's successful civic action programs against the guerrillas in the 1960s. The Committee for National Reconstruction (Comité de Reconstrucción Nacional—CRN) provided food and services and coordinated small development projects in rural communities affected by the violence. Formed after the 1976 earthquake to coordinate international assistance, the CRN became a coordinating agency for civic action and social assistance to encourage the establishment of civil defense forces. The ultimate purpose of the strategy was to establish trust between the armed forces and the rural population. The task has not been easy.

The "Victoria '82" campaign lasted for less than six months (July-December 1982). But it was during this time—with a mobilized, expanded army fighting in smaller units throughout the highlands, with the support of several hundred thousand CDF *patrulleros* and the CRN, which assisted some 300,000 rural inhabitants directly affected by the violence—that deaths rose sharply and the largest wave of refugees arrived in Mexico. Despite having broken the guerrillas—especially the EGP—militarily by late 1982, the military continues to struggle politically with the guerrillas over the allegiance of thousands of inhabitants, not only in the rural highlands but now also along the Mexican border from San Marcos to Petén and along the south coast—areas that guerrillas were pushed into by "Victoria '82." Both sides continue to mobilize the population; both realize that the loyalty of the rural inhabitants will ultimately determine the outcome of the Guatemalan internal war. One point is worth noting: although the potential pool of human resources for an insurgency is staggering—given socioeconomic conditions, weak government presence, and violence at the hands of government and nongovernment forces—the rural population has not been converted into a mass revolutionary movement against the Guatemalan armed forces.

The New Approach to Counterinsurgency

In addition to the attempt at moral and political regeneration of government in Guatemala, the Ríos Montt regime also tried to transmute the management of military operations. The agenda for this change was contained in the *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo y Seguridad* (National Plan for Development and Security). This plan was developed by various working groups of civilian and military professionals and coordinated by the Center for Military Studies, the Guatemalan Command and General Staff School, and the Committee for National Reconstruction.

The plan's basic message was that national security depended on socioeconomic development. The plan outlined the following four basic requirements for attacking the latent dimensions of the insurgency:

- The need to address longstanding socioeconomic inequities.
- The need for public sector unity and coordination.
- The need for resources from abroad.
- The need for private sector involvement.

Under the direction of the CRN, the military government put into operation a mini-plan for development and security that embodied a key element of the new counterinsurgency strategy.[21] This plan attempted to address the needs of the families most affected by violence in the highlands. The CRN coordinated the activities of various government ministries, the military, and international organizations assisting the victims of the war. CRN technicians estimated that about 50,000 families (250,000 to 300,000 individuals) were in desperate need of food and shelter in July 1982. By providing the materials to meet these basic needs, the CRN hoped to encourage confidence in the government, help stabilize the area, and get the local population involved in solving their socioeconomic problems locally.

The CRN also served as the government's resource in the "*fusiles y frijoles*"—"rifles and beans"—program. This program linked development projects to the establishment of local civil defense forces—the *patrullas de autodefensa civil* or *patrulleros*. Although the idea of arming and organizing the population into civil defense units originated with the Lucas regime, the Ríos Montt government took the step of linking it to a socioeconomic development program. Through this strategy, the military mobilized several hundred thousand *patrulleros* in primary zones of conflict such as the Ixil Triangle, Quiché, the department of Chimaltenango, and the western municipalities of Baja Vera Paz.[22] In conjunction with organizing these civil defense forces, the CRN supported local community activities, provided resources for small projects, and hoped to purchase land not in use for the creation of cooperatives. (The latter program never took place.)

The civilian defense units were not just paramilitary organizations; they had become political entities at the local level—the only organizations at that level that could counter the guerrillas' local cadre, the Fuerzas Irregulares Locales (FIL). At present, it is not clear whether these defense units have become a counterpoise to the FIL or remain simply a military extension of the armed forces. However, the CRN prefers that they take on more than just military functions.[23]

The Ríos Montt regime undertook these programs in large measure because it knew that the new counterinsurgency strategy would fail unless good relations between the military and the civilian population were restored. These relations were seriously damaged by five years (1978–1982) of intense warfare in which neither the armed forces nor the guerrillas honored the status of "noncombatant." The guerrillas, especially the EGP, deliberately put civilians between themselves and the armed forces; and "teaching a lesson" to particular villages was a tactic of the military under previous regimes.[24] Together, these tactics drove a considerable wedge between the government and the inhabitants of the highlands.

To remedy this situation, the army Chief of Staff issued a code of conduct to all commanders in July 1982. The code provided guidance in three areas: military conduct during operations, use of weapons in operations, and treatment of the civilian population. This guidance was intended to make operations against the guerrillas more effective while reducing civilian casualties and avoiding further alienation of the rural population. It may be that orders from the Chief of Staff cannot change years of accepted practice among the troops. However, the code of conduct recognized what had to be done to reduce human rights abuses that resulted from counterinsurgency operations in the rural areas. The code also implied the recognition that the size of the guerrilla force depended as much on eliminating human rights abuses as on killing guerrillas.

Management of Military Operations

The key to the operational aspects of the government's counterinsurgency strategy was to substitute manpower for mobility. Operationally, the counterinsurgency strategy depended on *agrupamientos tácticos* (tactical combat groups) operating out of Chimaltenango, Quiché, and Huehuetenango. It was from these field units that saturation patrols were made. The manpower available for these field operations was limited: less than one-fourth of the 18,000-man army could be deployed and supported in the highlands. Considering the nature of the terrain and the size of the zone of conflict, the military had to mobilize 5,000 reservists and former soldiers. Although this allowed the government to put more men in the field, it also increased the support burden. The army needed more supplies, more officers, more equipment, and more weapons. Without increased resources for support, the government risked sending poorly trained, improperly equipped, and ineffectively led troops into the field against seasoned and well-armed guerrillas.

The Guatemalan Air Force (GAF) provided limited transportation and support for small-unit operations and resupply of troops, civic action activities, and medical evacuation. Although its inventory numbered 80–90 aircraft, the GAF was unable to make up for army manpower shortages with air assets such as mobility or firepower.[25] It was plagued by inefficient management of air assets and poor coordination between aircraft and ground forces. Further, because aircraft were periodically grounded for maintenance, lack of spare parts, and too many flying hours, the GAF sometimes relied on the civilian Aeroclub aircraft and pilots to support military operations. Consequently, it played only a marginal role in ground operations against guerrillas.

Guerrillas, Refugees, and Border Relations with Mexico

The "open border" with Mexico became a major concern for the Guatemalan armed forces fighting the guerrillas along the frontier. Once seen as a "safety valve" for Guatemalan labor and as a source of products for consumption, the "open border" is now viewed as a national security problem. Border relations are governed by the counterinsurgency concerns of the Guatemalan military and by the presence of some 30,000–40,000 Guatemalan refugees located in some eighty camps, many within a few minutes' or hours' walking distance of the border.

The current border tensions are the result of guerrilla strategies adopted in the mid 1970s. The Guerrilla Army of the Poor (Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres—EGP) began activities in the department of Quiché, in northwestern Guatemala, establishing an area of operations with a safety corridor to Mexico. In 1980 the Armed People's Organization (Organización del Pueblo en Armas—ORPA) established a new area of operations in the department of San Marcos, adjacent to the border with southern Chiapas. ORPA also had a safety and logistical corridor to Mexico.[26] Thus, the guerrillas' strategy of protecting their rear meant that the Guatemalan military's counterinsurgency strategy would eventually have to include the Mexican border—and that the military would be suspicious of any signs of Mexican support for the guerrillas.[27]

It was virtually unavoidable that the conflict in Guatemala would affect southern Mexico; the major growth of the Guatemalan insurgency in 1980 and the army's counterinsurgency campaign of mid 1982 both fostered the "spillover." Even before the Guatemalan Army could reach the border to secure it, military operations in the interior of the *altiplano* drove thousands of Guatemalan Indians into Mexico ahead of the army's "march" to the border. But the EGP leadership was also responsible for pushing Guatemalans into Mexico—seeing refugees in Mexico as a means to continue the fighting in Guatemala.

The Guatemalan Army's strategy involved a delicate balance of relations with Mexico. It assumed that the only way to break the EGP's hold in the highland departments of Chimaltenango, Quiché, and Heuheutenango was to push the guerrillas and their sympathizers to the Mexican border; there, the guerrillas could survive only if they received some form of sanctuary, however limited, in Mexico. The strategy further assumed that the army would need some cooperation, however limited or indirect, from Mexican security and military agencies along the border in order to settle the guerrilla problem without damaging the overall bilateral relationship. Despite Guatemalan official rhetoric, in the early 1980s there were always strong incentives for Guatemala to maintain Mexican "good will," as latent as it might appear. The Guatemalans wanted to avoid a major confrontation with Mexico because the guerrillas could prolong the war if assured of friendly sanctuaries in Mexico. As a result of these varied considerations, the Guatemalan strategy was to push the guerrillas to the border and apply military pressure along it. There was an expectation that the Mexicans would respond by militarizing the border between Guatemala and Chiapas, not only to keep the Guatemalan Army at bay, but also to cut whatever supply networks the guerrillas maintained in Mexican territory.

The complicating factor that hampered the Guatemalan military was the establishment of some eighty refugee camps in Chiapas along the border, serving the 30,000–40,000 Guatemalans fleeing the *altiplano* conflict. The Mexican government gave higher priority to its refugee problem than to Guatemala's insurgency problem. A number of incidents of violence against refugees took place in 1983 in Mexican territory.[28]

By early 1984 the Mexican government took the initiative to gain control of the refugee camps. Guatemalan leaders still complain that "solidarity" committees and "leftist" academics gain too-easy access to the camps (much more easily than can US and UN officials) for the purpose of obtaining interviews to fuel the worldwide propaganda war against Guatemala. But Mexican security and military forces have virtually eliminated operational use of the camps by the guerrillas.[29]

For its part, Guatemala has taken significant military and diplomatic steps to alleviate border tensions with Mexico. The army's strategy of protracted conflict now focuses on rebuilding the border communities that were damaged or destroyed during the intense fighting of 1980-82.[30] Military patrols are now more careful about avoiding border incursions. The civil defense patrols from the Guatemalan border communities still act on their own with little or no military guidance and have a tendency to do as they please along the many footpaths that parallel and crisscross the border. But the increased presence of Mexican military and security forces near the border—directed more at controlling access to the camps and movement by refugees than at controlling the border itself—may be an added deterrent to the Guatemalan *patrulleros*.

On the diplomatic front, Chief of State General Oscar Mejía Víctores renovated Guatemala's foreign policy to include a more active and constructive participation in the Contadora process.[31] Though still dubious of Contadora's potential effectiveness, the Guatemalans hope Contadora negotiations can help prevent the Central American conflicts to their south from spilling into their nation. One side benefit of more active participation in Contadora is an opportunity to discuss bilateral issues with Mexican government officials, especially the Foreign Minister. Using the regional Contadora process to enhance the bilateral relationship has unexpectedly improved the climate of cooperation and dialogue regarding border and refugee issues. The Guatemalan leadership seeks a secure border with Mexico, but it also desires to preserve a cooperative, bilateral relationship. The Guatemalans have come to realize that military pressure alone will not achieve their goals; serious diplomacy is also essential.[32]

LESSONS FROM GUATEMALA'S HIGHLANDS WAR

Since the early 1960s the Guatemalan armed forces have faced a prolonged insurgent challenge. The ideological and psychological roots of the insurgency can be traced to the 1950s. Guatemalan conservatives and the US administration viewed the domestic and foreign policies of President Jacobo Arbenz as dangerously radical and leftist. Accordingly, the United States supported the overthrow of his government in 1954.[33] The first stage of insurgency grew out of an aborted 1960 military coup, soon acquired communist ties, and battled against army forces until it was defeated militarily in the rural areas by 1968 and in the cities by 1972. However, just as this insurgent threat—which never amounted to more than 500 armed guerrillas—was quelled, second-generation insurgency emerged in the densely populated highlands. Unlike its predecessors, this movement grew prodigiously from an original group of 12 to over 3,000 members.

The evolution of Guatemala's insurgency provides important insights into the dynamics of insurgent movements and counterinsurgency tactics. It also imparts some lessons for the United States about effective response to low-intensity conflict in developing countries.

The Guatemalan armed forces have demonstrated on two occasions (1966 and 1982) that the mobilization and arming of local populations to fight against guerrillas and the concentration of government services on basic human needs in the areas of conflict are essential elements of a successful counterinsurgency strategy. Furthermore, the Guatemalans have demonstrated that they are capable of fighting a guerrilla insurgency with or without the direct assistance of the United States. At the same time, the Guatemalan case also illustrates the dangers of relying primarily on military means to combat a guerrilla movement embedded in the small, isolated villages that had been ignored or long forgotten by government and military authorities. The costs of regaining military and political control of such areas is measured in the death, disappearance, and displacement of thousands of highland Indians. Further, as in other cases, it has become more than obvious that insurgencies do not die—they fade away only to return at another opportune time.

Comparisons between the internal wars of Guatemala and El Salvador require one to ask several questions: Is US assistance (and the conditions for such assistance) a help or a hindrance to a government fighting an insurgency? Would the Guatemalans have been as successful with US military assistance? Would the Salvadoran military be more successful today without US assistance? Or is it necessary to go beyond the factor of external military assistance to understand the differences between the two countries?

With regard to El Salvador, the armed forces are alone in the countryside combatting the guerrillas. Neither the government nor the civilian population has been mobilized (unlike Guatemala after June 1982) to become part of a more comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy. No amount of military assistance, training, or advisers in the field has changed the basic military thinking of Salvadoran military officers. On the other hand, in Guatemala the military officers were forced to rethink their counterinsurgency approach. Not only was the size of the guerrilla force increasing, but the Guatemalan army faced the serious dilemma of diminishing resources as well. The "force multiplier" became people (the CDFs), not helicopters, attack aircraft, or artillery. The army reorganized itself in the field. All this took place without much tutelage or pressure from outside Guatemala. This, then, begs the question as to why these two nations, who share a common border, took different approaches in their counterinsurgency operations.

Perhaps it is necessary to look at the institutions themselves. Perhaps the key to success in counterinsurgency is not outside assistance but the ability to move beyond a one-dimensional strategy—dominated by military considerations, resources, and objectives—to one that parallels the comprehensive political-military-diplomatic strategy of the guerrilla of the 1980s. Would the Guatemalans have been as successful with "Victoria '82" if Nicaragua were a close neighbor able to directly support Guatemalan guerrillas? The answer is yes. Effective external assistance to an insurgency requires an infrastructure, communication links, secure areas, and a sympathetic population in the areas of conflict. Beginning in June 1982 the Guatemalan military strategy was directed at all the critical structures required to maintain an active insurgency. From that moment on, no amount of external assistance would have made a difference to the Guatemalan guerrillas. This, of course, is not the case in El Salvador.

Will a third-generation insurgency appear in Guatemala? It is a probability. After the 1985 presidential elections, businessmen, political leaders, and military officers could return to "business as usual" in the management of Guatemalan government and society. Over the next decade, socioeconomic patterns can change but slightly. With a growing population (especially in the Indian highlands), potential for labor discontent along the agribusiness south coast, and a growing (and largely unemployed) lumpenproletariat settling in around the capital, the conditions for a third round of insurgency cannot be dismissed.

In an insurgency environment, it is well to remember that the armed forces must win every round of the battle; the guerrilla need be victorious only once!

Notes

1. See Kenneth J. Grieb, *The Latin American Policy of Warren G. Harding* (The Texas Christian University Press, 1976).

2. For a discussion of the US policy response to the region's conflicts, see Caesar D. Sereseres, "The Central American Policy Conundrum," *American Foreign Policy*, Vol. 6, No. 4, August 1983.

3. US Department of State, *Cuba's Renewed Support for Violence in Latin America*, Bureau of Public Affairs, Special Report No. 90 (Washington, DC, 1981).

4. Detailed background information on the region is provided in Richard E. Feinberg, ed., *Central America: International Dimensions of the Crisis* (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., 1982); and Robert A. Pastor, "Our Real Interests in Central America," *Atlantic Monthly*, July 1982.

5. US security interests and the consequences of guerrilla successes in Central America are examined by Edward González, et al., *U.S. Policy for Central America*, R-3150-RC, (Santa Monica, Rand Corporation, March 1984).

6. For an elaboration of the relationship between state and society and the role of the military institution, see Richard N. Adams, *Energy and Structure: A Theory of Social Power* (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1975); and his "The Development of the Military," in *Crucifixion by Power* (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1970).

7. These views are expressed in the work of two Guatemalan intellectuals who discuss the notions of "left" and "right." See Mario Monteforte Toledo and Francisco Villagrán Kramer, *Izquierdas y Derechas en Latinoamérica* (Buenos Aires, Editorial Pleamer, 1968). The public dialogue regarding the ideological basis of Guatemalan national life rose briefly in the early 1970s; see General Rolando Chinchilla Aguilar, "Los guatemaltecos debemos cesar de hablar de las derechas o izquierdas," *La Nación* (Guatemala), 2 February 1973, and Juan Baltazar Martínez, "Hablar de derechas o izquierda es un mito," *El Imparcial* (Guatemala), 1 June 1973.

8. The Guatemalan National Planning Council has estimated that in 1981, 50 percent of the nation's families were classified as "extremely poor." Another 27 percent were classified as "poor." *Central America Report*, Vol. IX, No. 17, 7 May 1982.

9. The economic "influentials" are identified through their ownership of, or participation in, financial institutions, industrial firms, commercial enterprises, and agriculture—especially export commodities like coffee. These "families" do not dominate the Guatemalan economy. They are not an oligarchy of the kind that existed in El Salvador; they do not have a covenant with the military. These influentials are well-organized and effectively represented both in Guatemala and internationally. For an analysis of Guatemala's "economic elite," see "Guatemala's Bourgeoisie," in Susanne Jonas and David Tobias, *Guatemala* (Berkeley, North American Congress on Latin America, 1974).

10. See *Guatemala: Economic and Social Position and Prospects* (Washington, DC, the World Bank, 1978), and Isaac Cohen and Gert Rosenthal, "The International Aspects of the Crisis in Central America," paper delivered at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, 2 April 1981. Although there are frequent differences of opinion among those analyzing the distribution of wealth and land in Guatemala, they tend to be minor compared to the differences between the business sector and the armed forces. During 1979-1982, in private sessions between representatives of the Army general staff and CACIF—the umbrella organization of all sectors of private initiative—the debate focused on the military's heavy-handed counterinsurgency tactics and the businessmen's abuse of labor and lack of interest in social development. One private sector view is reflected in *Guatemala Newsletter*, published by the Asociación de Amigos del País and distributed in English and Spanish in Guatemala and the United States.

11. The number of deaths (and attribution to those responsible) in Guatemala has become part of the policy debate. Virtually every assessment considers a different time period, draws upon different sources of information, utilizes a variety of methodological approaches to tabulate the count, and "frames" the numbers to suit political objectives. Although there is no reliable "body count," a reasonable range for the period of 1966-1982 is from 15,000 to 30,000 *deaths attributable to politically-related violence*. The following sources provide distinct perspectives on the violence: *Human Rights in Guatemala*, Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations and Inter-American Affairs, Committee on Foreign Affairs, US House of Representatives, 97th Congress, July 1981; Organization of American States, *Informe de la Comisión Interamericana de derechos humanos sobre la situación de los derechos humanos en la República de Guatemala*, (Washington, DC, October 1981); Amnesty International, *Guatemala: A Government Program of Political Murder* (London,

1981); Shelton H. Davis and Julie Hodson, *Witnesses to political Violence in Guatemala* (Boston, OXFAM America, 1982); and L. Francis Bouchey and Alberto M. Piedra, *Guatemala: A Promise in Peril* (Washington, DC, Council for Inter-American Security, 1980).

12. Translated by the author from Military Communiqué #1, issued in late morning of 23 March 1982.

13. Translated by the author from a transcript of a broadcast to the nation by Ríos Montt on 5 April 1982.

14. As the years go by, mythology replaces fact for the "October Revolution" and "Liberation of 1954." A close look at both is provided by Marta Cehelsky, "Guatemala's Frustrated Revolution: The Liberation of 1954," unpublished Master's Thesis, Columbia University, 1967. The "successes" and "failures" of revolution and counterrevolution, and the myths that arose, are noted and are helpful in understanding the insurgency of the 1980s.

15. Labeling the guerrilla strategy of the 1960s as nothing more than *acción improvisada* (improvised action), the founders of the EGP set out to learn the lessons of the past before entering into politico-military warfare. A personal account of the origins of the guerrilla force in Ixcan and its growth between 1972 and 1976 is to be found in Mario Payeras, *Los Días de la Selva* (Mexico, Editorial Nuestro Tiempo, 1981).

16. The doctrine of the guerrilla "foco" was postulated in its purest form by Ernesto Guevara—*Che Guevara on Guerrilla Warfare* (New York, Praeger, 1961)—and the foremost chronologer of foco warfare, Regis Debray—*Revolution in the Revolution: Armed Struggle and Political Struggle in Latin America* (New York, Monthly Review, 1967). A challenge to orthodox Marxist theory, the *foquista* approach to revolution emphasized the military dimension of conflict, arguing against the need for an urban, mass base. All the guerrilla movements following the foco strategy succumbed to military defeat during the 1960s.

17. A rejuvenated FAR, after several years of dormancy, rejoined the armed struggle after serious defeats in the metropolitan region of Guatemala City during the 1970-1972 period. The plight of the FAR, under the leadership of Pablo Monsanto, is described in a series of articles published in the Mexico City daily, *Uno Màs Uno*. See Victor Aviles, "Tres semanas con las FAR guatemaltecas," 29 August-1 September 1982.

18. Today the relationship between the EGP and other Guatemalan guerrilla organizations and Cuba is significantly influenced by the Cuban experience in the Nicaraguan civil war. Materials that help develop this point include Edward González, "Institutionalization, Political Elites

and Foreign Policies," in Cole Blasier and Carmelo Mesa-Lago, eds., *Cuba in the World* (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979); William M. Leogrande, "Foreign Policy: The Limits of Success," in Jorge I. Domínguez, ed., *Cuba: Internal and International Affairs* (Beverly Hills, SAGE Publications, 1982); Edward González, *Cuba Under Castro: The Limits of Charisma* (Boston, Houghton-Mifflin, 1974), pp. 113-145; *Cuba's Renewed Support for Violence in Latin America*, Special Report No. 90, US Department of State (Washington, DC, 1981); and John Maclean, "Cuba and Panama Giving Aid to Somoza's Foes," *Chicago Tribune*, 17 June 1979.

19. In testimony, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Steven Bosworth stated that the guerrillas constitute a formidable threat to the Guatemalan government. He indicated that "full-time, trained, armed guerrillas may number as many as 3,500 . . . supplemented by approximately 10,000 irregular 'local defense' guerrillas . . . and a support infrastructure of some 30,000-60,000 sympathizers . . . ." This information was provided to the House Banking Subcommittee on 5 August 1982. By comparison, one estimate by Guatemalan military intelligence placed the number of armed guerrillas in 1981 at 5,000-6,000, with at least five times that number in the Fuerzas Irregulares Locales (FIL) and support infrastructure. The four guerrilla groups operated in a dozen distinct military fronts throughout Guatemala by 1981.

20. Human rights, church, and academic organizations, as well as solidarity committees and guerrilla-linked front groups, continued to claim into late 1983 that the level of violence and government involvement in abuses remain largely unchanged. The debate over a break with past practices may well depend on the time frame considered. Military operations during the "Victoria '82" campaign resulted in some 300 deaths per month between July and November 1982. By early 1983 military operations were reduced as civilian patrols assumed a more extensive security role and as guerrillas fled into new areas along the Mexico-Guatemala border. From a high of over 500 deaths in July 1982, reported deaths (guerrillas, government forces, civilian patrolmen, and noncombatants) averaged less than 100 a month and reported kidnappings, 15-20 per month in 1983. Current reporting by international organizations on human rights abuses seem to rely heavily on refugee camp inhabitants in Mexico. Most of these refugees arrived in Mexico during the September-December 1982 period. A combination of factors may have produced the flow of refugees to Mexico, including military attacks against villages, fear of a pending military attack, and a guerrilla decision to send supporters that they could no longer protect into Mexico for propaganda purposes. Whatever the case, refugees provide a two-

year-old picture of Guatemalan military operations and life in the small highland villages. For a discussion of human rights abuses and the changes that may or may not have come about since the 23 March 1982 coup, see *United States Policy Toward Guatemala*, Hearings before the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, House of Representatives, US Congress, 98th Congress, 1st Session, March 1983; Amnesty International, *Guatemala: Massive Extrajudicial Executions in Rural Areas Under the Government of Ríos Montt* (London, July 1982); and "Death and Disorder in Guatemala," *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Spring 1983.

21. *Plan de asistencia a áreas en conflicto* (PAAC) ("Plan for Assistance for the Zones in Conflict"), Comité de Reconstrucción Nacional, Presidencia de la República, Guatemala, June 1982.

22. Various sources estimated the number of *patrulleros*, the name given to those belonging to self-defense forces, from 300,000 to 400,000, organized in upwards of 1,000 villages in the *altiplano*. Regardless of the numbers, the *patrulleros* have become the "front line" for the army, and as a consequence, the level of insurgency-related deaths has risen. A composite picture of *patrulleros* can be gleaned from the following sources: Marlise Simons, "Guatemalans Are Adding a Few Twists to Pacification," *Washington Post*, 15 September 1982; John Dinges, "Guatemalans Organizing Peasant Antirebel Units," *Washington Post*, 19 July 1982; Nery García, "30,000 hombres en armas en Quiché," *El Gráfico* (Guatemala), 19 April 1982; and Ricardo Gatica Trejo, "Indígenas piden armas al ejército," *El Gráfico* (Guatemala), 3 December 1981.

23. The government's counterinsurgency strategy and the role of the guerrillas' FIL units are discussed by an operations officer stationed in the Ixil Triangle in "Estrategia político-militar para derrotar a la guerrilla desarrolla el ejército," *Correo Político* (Guatemala), 29 April 1982.

24. See the analysis of this tactic by Dial Torgerson, "Guatemalan Villagers Taught 'A Lesson'," *Los Angeles Times*, 14 June 1981. The killing of at least 36 inhabitants of San Mateo Ixtatan in northern Huehuetenango was committed by an unidentified group of heavily armed men. The guerrillas had recently been in the town to hold a political meeting and the killers arrived in vehicles—the guerrillas who live in the hills above San Mateo have no vehicles, according to the villagers.

25. For a detailed review of Guatemala's military equipment and force structure, see "Guatemala," *DMS Market Intelligence Report* (Greenwich, DMS Incorporated, 1981). Military force levels are placed at 15,000: 14,000 army personnel, 500 navy personnel, and 500 air force personnel. The air force inventory is said to include Cessna A-37B

ground support jets, Pilatus trainers/ground support turboprops, Arava and C-47 transports, Cessna utility aircraft, and Bell helicopters, including UH-1D "Hueys."

26. The Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes (FAR), although less active than the EGP and FAR in the 1980-1983 period, also established themselves close to Mexican territory in the northern Guatemalan department of Petén.

27. Material support for the guerrillas has come from Mexico since the mid 1970s. What is open to debate is whether there exists a guerrilla support network (perhaps even with the knowledge of Mexican officials) or just a practice of purchasing food, medicines, explosives, radios, and the like in the open market. Transporting such items across the border into Guatemala would require little effort, given the absence of effective control by either the Mexican or Guatemalan government. The Guatemalan military is quick to illustrate its concerns by showing captured guerrilla equipment, including homemade hand grenades/booby traps that are contained in Tecate beer cans, filled with Mexican-made explosives, triggered by batteries purchased in Mexico. Food and medicines that have been provided to the refugee camps have found their way into guerrilla camps in Guatemala. This may be due less to guerrilla infiltration of the refugee camps than to the surplus of goods provided by the multitude of international and private organizations, combined with the Mexican government policy of providing similar supplies to communities in proximity to the camps so as to minimize the conflict between refugee and local populations. Both factors make these supplies available via porch-front stores throughout the Chiapas border region. Guerrillas, or their supporters, would have little difficulty purchasing and transporting such supplies without ever having entered a refugee camp.

28. In early 1983 Guatemalan troops were accused of crossing into Mexican territory and entering one refugee camp. Several Guatemalans were killed. On another occasion civil defense patrolmen were said to have entered into a camp to kidnap refugees. In May 1984 several incidents were reported in which men, dressed in Guatemalan military uniforms, killed six camp members. In this case, it may have been guerrillas attempting to keep refugees from returning to Guatemala. Without these camps, the guerrillas, especially the EGP, lose a valuable source of material and propaganda support.

29. The government has taken steps to isolate the camps. In an effort to please everybody, a decision was made in June 1984 to move refugees along the Chiapas border to the Yucatan peninsula. This forces many refugees to make a choice between returning to Guatemala or moving to a less hospitable environment. The EGP and the ORPA could not publicly protest. The Guatemalan government, while preferring the

return of the refugees, is indirectly assisted in its efforts to isolate the guerrillas. And the United Nations High Commission on Refugees is made happy because the camps will now be located in a less hostile, less vulnerable area. In addition, local security forces and the Directorate of Federal Security have been putting increasing pressure on Guatemalans known to be operationally assisting the guerrillas in Chiapas. In early July 1984 the DSF raided a building, owned by a Guatemalan member of ORPA, that had been used as a hospital and warehouse for medical supplies. For further information, see William Orme, Jr., "Attack on Guatemalans in Mexico Reported," *Washington Post*, 3 May 1984; and Juan M. Vásquez, "Mexico Moving 46,000 Guatemalan Refugees After Attack at the Border," *Los Angeles Times*, 31 May 1984.

30. The Guatemalan armed forces are now primarily engaged in the construction of *polos de desarrollo* (development centers), which are being used to draw people back to their lands in the areas of conflict. Several are located near the Chiapas border for the purpose of attracting refugees. Major roads that parallel the Mexican border are also being built. This serves both security and development objectives.

31. Within the Reagan administration there are serious misgivings and suspicions that Guatemala and Mexico formed a tacit alliance within the Contadora process. For the past several years Guatemala has remained uncooperative as the United States has sought a regional alliance against Nicaragua. Since 1979 Guatemala has maintained a nonhostile public dialogue with Nicaragua on economic, financial, and regional affairs.

32. For a further discussion of Guatemala-Mexico relations, see Cesar D. Sereseres, "The Mexican Military Looks South," in David F. Ronfeldt, ed., *The Modern Mexican Military: A Reassessment*, Center for US-Mexico Studies, Monograph Series 15 (University of California, San Diego, 1984).

33. For an account of the CIA operation to topple the government of Arbenz, see Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer, *Bitter Fruit: The Untold Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* (New York, Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1982).

US POLICIES TOWARD INSURGENCIES IN LATIN AMERICA

Jack Child

Insurgency in Latin America is not a new phenomenon. Wars of liberation, wars of national or ethnic unification, and wars for social, political, and economic betterment have characterized Latin American history for centuries. As hemispheric guardian, the United States has carefully watched over these events, ensuring that hemispheric matters remained in hemispheric hands; hence, the Monroe Doctrine and its subsequent corollaries. Not until recently, however, has the United States taken an active interest in hemispheric insurgency and attempted to steer the course of events. Since the rise of Fidel Castro, Latin American insurgency movements have taken on new importance because of their potential challenge to US regional interests. In response, counterinsurgency and pacification programs have been developed for the purpose of guarding and enhancing national interests.

What follows is an examination of US policies toward insurgencies over the past quarter-century, with an emphasis on the current situation in Central America, especially in El Salvador and Nicaragua. The discussion is divided into three parts: a historical overview of US policies toward Latin American insurgencies through the Carter presidency; an examination of the Reagan administration's approaches, including the views of its critics; and an assessment of a variety of current policy options available to the United States, ranging from complete and total withdrawal to an active commitment of US military personnel.

OVERVIEW OF US INSURGENCY POLICIES, 1961-1980

Before the "Foco" Period [1]

Before the 1961-1967 period of the "foco" insurgencies in Latin America, the United States did not really have anything that could be called a Latin American policy. This was so despite the fact that the United States had had direct experience with Latin American insurgencies and guerrilla warfare in episodes such as the punitive expedition against Pancho Villa in 1916-1917 and the fight against the guerrillas of César Augusto Sandino in Nicaragua in the 1927-1933 period. From the politico-military perspective the US emphasis was on defending the hemisphere against a conventional external invasion and did not consider the possibility of internal conflict in the form of insurgencies. US policy that was relevant to insurgencies took the more general form of diplomatic, economic, and military support for the status quo, which throughout this period was rarely threatened in any serious manner. The absence of a US insurgency policy and the general Latin American lack of preparation to fight guerrilla wars were important factors in the triumph of Fidel Castro's revolution in Cuba in 1956-1958, and in the belief after his victory that the Cuban experience might be repeated in other parts of the hemisphere.

The Foco Period, 1961-1967 [2]

After a relatively short period of consolidation, the triumphant Castro revolution in Cuba set out to do what few Latin American revolutions have attempted: to export itself. This was to be accomplished under the premise that became known as the foco theory of revolutionary warfare. The foco theory (as laid out by Che Guevara and Regis Debray) argued that the Cuban revolutionary experience was indeed repeatable in many parts of Latin America, even without some of the objective and subjective conditions for revolution.[3] The catalysts in this process would be small cadres of guerrillas with prior experience or training in Cuba, who would form revolutionary focos or points of insurgent activity in various locations. These in turn would start the larger revolutionary motor and become the lead elements in a broader process that would eventually create "one, two, three, even many Latin American Vietnams."

Although in retrospect it can clearly be seen that this foco approach had little chance of success, the new Kennedy administration took quite seriously the threat of a series of triumphant foco insurgencies in Latin America, leading to the first coherent US policy toward insurgencies in the hemisphere.[4] Policy Planning and Joint Chiefs of Staff documents from that era show that the administration strongly felt the need to develop a policy to deal with this threat, and believed that the policy should be based on economic and political factors as much as military ones.

On the developmental side, the Alliance for Progress was envisioned as the instrument for changing basic political and economic structures so as to deny the revolutionaries a fertile terrain for their appeal. Militarily, local forces were to be guided away from the anachronistic hemispheric defense concepts toward a more enlightened approach, stressing civic action and counterinsurgency in ways that would support the Alliance for Progress. The details of this concept were laid out in a January 1961 State Department Policy Planning paper, aptly titled "A New Concept for Hemispheric Defense and Development," which stated in part,

> the U.S. should undertake (a) to phase out programs in which Latin American forces are unrealistically associated in continental defense roles and (b) to influence Latin American military leaders towards greater emphasis on maintaining intra-hemispheric peace and contributing to the internal development of their countries. . . . Toward this end, the U.S. should start the process of convincing the Latin American military—however long it may take—that their most patriotic role, and their true defense role, lies in executing a concept of defense through development, with all that this entails.[5]

The implementation of this new approach, which acquired the title "Internal Defense and Development" (IDAD), involved a reorientation not only of the Latin American military but also of the complex inter-American military system that linked the United States and the Latin American military establishments. The military assistance program shifted emphasis away from conventional military equipment and training toward that which was more appropriate to counterinsurgency and internal defense and development. Existing institutions of the system reflected this shift, and a number of new institutions were created. (These included the Inter-American Defense College, Service Chiefs Conferences, the Central American Defense Council, combined military exercises, communications networks, and Special Forces units.) Training in military schools in the United States, in the then Canal Zone, and in Latin America was greatly expanded, all under the IDAD concept, with a conscious attempt to link the military to the Alliance for Progress as an effective instrument against the threat of the focos.[6]

The results of this US insurgency policy were mixed. The focos were in fact defeated, but in retrospect it seems clear that the principal factor in this defeat was not so much the IDAD concept as it was the basic fallacy of the foco theory: that a small cadre of imported guerrillas could create a revolution when the circumstances did not favor it.[7] Guevara's ill-fated attempt at proving the validity of the foco theory was taken to its ultimate conclusion in Bolivia in 1966-1967, and Guevara died in the process. His death closes the period of optimistic assumptions by the guerrillas concerning easy exportability of the Cuban revolution and begins a second wave of revolutionary attempts in Latin America, this time with an urban emphasis. These attempts almost succeeded in countries with special circumstances, such as Uruguay and Argentina, but they too were eradicated by their own mistakes and by the ruthlessly efficient repressive measures of Southern Cone military and police establishments.

The foco period also included an interesting precedent when the United States attempted to use "contra" or counterrevolutionary forces to bring down a revolutionary regime in Latin America: the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion of April 1961. It in turn was based on the precedent of Guatemala in 1954, when covert US support of a counterrevolutionary group was indeed successful in the defeat of the reformist left-of-center government of Jacobo Arbenz.

In this early to mid 1960s period the United States successfully used the Inter-American System (and the Organization of American States (OAS), as its principal institution) as an anti-Castro and anti-communist alliance, although there was no Latin American unanimity on the wisdom of doing so. This process reached its culmination in the Dominican Republic in 1965, when the United States converted a unilateral initiative into a multilateral Inter-American Peace Force via the OAS. However, the process created considerable resentment and suspicion within Latin American circles and made it very unlikely that any sort of multilateral peacekeeping force under OAS auspices could be mounted in the future.

Post-Foco Quiescence, 1967–1977

The death of Che Guevara in 1967 marks an important turning point in both the history of Latin American insurgencies and US policies to counter them. Although it is true that some rural focos persisted beyond the death of Che, and that urban insurgencies caused some concern in the late 1960s and 1970s, Che's death seemed to put an end to the idea that the Cuban revolutionary model would find quick and easy imitators in the rest of Latin America. The mistakes of the guerrillas, especially their sense of elitism, isolation from the population, and sporadic acts of terror and violence, guaranteed their defeat more than any US efforts. The ten-year period after the death of Che can thus properly be called one of quiescence, in which the United States turned its attention elsewhere as the Latin American insurgents searched for other methods to achieve power.

This period also saw the growth of the so-called "national security state," especially in the Southern Cone. Although it would be unfair to suggest that the United States desired or encouraged the brutality characterizing this type of government, there are strong indications that the national security state was the logical outcome of the US emphasis on internal defense and development in the early and mid 1960s.[8] Although the IDAD thrust, as defined by the United States, was limited to the tactical level in terms of its value as a counterinsurgency weapon, several Latin American military establishments took the concept to much higher levels and applied it to the management of the nation-state itself.

In a number of countries, including Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile, the IDAD concept was merged with geopolitical thinking, corporatism, and organic state theories to produce national security regimes. In these countries the remnants of the focos and urban insurgencies were dealt with harshly by the guardians of the national security state and were either eliminated or driven into exile. This accomplished, the military seemed reluctant to return power to civilian politicians, whom they mistrusted, and settled in for long-term periods of direct authoritarian rule.[9]

Other factors contributed to this post-foco period of quiescence. For one, Fidel Castro turned away from involvement with Latin American revolutionary movements after the death of Che, finally accepting the Moscow line that conditions were not yet ripe for the export of Cuban-style revolutionary movements in the hemisphere. The United States' deepening involvement in Vietnam, and later the internal problems of the Nixon administration, left little attention and few resources available for Latin America, which reverted back to its traditional low-priority status in US policy concerns. Illustrating this approach, a US Army staff document of the mid 1970s applied the "Nixon Doctrine" of local self-reliance to Latin America and suggested that although the United States still supported the IDAD concept, the major effort and resources involved had to come from the Latin American nations themselves.[10]

Several of these nations, and especially their military establishments, began to show a greater sense of independence in this period, and less disposition to accept US leadership in either political or military matters. The larger nations of South America began to speak of the need to break away from military dependence on the United States and emphasized their own arms industries as important elements in this process. Highly nationalistic and chauvinistic military officers stressed more traditional military concerns, focusing on historical border tensions with neighbors, while politicians argued that the Inter-American System (and the military-to-military elements that formed a part of it) had to be reformed to break away from the old subservience to the

United States and become truly representative of Latin American needs and priorities.[11]

Although the Alliance for Progress and the IDAD concepts continued as foundations for US policy, they were sustained more by bureaucratic momentum than by fresh ideas or resources. Military assistance programs were cut back and began to feel the impact of a series of congressionally mandated restrictions that were to take on great significance in the following decade. These restrictions (such as the Fulbright, Conte, and Symington Amendments, among others) were attempts to place limits on the amounts or types of arms that could be sold to Latin America. Individually, they did in fact achieve positive results. Taken collectively, however, they were seen in many Latin American circles as unwarranted and paternalistic interference.

An even more dramatic impact on the inter-American security relationship was to emerge from US human rights legislation which would cut off military assistance to any government that consistently and grossly violated the human rights of its citizens. These provisions were the product of the Vietnam-era feeling that US relations with regimes of the national security type in Latin America should contain a moral component to be considered along with the more traditional security and political components. As was the case with the previous congressional restrictions on military assistance, these measures were to have unexpected negative effects in terms of US relations with a number of Latin American governments, and to have an impact on US policies toward insurgencies in these countries.

The Carter period, 1977-1980

The Carter administration's policies toward insurgencies in Latin America represented a dramatic departure from the previous emphasis on internal defense and development. The strong emphasis on human rights and on attempts at accommodation made it an activist policy, and the strong de-emphasis of military instruments to deal with insurgency gave it a distinctive tone.

President Carter's Latin American policies (and his approaches to insurgencies) were foreshadowed by three key reports in the years immediately preceding his presidency.[12] The Commission on US-Latin American Relations (headed by Sol Linowitz) issued two reports, in 1974 and 1976, which called for dramatic cuts in US military assistance to Latin America, steps toward arms reductions, and linkage of the provision of security assistance to human rights performance. Of perhaps greater direct influence was the February 1977 report of the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), *The Southern Connection*, because several key members of the IPS ad hoc working group were later appointed to important positions in the Carter administration. The IPS report built on the Linowitz Commission recommendations on reducing US military assistance and encouraging arms limitation agreements in the area. But it also went considerably beyond the earlier reports in the way it argued for an activist US human rights policy and for strict enforcement of congressional restrictions on military assistance programs.

The Carter administration moved quickly to implement a globalist policy with human rights as its centerpiece. Although the original intent was to apply the human rights emphasis consistently and with equal vigor to all nations, in practice certain compromises were made for key countries (such as Iran, the Philippines, and South Korea) on US national security grounds. Because Latin America was an area with a low national security priority, the full force of the activist human rights policy fell on repressive regimes in Central America and the Southern Cone. On the positive side, there is no doubt that the human rights emphasis restored a badly needed moral and humanitarian element to US foreign policy and likely succeeded in saving lives and improving conditions for political prisoners in many countries. However, critics of the policy's employment in Latin America have also noted inconsistent, inefficient applications, with little concern for special cultural and political situations and with seeming disregard for the impact on economic and strategic priorities.

Proponents of the Carter human rights approach argued that it was indeed an effective counterinsurgency policy because it put distance between the United States and repressive right wing regimes that could offer only short-term stability. As these brutal regimes weakened under pressures for change, the United States should weaken its remaining ties. It was much wiser, according to the policy's supporters, to ally the United States with progressive forces through an activist human rights policy; such an alliance would establish long-term stability based on social, economic, and political reforms.[13]

The early implementation of the activist Carter human rights policies did indeed quickly put distance between the United States and those regimes perceived (and proven) to be repressive dictatorships. However, the second half of the policy's premise (that this would ally the United States with the progressive forces for change and democracy) did not necessarily follow; nor in many cases was there any immediate and obvious impact on the human rights situations in these countries. Many Latin American governments and individuals reacted with anger and resentment at what they saw as interference, made even less palatable by a sometimes self-righteous attitude on the part of Carter administration officials. Several governments rejected US military assistance rather than subject themselves to lengthy and humiliating human rights verification procedures.

Programs of military assistance to Latin America were cut back drastically, the number of US military personnel in the area was reduced dramatically, and the elaborate inter-American military system suffered a series of reverses. As Carter's policymakers assessed the impact of their human rights approach to Latin America, they were increasingly forced to acknowledge that it had a destabilizing effect that could create power vacuums not necessarily filled by elements friendly to the United States. The realization of this dilemma brought shifts in the early aggressive human rights policy and a considerable amount of vacillation.

Nowhere was this vacillation more evident than in the US approach to the insurgency in Nicaragua in the late 1970s. Somoza's regime was the perfect target for the early aggressive phase of Carter's policies, and the implementation of those policies severely restricted (and finally cut off) military assistance to Somoza and gave considerable encouragement to the regime's enemies. The Carter administration was dismayed, however, to learn that the vanguard of the revolutionary Sandinista National Liberation Front (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional—FSLN) movement against Somoza was headed by Marxist survivors of a 1960s foco movement. This vanguard was now leading a broad-based coalition with considerable finesse and sophistication, supported by a number of Latin American nations.

Attempts to encourage middle sectors in Nicaragua or to avoid the total defeat of the National Guard and create a "*Somocismo* without Somoza" led to a series of inconsistent and inept US policy moves in late 1978 and early 1979. As much as the Carter administration wanted to press reforms upon Somoza and even remove him if necessary, it was not prepared for the consequences of the collapse of both his government and the institutions that had tightly bound Nicaragua to the United States for four decades. Carter was further hemmed in by conservatives in the United States, especially in Congress, who fought a delaying action on behalf of Somoza and his regime. In the end, events overtook US policy toward Nicaragua and the Carter administration was faced with an increasingly hostile Sandinista regime, which soon rejected numerous US overtures as it turned to Cuba, Eastern European nations, and the Soviet Union for arms and support.[14]

Shortly after the FSLN victory in Nicaragua, the Carter administration was faced with a new crisis in El Salvador. Although the situation was different, the administration was once again caught up in its human rights policy dilemma of wanting to disassociate itself from repressive elements and yet not being able to countenance the revolutionary alternative that might emerge from this process. The Carter administration welcomed the October 1979 coup that removed General Carlos Romero and installed a reformist, mixed military-civilian junta. But to Carter's dismay, the more conservative elements in the military began to force out the reformist officers while the junta slowly drifted to the right, to the point that even with a civilian as president it was increasingly difficult to support the Salvadoran government and still be faithful to human rights principles. Events of late 1980, including the brutal murder of four US churchwomen, finally forced the Carter administration to cut off military assistance. But in an ironic and final display of indecision in the last days of the Carter presidency, this assistance was restored in January 1981 when the guerrillas launched their "final" offensive and US intelligence sources indicated that they were receiving substantial quantities of Soviet Bloc weapons through Cuba and Nicaragua.[15]

Cast in a different light, the Carter administration's reaction to the Salvadoran insurgency can be seen as a function of shifting world views. Beginning with Angola and ending with Afghanistan, US policymakers' interpretation of Soviet motivations had changed dramatically. Moderate views, as characterized by Cyrus Vance and Andrew Young, were replaced with "hard-line" perspectives advanced by Zbigniew Brzezinski. Given the increase in Soviet activity in other regions of the world, it was no surprise that Central American insurgencies took on new dimensions. Regional security and the international balance of power now acquired new importance. leavng human rights as a matter of less urgency. Facing Soviet activism—often via its proxies—the United States had to adjust its policies accordingly.

CURRENT INSURGENCY POLICIES: THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

At the risk of oversimplification, the Reagan administration's stated insurgency policy can be reduced to the so-called "4 d's": democracy, development, diplomacy, and defense.[16] A senior diplomat has described the president's key April 1983 speech to a joint session of Congress as presenting these "4 d's" as the pillars of US policy in the area.[17] These four components are described as being balanced and interrelated.

Thus, US military assistance to key countries in the region (El Salvador and Honduras) is envisioned as providing a defensive shield against communist subversive efforts supported from Cuba and Nicaragua. This shield is to provide protection for the growth and strengthening of political democracy and socioeconomic development in El Salvador and Honduras, while at the same time diplomacy and negotiations are employed in the search for peaceful solutions to conflict in the area. The policy also contains an element of symmetry in the sense that Nicaraguan attempts to destabilize neighboring governments will be met by military, economic, and political pressures as well as by support to dissident Nicaraguan elements opposed to the Sandinista regime in Managua.

Many critics of the administration argued that even though the "4 d's" may in fact be present, there is a severe imbalance between the different elements, with a strong emphasis on defense and a basic quest for a military solution to the problem of insurgency.[18] Most critics would also contend that the administration's real (although publicly unstated) goals include the overthrow of the Sandinista regime, or at least a significant modification of its behavior to make it more acceptable to the United States. Thus, the Reagan administration's approach is one not only of countering insurgency in allied nations but also of encouraging insurgency in Nicaragua. Many also argue that the administration is prepared to contemplate a deeper military involvement (and might even welcome it) should the situation deteriorate or should a provocation or incident lead in that direction. The administration's policies are also criticized for being too optimistic in their assessment of the Central American allies' ability and will to create and strengthen democratic institutions and permit socioeconomic development in the face of civil war, right-wing pressures, and an unprecedented high level of regional tensions.

In assessing the impact of the administration's policies, two conflicting views emerge. One view, informed by an optimistic assessment of events in the area, argues that the administration's policies are indeed working because development and democracy are in fact taking root, especially in El Salvador and Honduras, behind the defensive shield provided by US military assistance and presence. Further, the combined military and economic pressure being applied on Nicaragua is having its desired impact, as shown by Sandinista concessions such as a stated willingness to negotiate, to participate in the Contadora process, and to hold elections.

A second view argues that the indications of democracy and development in the area are superficial at best, sustained by massive US aid and political pressures. Attempts to intimidate Nicaragua have served to strengthen the hold of the hard-liners within the Sandinista Directorate, have given the FSLN an excuse for explaining away economic failures, have tended to coalesce popular support for the *Comandantes*, and have driven the regime further into the arms of the Cubans and the Soviets. This view would also stress that the cost of current US policies is indeed high because of the potential for direct US involvement in regional conflict and because of international opprobrium caused by US support of illegal covert activities.

Some Precursors of the Reagan Policies

As was the case with the Carter administration, President Reagan's Latin American policies (and as part of them, his policies for dealing with insurgencies) were foreshadowed before his inauguration. Principally, Reagan strongly repudiated those elements of the Carter policies that were seen as failed, weak, and too soft on Soviet-Cuban penetration in the hemisphere.[19] Two specific targets in this process were Carter's human rights policies and his approaches to the problems posed by Nicaragua and El Salvador. Central America was seen by some as a prime area in which the new administration would effectively demonstrate its toughness before tackling problems in other parts of the world.

The most extensive expression of these ideas was put together in May 1980 by the "Committee of Santa Fe" for the Council for Inter-American Security. The Committee produced a lengthy document, titled *A New Inter-American Policy for the Eighties*, which was presumably intended as a parallel (and counter) to the Linowitz and IPS reports that preceded the Carter administration. The five-man Committee of Santa Fe included several well-known Latin American specialists active in conservative circles, most of whom were later appointed to positions in the new Reagan administration. In the view of the Committee, US policies toward Latin America at the end of the Carter period were characterized by indecision, impotence, and "anxious accommodation." Thus, the United States needed to chart a new and dynamic course in which inter-American relations would be a "shield of New World security and sword of U.S. global power projection." [20]

Internal subversion, aided by Cuba and the Soviet Union, was seen as a major problem to be countered by a reactivated military assistance program, by a revised (and culturally relative) human rights policy, and by strong reliance on bilateral and regional military agreements. The philosophical and institutional bases for this new policy would be the Monroe Doctrine, the Rio Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, and the Inter-American Defense Board as the coordinating element. Anticipating the Caribbean Basin Initiative, the Committee called for a major and multifaceted regional assistance program that would combine the most successful elements of the Alliance for Progress and the Truman

Doctrine. Cuba would be offered clear alternatives in terms of inducements to loosen its ties with the Soviet Union and cease its subversive efforts. But, should Cuba persist in these activities, it must be made clear to them that "other appropriate steps will be taken." [21]

These ideas were, in fact, incorporated into the Reagan presidential campaign, and some of them appeared in the Republican National Convention Platform. Two concepts that did appear in the Republican platform were (1) that insurgency in El Salvador was basically due to outside subversion rather than internal political and socioeconomic conditions, and (2) that the Carter administration, through misguided human rights policies, had contributed to Marxist attempts to destabilize Central American governments.

At a higher conceptual and intellectual level, the arguments of Professor (and later United Nations Ambassador) Jeane Kirkpatrick were contained in two seminal articles, "Dictatorships and Double Standards" and "U.S. Security and Latin America." These articles offered a strong attack on the Linowitz and IPS reports and on the impact of the Carter administration's human rights policies, especially as they were applied to the Somoza regime in Nicaragua.

Early in the new administration, then Secretary of State Alexander Haig strongly emphasized Cuba as the source of insurgency in Central America. Haig argued forcefully that Marxist insurgencies were attempting to repeat in Central America what they had achieved in Vietnam and that the Reagan administration could not solve the problem unless it dealt with "the immediate source of the problem—and that is Cuba." [22]

Security Assistance and Counterinsurgency

At one level, the Reagan administration's policy toward insurgency in El Salvador was based on fundamental and proven counterinsurgency tactics and techniques. Security assistance programs (trainng, equipment, and advice) were designed with these in mind and have been aimed at breaking the military stalemate in the fight between Salvadoran government forces and the FMLN/FDR guerrillas. These security assistance programs are unprecedented for Central America in terms of scope, cost, and duration; and they reflect concern over the gravity of the problem. Nevertheless, they have not had easy passage through a Congress concerned with human rights violations and the possibility that security assistance programs may be the prelude to a deeper US involvement in Central America and an "Americanization" of the conflicts.[23]

The basic problems encountered by the Salvadoran government in facing guerrilla insurgency have been frequently analyzed by US government officials and outside sources.[24] Fundamentally, the Salvadoran military as an institution has internal structures and loyalties that are inadequate and indeed counterproductive in opposing an insurgency. As a privileged institution whose orientation for the past half-century has been more political than military, the Salvadoran officer corps (especially in its upper reaches) has little concept of how to effectively fight an insurgent enemy without alienating the civilian population. The officer corps is a closed institution that is not amenable to suggestions or changes pressed from the outside.

Intense personal and institutional loyalties are built up in each graduating class. These so-called "*tandas*" function as a parallel command structure, which is highly impervious to civilian control or change. This results in a rigid, closed command system that protects incompetents, allows for widespread corruption, and condones attacks against civilians as an anti-guerrilla tactic. In the field, the effectiveness of Salvadoran tactical units is severely hampered by these leadership deficiencies and by a lack of effective communication, transportation, intelligence, coordination, and medical support systems. The net result is a reluctance and inability to engage in aggressive small-unit operations (especially night operations), which are considered paramount for defeat of a guerrilla adversary.

US attempts to overcome these problems have included increases in military assistance to El Salvador, but the training function has been limited by the self-imposed cap on the number of US military advisers. Alternate solutions have included bringing Salvadoran troops and junior officers to both Panama and the United States for training and, more recently, the establishment of a regional military training center in Honduras. The experience at this center illustrates the complexity of the problems involved in countering insurgency in Central America. The Hondurans accepted the idea of training Salvadorans on their soil with much reluctance because of historic animosities and the still-fresh recollection of the 1969 conflict between El Salvador and Honduras.

The US attempt to change the Salvadoran military's archaic command and promotion structure has run up against the closed nature of the *tanda* system; hopes that the junior officers influenced by the US training would make a major change in the structure and effectiveness of the Salvadoran military have not been realized, although improvements have been noted. US military and political advisers have also, with mixed results, pressed for the implementation of broad IDAD projects, such as the "National Pacification Plan," which attempts to apply counterinsurgency and reformist principles.[25]

A recent controversial issue involving the security assistance program is the accusation that a substantial portion of the weapons and equipment provided under US assistance programs ends up in the hands of the guerrillas because of either combat losses, inefficiencies in the logistical system, or corrupt Salvadoran officials. To critics of the Reagan administration's Central American policies, this was an argument for cutting back on military assistance to El Salvador; to the policies' supporters, it was grounds for increasing assistance to make up for the losses and make the military a more effective fighting force.[26]

Insurgency and Human Rights

The Reagan administration's policies toward insurgency, especially as they relate to El Salvador, have had to deal with the complicated and politically delicate issue of human rights and their abuses during counterinsurgency operations. The dilemma is a classic one, but one that has been exacerbated by the weight of history and the excesses that have been a part of the Salvadoran military's traditional approach to insurgency. The Reagan administration came into office with an almost contemptuous attitude toward the softness and misplaced idealism that were seen as the hallmarks of the Carter human rights approaches. Former Secretary of State Alexander Haig, in particular, explicitly stated that the new administration would implant its own priorities, which placed concern for international terrorism and insurgency over human rights.[27] In practice, however, implanting new priorities was not a simple matter in the light of legislative restrictions stemming from a suspicious Congress.

The Reagan administration was eventually successful in vetoing the congressional requirement for certification of improvement in the Salvadoran human rights situation every six months and substituting its own review of the human rights situation. Nevertheless, the issue of making military assistance dependent on human rights performance has remained a serious one, and one which, on more than one occasion, has seriously threatened to severely restrict or even cancel the security assistance program for El Salvador.[28]

The Conventional Military Build-Up

A special and unprecedented feature of the Reagan administration's counterinsurgency policy in Central America has been a conventional military buildup for the region. Historically, US military forces in Latin America have been minimal, consisting of the normal attaché and military assistance groups and modest military installations in Panama and Guantánamo, Cuba; naval and air deployments to the area were small and infrequent. The situation changed dramatically in 1983 and 1984.

The principal focus of the build-up has been Honduras, where the United States has constructed a network of improved airfields, roads, radar sites, troop facilities, and logistical infrastructure. Although it can be argued that these are rather primitive facilities that are temporary in nature, critics maintain that they represent an integrated support structure that is available for a range of contingencies. Among the contingencies cited, the following are often included: joint US-Honduran exercises, anti-Sandinista "contra" guerrilla operations inside Nicaragua, US air reconnaissance and intelligence operations over El Salvador, arms interdiction, and eventual deployment of US combat troops in Central America. Moreover, this US activity delivers a powerful message to Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Honduras that the United States has made a commitment. Remarkably, the conventional military build-up was accomplished with relatively little attention or congressional involvement.[29]

The principal vehicle for the conventional build-up (and also its official justification) has been a series of military exercises involving the United States and Honduras (and in some cases other regional allies). These exercises in themselves have been unprecedented in both size and duration and have been accompanied by extensive construction and improvement of facilities. By 1984 the schedule of maneuvers was such that they were almost a continuous series, and significant numbers of US military personnel were being left behind between maneuvers to safeguard and maintain the installations and equipment left in place. This prompted a US senator to comment, "my fear is that the maneuvers are simply a veil behind which a greatly expanded military infrastructure is being built in Honduras." [30]

Despite the dimensions of the US military build-up, one element of the Reagan insurgency policy is to avoid Americanizing the conflict, or, stated differently, to "Centralamericanize" it to the greatest extent possible. In this process, the Reagan administration has sought to create and strengthen regional groupings that displayed political stability and use them as instruments with which to counter the Nicaraguan military build-up. Some have been bilateral, such as the reluctant cooperation between El Salvador and Honduras on the regional training center and on border security; but the most ambitious attempt at creating a regional alliance has been the proposed revival of the Central American Defense Council (CONDECA). CONDECA was created in the early 1960s as one of several US initiatives to expand the inter-American military system, but it became inactive after the 1969 El Salvador-Honduras conflict and ceased to exist with the fall of Somoza. In mid 1983 the commander of the US Southern Command met with the defense ministers of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras to discuss CONDECA's possible revival as an anti-Nicaraguan alliance effort supported by the United States.[31]

The 1947 Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (the Rio Treaty) has also been cited by Reagan administration spokesmen as justification for contingency facilities in Honduras. These contingencies presumably have included use of US forces in response to a request from Honduras or El Salvador for assistance in the face of a threat from Nicaragua or insurgents.[32] Although the Rio Treaty does provide for military assistance to an attacked nation, any kind of collective military action or sanction under the pact requires a two-thirds majority vote from the twenty-one signatory nations (which include Nicaragua). Such an endorsement is highly unlikely given the current political climate in the Organization of American States.

The administration's reference to the Rio Treaty as a basis for military involvement in Central America was also used by the Secretaries of Defense and State in their April 1984 denial of plans for a US "invasion" of a Central American country. While denying that any such plans existed, they acknowledged that there were plans for US military support of Rio Treaty obligations. To a number of observers, this suggested the possibility of a multilateral cover for a greater US military role.[33]

Covert Measures as Insurgency Policy

A controversial element of the Reagan administration's insurgency policy in Central America is the use of large-scale covert measures to pressure Nicaragua. The chief instruments in this process have been three groups of insurgents opposed to the Sandinista regime in Managua: the Nicaraguan Democratic Force based in Honduras, primarily comprised of former supporters of the Somoza regime; the Revolutionary Democratic Alliance operating from the Costa Rican border, principally involving disillusioned supporters of the Sandinista revolution; and various Miskito Indian groups along the Atlantic coast. The group most willing to work with the US Central Intelligence Agency was the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, and the relationship was formalized in National Security Decision Directive 17 of November 1981, which provided funds for this purpose.

The use of covert measures as part of a counterinsurgency policy is not new for the United States. However, in the case of Nicaragua there seemed to be some confusion as to the goals being pursued. At times the explanation seemed to be "symmetry," under which the US supported the "contras" as retaliation for Nicaraguan support of guerrillas in El Salvador and elsewhere. At other times the administration seemed to be pursuing more ambitious goals, including inflicting severe economic damage on the Nicaraguan economy and even hoping for an overthrow of the FSLN regime in Managua.[34]

Regardless of the objective sought, there have been questions about the convergence of the contras' own objectives with those of the United States and about the degree of US control over the contras, who apparently have received financing and support from other sources. Questions were also raised about what would happen to the contras if the United States eventually cut off their support, and what the impact would be on Honduras and Costa Rica.

The risks and costs of using covert measures on a large scale as part of an insurgency policy were dramatically brought out by the harbor minings of 1984 and the domestic and international repercussions when Nicaragua took the case to the International Court of Justice. The argument that the minings were relatively harmless and were justified as a self-defense measure did not convince critics in the US Congress or abroad.[35]

US POLICY OPTIONS

US insurgency policy options in the present Central American context can be best defined in terms of two extreme options and a range of middle courses.[36]

Withdrawal and Abstention

One extreme option would be for the United States to abandon its efforts to confront insurgencies in Central America, withdraw its personnel and assistance programs, and abstain from any further attempts to influence the outcome. Such an approach could be based on any of the following premises: [37]

- That the United States has no vital interests in Central America worth the cost of protecting them under the present circumstances.
- That because of the decline of relative and absolute US power in the area it is now absurd to believe that the United

States can "control" or determine the outcome of the present insurgencies.

- That US involvement in the current situation only makes things worse by prolonging the violent phase of an inevitable revolutionary process.
- That if the United States withdraws, other outside forces can also be persuaded to keep a "hands-off" attitude, thus allowing events in Central America to be determined by the nations of the region themselves.
- That an obsession with the "Vietnam syndrome" will so paralyze the US Congress and public opinion as to make withdrawal and abstention inevitable in the face of an unwillingness to accept other options.

Some conservative observers in the United States are concerned that excessive faith in the negotiating process (such as embodied in Contadora or in a variety of proposals suggesting "power sharing" arrangements) could generate pressures and momentum that would, in effect, bring this option about despite resistance from US government policymakers. One columnist put it this way: "Contadora is to Central America what the Paris Accords were to South Vietnam: a high-sounding pretext for another US walkaway."[38] Somewhat similar sentiments were contained in the April 1982 National Security Council document, "U.S. Policy in Central America and Cuba through FY 84," which calls for a strategy of "co-opting cut-and-run negotiating strategies by demonstrating a reasonable but firm approach to negotiations and compromise on our terms" and suggests a policy to "step up efforts to co-opt (the) negotiating issue to avoid Congressionally mandated negotiations, which would work against our interests."[39]

Assessments of the impact of a US withdrawal and abstention option must necessarily be speculative, but it is hard to be optimistic. A plausible scenario would have the more violent elements of the FMLN/FDR coming to power in El Salvador (after a bloody last-ditch struggle of unprecedented proportions with the far right). The emerging regime would have close ties to Nicaragua and Cuba, and the three nations would exert considerable pressure on Honduras, Costa Rica, and Guatemala;

insurgent movements in those countries could be expected to gather strength and support.

Despite this option's unattractiveness, it must be given serious consideration because it may be forced on a US administration by an antagonistic Congress or by fast-moving events in Central America, such as collapse of the Salvadoran government or regionalization of the conflict growing out of a clash between Nicaragua and one of its neighbors.

Involvement of US Combat Forces

The second obvious option would be a military commitment involving US combat forces. The range of commitment could start from the present (mid 1984) levels of military assistance to El Salvador and US forces deployed in exercises in Honduras. Deeper involvement would range from greatly stepped up advisory, logistical, and intelligence efforts, reminiscent of Vietnam in the early and mid 1960s; through reconnaissance, air strikes, and naval bombardment in support of counterinsurgency operations; and to the ultimate involvement of US ground tactical units in combat.

The upper range of commitment could also take the form of a long-term US combat troop presence in a polarized Central America similar to the Korean or European scenario, in which the forces of the United States and its allies would indefinitely face the troops of Nicaragua and its allies across a tense border.[40] Alternatively, the scenario could result in "going to the source" with an outright invasion of Nicaragua by military forces of the United States and its regional allies.

As long as the United States could still count on regional allies (El Salvador and Honduras), a legalistic justification could conceivably be fashioned that, although not particularly convincing to US or world public opinion, would at least give the United States government a juridical argument on which to base its actions. The use of a little-known article in the Charter of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States as justification for the Grenadian invasion provides the precedent for selective multilateralism, which could also be applied in Central America. On the Isthmus, the available legalistic instrument is the CONDECA agreement, although this is a much shakier vehicle because it was signed by ministers of defense, not governments as such, and because of the nature of the regimes involved. Other options might be the self-defense provisions of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty) or the Charter of the United Nations, but it would not be politically possible to obtain the required approval of either the Organization of American States (a two-thirds majority vote is required) or of the UN Security Council (where the veto would block any action, even if there were a majority within the Council).

Increasingly during late 1983 and early 1984, the United States seemed already headed in the direction of a military solution under one of the variants sketched above. In addition, the United States could quickly become embroiled in a direct military role through accident, miscalculation, terrorism, or provocation involving US military personnel in Honduras or El Salvador, or in the air and sea spaces in or near Nicaragua. Some have suggested that the involvement might come about incrementally. Others have argued that the US commitment to security assistance and exercises in Central America (along with the "message" of the intervention in Grenada) is basically a psychological ploy to intimidate Nicaragua and persuade it to change its policies. Regardless of the motivation and intention, the possibility of a greater military role in the insurgency situation in Central America has been taken seriously by adversaries, allies, and concerned observers in the region.[41]

Domestically, the impact of the Vietnam syndrome continues, presenting the administration with a fundamental dilemma, which can be framed as follows: the administration is determined not to "lose" Central America to a series of Marxist-Leninist insurgencies supported from Cuba and Nicaragua; although the American public and Congress support this goal in general, they are apparently unwilling to contemplate the ultimate price of greater military involvement that may be necessary in order to achieve it. In this situation, the administration has attempted to steer a middle course between withdrawal and direct intervention, denying that it is considering either possibility. Optimists argue that the administration's goals can be achieved by means short of committing US combat troops; pessimists feel this commitment is a very real possibility. Others argue that the basic policy should start with a clear definition of interests; if vital US interests are at stake in the Central American insurgency arena, then that fact should be made clear to the American public.

The military option has given rise to considerable speculation, mostly pessimistic. A few optimists stress the vast differences between Central America and Vietnam, noting that El Salvador, for example, is a small country with only one-tenth the population of Vietnam. This suggests to them that US military forces, if necessary, could overwhelm the insurgents in that country. Nicaragua would be another matter, but the optimists argue that the United States and its CONDECA allies could readily crush the conventional military forces of the Sandinista People's Army and control the principal cities of Nicaragua.

Although these military goals may be achievable, it seems more likely that, at best, a military approach would achieve short-term stability at a great human and political price. Furthermore, there are few checks against escalation at this level of conflict, not to mention the difficulties of extrication. The impact on US relations with Mexico, the rest of Latin America, and European allies would be profound, and the price would be paid for years to come. The historical record of US military solutions in Central America and the Caribbean confirms this somber assessment.[42]

The Middle Courses

In between withdrawal and military intervention is a wide range of middle courses. In general, these options involve mixes of the "4 d's" that are the essential elements of the Reagan administration's stated policy: development, democracy, defense, and diplomacy. The debate centers on the relative emphasis given each one of these components, on the precise meaning of each one of them, and on whose definition will become operational. Does, for example, "democracy" mean elections under conditions specified by the regime in San Salvador, or does it mean power sharing? Does "defense" mean protection of the status quo, or does it include the possibility of a Salvadoran military establishment made up of regulars and guerrillas? Does "dialogue" mean simply discussion, or does it mean negotiation without preconditions? Does "development" mean a capitalist model financed by the United States, or are socialist or mixed models possible?

Evaluated on its own terms, the Reagan administration's stated policy as of mid 1984 is a reasonable and balanced mix of the "4 d's." The degree to which this stated policy is actually being carried out, the priority of military solutions subsumed under "defense," and the extent to which a multilateral negotiation solution has sincerely been sought are matters of continuing controversy.

Taken at face value, the recommendations of the Kissinger Commission are another expression of a balanced approach, and one that is not far from the stated policies of the Reagan administration. Although there is much to be applauded in the Kissinger Commission's report, it essentially advocates reform in the Alliance for Progress tradition, using development and democracy as counterinsurgency instruments, with emphasis on the military element.[43] The Kissinger recommendations, in effect, call for "more of the same" in terms of economic and military assistance. But the recommendations do not answer the question of how to avoid an increasingly deeper US involvement if the reformist solutions don't work, if the other side increases the ante, or if the chosen US regional allies turn out to be supporters of the status quo instead of reformers.

Another alternative would accept much of the Kissinger Commission's work but would de-emphasize the "defense" portion and replace it with "de-militarization." [44] Instead of employing intimidation to modify Nicaragua's behavior, it would try to reassure the Managua regime that its security can be protected in ways that do not threaten its neighbors. An alternative middle course would stress ways of defusing tensions instead of igniting them. All parties would seek to return Central American problems to their lower historical level by decoupling them from outside issues and forces; means would be sought to verify negotiable solutions while protecting legitimate interests.

Making the Choice

The ultimate choice of options will be the result of long hours of debate and compromise between the president and the Executive Branch, Congress, and to a lesser extent the American public. Regardless of the course chosen, it is imperative that opportunities and costs be thoroughly articulated and that clear direction follows once the choice is made. More important, however, is the matter of consistency. Over the years, US concern for hemispheric affairs has run both "hot" and "cold." Throughout most of the 1960s US concerns tended to be "hot," while through most of the 1970s they were "cold."

Right now, concerns are "hot" again; hence, Central America will continue to receive policymakers' attention. But Central American events should not overshadow events in other parts of the hemisphere; nor should they cloud the fact that attention generally increases only in times of crisis. US interests in Latin America can only be served by deliberate policies and programs flowing down from continuous attention and appraisal. Wishing insurgencies away will not eliminate them; that they will remain is all but inevitable. What remains to be seen is the direction US policy will take and what effect this will have on regional developments.

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THE FUTURE OF LATIN AMERICAN INSURGENCIES

William Ratliff

Over the past three decades Latin America has been a hands-on school for insurgents trying to seize power from traditional, military, and even reformist governments. A few insurgents have done well in this revolutionary school; they have taken political power and become the teaching faculty, as it were—most importantly, Fidel Castro in Cuba. But over the decades most of the insurgents flunked their courses: they died, went to prison, gave up, or stubbornly slogged away year after year with no significant successes, though much destruction to show for their efforts.

Insurgencies in contemporary Latin America have tended to come in fits and starts, occasionally in clusters, and during three periods have been of long duration or major regional importance. The first of these three, in Cuba during the late 1950s, was both relatively short and isolated, but it succeeded and became the prototype of the contemporary "anti-imperialist" revolution in the Western Hemisphere. The second period, under the direct and indirect influence of Cuba, was both prolonged and spread throughout the hemisphere. It lasted from the mid 1960s to the mid 1970s and ranged from a Cuban-supported war in Venezuela and an exported "Castroist" model revolution in Bolivia to more independent insurgent movements launched in Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina. All of these were put down, but in the process they caused significant national and regional turmoil and in a couple of instances took democratic political systems down with them. The third period began in the late 1970s and continues at a rising pitch in the mid 1980s. Its two most important early successes were the revolutionary coup in Grenada and the Sandinista victory in Nicaragua.

Of course, insurgents also posed challenges, sometimes serious ones, off and on in other countries as well, not least in Guatemala, Colombia, and Peru. But the current siege, centered in the Caribbean Basin though not restricted to that area, stands apart for two principal reasons: the efficacy of the strategies employed and the altered national and international contexts. As a result, two of the struggles culminated in a seizure of power by the insurgents—though the one in Grenada was reversed four years later—and the increasing momentum of the insurgencies, particularly at present in El Salvador, raises the possibility, perhaps probability of further revolutionary victories during the 1980s. Indeed, it is precisely this mounting challenge of insurgent movements since the late 1970s that has awakened some traditionally somnolent North Americans to at least part of what is happening in portions of Latin America.

"If you look the past dead in the eye," Will Rogers once remarked, "you'll learn something for tomorrow." Rogers' observation on learning from the past is closer to the truth than George Santayana's more famous dictum, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it," for ignorance does not necessarily precipitate a repetition of what has gone before. But Santayana was right to suggest that knowing the past is one of the best ways of anticipating and perhaps altering the future. Insurgents and those who oppose them have learned some things from the experiences of the last three decades, as I will detail in the pages that follow. But both sides will have to continue learning in the years ahead if they hope to avoid landing in the dustbin of history.

I will focus on the strategies and experiences of several important Latin American insurgencies of the past thirty years and note which aspects, in what modified forms, are important today and likely to be present in the insurgencies of the future. Among the topics to be covered are the reasons for insurgencies; the varying objectives and experiences of domestic groups and international powers directly or indirectly involved in insurgencies; the factors favoring and inhibiting the growth of insurgent movements; probable revolutionary strategies for the years ahead; and briefly, what policies or actions may be effective in reducing the incidence and destructiveness of insurgent movements.

WHY INSURGENCIES?

Many Latin American countries have had, now have, or will have insurgencies for a variety of reasons, only some of which can be mentioned here. On the domestic side, the contributing factors include (1) the extensive political, economic, and social needs and the rapidly expanding populations of many countries, which sometimes provide the incentive for dissent in many forms, including insurgent movements; (2) the actual or perceived ineffectiveness or incompetence of government efforts to satisfy the needs of individuals and promote national development; and (3) the political sophistication of the country's citizens, or some sectors of the citizenry, and the extent of or potential for organized violent opposition to the government and its security forces.

But there are international components as well that may be of considerable, sometimes critical importance in launching and pursuing, or in thwarting, an insurgency. And although one may strive to reduce the impact of outside powers, it will not fade away in the foreseeable future for at least two reasons. First, Latin America depends on other regions of the world for financing and markets; and religion and politics, so to speak, have long walked in the shadow of economics. Second, it is the nature of serious international political rivals—the United States and the Soviet Union, for example—to project themselves into vulnerable and potentially receptive areas, which Latin America is thought to be. Thus, the international influence on insurgencies depends on the level and nature of international support for maintaining, reforming, or overthrowing existing governments and societies, and on the orientation and vitality of international rivalries and other developments which may have little or nothing to do directly with Latin America.

THE PROBLEM OF OBJECTIVES

Among the most difficult problems anyone faces in trying to evaluate insurgencies and their prospects is that of sorting out the real and perceived objectives of the many parties involved. Differences between the insurgents and the mainstream of society are to be expected, but equally important at times are differences within the insurgent movement itself. The insurgents sometimes have highlighted their own differences and sometimes have quite effectively hidden them from most observers, including many journalists, academics, churchmen, government officials, and others of the right, center, and left in the United States and abroad whose views are regularly sought and delivered.

In the most general terms, the domestic objectives of the insurgents are relatively clear: most hope to seize power and set up a government of their own. Most claim to be Marxists or Marxist-Leninists fighting on behalf of "the people." With few exceptions, however, revolutionaries who have taken power have been more prone to imposing their own views of what the people need than inclined to bring the proletariat, peasantry, intelligentsia, or others under their control into the policy planning process. From a position of strength, insurgents may be willing to compromise at some point with existing powers if they conclude that doing so will ultimately bring them the same prize with less destruction. Or, very rarely, insurgents may compromise from a position of equality or weakness if they feel that doing so will save them something in a deteriorating situation.

A few insurgents are more interested in applying pressure on a government for faster reform than in taking power themselves. By the very nature of their objectives, these insurgents are much more open to negotiated settlements. The calculations of insurgent leaders before and after taking power are complicated by the need to win some popular support for their actions as well as to gauge the response of the groups they are challenging. And, sometimes the most difficult of all, they must try to anticipate the reliability of their international allies and the responses of their international enemies.

But the objectives of insurgents in Latin America in recent years have not always been limited to domestic matters. Since the United States has long been the dominant international power in the region, and since the vast majority of insurgents consider themselves Marxists in one form or another, most insurgencies have been highly critical of the United States. This orientation has been heightened by the strongly anti-US position of the Cuban government, which has actively promoted other revolutionary struggles most of the time since Castro took power in 1959. The Nicaraguan government, with Cuban backing, has done the same since 1979.

This international aspect was pointed out clearly by the Salvadoran guerrilla front, the Farabundo Marti Front of National Liberation (Frente Farabundo Martí de Liberación Nacional--FMLN), in a broadcast on its clandestine Radio *Venceremos* on 13 March 1983, when it said, "We are not naive and realize that we cannot and should not fail to include our plans within the framework of a regional conflict." Other groups have had international objectives, the most successful for a time being the National Liberation Movement (Tupamaros) in Uruguay during the late 1960s and early 1970s. These objectives were evident in the international makeup of guerrilla bands in Bolivia and other countries, particularly during the 1960s; in international meetings of revolutionary groups throughout the period under discussion; and in the formation in 1974 of the Revolutionary Coordinating Committee of guerrilla organizations from Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, and Bolivia.

Many diverse foreign governments and parties have supported insurgencies in Latin America over the past thirty years for a variety of reasons, ranging from common detestation of a ruling dictator to what were perceived as national security interests. Rómulo Betancourt, head of the Venezuelan Acción Democrática, threw his prestige and other support behind the anti-Batista insurgency in Cuba during the late 1950s, for example, though his government became one of the most celebrated targets of Castroist guerrillas during the following decade. The democratic governments of Venezuela and Costa Rica provided moral and materiel support for the Sandinista movement against the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua during the late 1970s, evidently expecting a Sandinista government that would be democratically oriented like their own. Some governments adopt a relatively neutral position toward insurgencies if they conclude the insurgents may be victorious, in hopes that this will strengthen moderate leaders of the movement and lead to better relations with the new government that is finally set up.

But the commitments of any government can change for many reasons, among them the advent of a new elected administration or military leader, the deterioration of the economy, or a shift in relations with a major international power, like the Cuban rapprochement with the Soviet Union at the end of the 1960s. Since the radicalization of the Nicaraguan revolution, many Latin American governments—notable among them, those of Venezuela and Costa Rica—have become critical of the Sandinistas and have been more chary about supporting insurgent movements, especially in a time of increasing Cuban activism.

The most significant international support for insurgencies since 1959 has come directly from Cuba—thus, any discussion of the many Latin American insurgencies has a very large Cuban component—and indirectly from the Soviet Union, a phenomenon that I will discuss in more detail below. According to Cuban leaders, their support for insurgencies over the past twenty-five years *has been motivated by their determination* to help the Latin American people overcome the oppression of their governments and foreign "imperialists." But Cuba has supported guerrilla wars against democratically elected governments as well as dictators, including Betancourt's in Venezuela, and thus Cuban policy apparently has other motivations as well. One of these motivations is Fidel Castro's antipathy toward the United States and its friends—an attitude that was well developed before he took power in 1959—and his conviction that anything to weaken the United States or its allies is in his interests. Beyond this strategic concern is Castro's evident personal ambition to play a major role in the international revolutionary community, a role far beyond what the leader of such a small Third World country could manage for long without a major international sponsor.

Whereas the Soviet Union was not sympathetic to Castro's international activism during the 1960s, cooperative ventures that Soviet leaders consider in their interests have been launched with some success since the mid 1970s in Africa and the Americas. Latin American insurgencies interest Soviet leaders primarily because they are anti-US. In the long term, Soviet officials would like to see a Marxist-Leninist Latin America that would be pro-Soviet, but they would settle for governments that would be merely anti-US.

A greatly expanded anti-US mood and unrest in the Americas, particularly in the Caribbean Basin, would force the United States to redeploy a significant portion of its military forces to handle what it would perceive as a new threat to its security. The United States would have to respond by moving men and materiel out of areas of more direct concern to the USSR or by increasing the size of its military. The Soviets would not welcome the latter possibility, of course, but despite President Reagan's interest in defense, Soviet leaders do not think a significantly expanded US military is likely given the mood of the American people today. On the other hand, the Soviet Union is not anxious to get a large number of dependencies like Cuba, for the Caribbean island is one of the chief recipients of Soviet military and economic aid, and a series of Cubas would be an excessive drain on Soviet resources.

Other countries and organizations from outside the hemisphere, ranging from Libya and the Palestine Liberation Organization to North Korea and Vietnam, have assisted Latin American insurgents in various ways over the years. These supporters have not generally provided the kind of aid needed to maintain a major insurgency, but their support might continue—or end—independently of Cuba and the Soviet Bloc. These allies have less to offer, however, and the loss of the Cuban conduit would greatly hamper the transportation of aid.

LEARNING FROM PAST INSURGENCIES

If we look the most important insurgency experiences and strategies of the past thirty years "dead in the eye," as Will Rogers suggested, we find that almost everything practiced by insurgents today was tried out in the past. The same is likely to be true in the future.

Over the past thirty years political-military insurgencies in Latin America have fallen into several sometimes overlapping categories: (1) armed struggles launched by small revolutionary groups trying to seize power or, by their very radicalism, to ignite a general conflagration; (2) armed and non-armed struggles stressing unity of the radical and moderate left in pursuit of a somewhat more gradual revolutionary program; (3) armed conflict centered in the countryside; and (4) armed conflict centered in the cities.

Fidel Castro, the first and most important insurgent of contemporary Latin America, had some experience with all four of these kinds of insurgencies in the Cuban struggle against Fulgencio Batista. His unsuccessful attack on the Moncada Barracks in 1953 combined numbers 1 and 4, but the experience in both was very limited. Between 1956 and 1959 he emphasized models 2 and 3, a broadly based insurgency proclaiming political freedom and a moderate program of reform with its critical, galvanizing force in the countryside.

The Heyday of Castroism

During the late 1940s and 1950s a strategy was being developed in Colombia that flowed naturally from the impatience and independent-mindedness of many Latin Americans. This was the unfocused, disunited armed rural insurgency of small groups—some little more than bandits claiming revolutionary legitimacy—often striking out randomly at government officials, the police, the military, the people generally, and each other. Ironically, during the 1960s this strategy became known as "Castroism," for shortly after taking power in Cuba, Castro threw out the moderate program and broad front lessons he had learned while fighting Batista and began promoting precisely this Colombian combination of models 1 and 3. Colombians have died for decades pursuing this form of conflict, and after Castro began promoting it in the mid 1960s, it led to the deaths of insurgents (and others) all over Latin America for more than a decade.

At its peak in 1967 Castroism, as the fighting ideology of impatient, radical, anti-US minorities, was reflected and projected in three major developments: (1) the publication in Havana, in January, of Regis Debray's *Revolution in the Revolution*; (2) the convening in Havana, during August-September, of the Latin American Solidarity Organization (OLAS) conference and the activities of its Castroites in a number of Latin American countries; and (3) the guerrilla war under Che Guevara in Bolivia.

Debray's book systematically purged the Cuban experience of its most important lesson—the need for unity among dissident military forces and support of broad sectors behind a reform-oriented program. It proclaimed the residue—guerrilla war by a band of insurgents, called the foco—as the Cuban experience and the model for all of Latin America. Some Latin American revolutionaries, prominent among them the Venezuelan guerrilla leader Douglas Bravo, immediately recognized Debray's polemic for what it was: a "dogmatic little recipe" that distorted the Cuban revolutionary experience and would lead in the years ahead to defeat after defeat for insurgents throughout the hemisphere. But many Latin Americans tried to make a revolution according to this recipe. And predictably, Debray's simplistic formulations were particularly popular with radical students and teachers in the United States and Europe.

The OLAS conference assembled many of the most radical and often the most inconsequential individuals and groups from the Americas, the vast majority chosen because they could be expected to endorse the emerging and increasingly doctrinaire Castro-Guevara-Debray focoist policy. These Castroist revolutionaries proceeded to declare war on the "imperialists" and their lackeys, which was predictable enough. But they went on to condemn all those "false revolutionaries," as Castro called them, who wanted to put off or sabotage the revolution Cuban leaders saw rolling in waves (*olas*, in Spanish) over the continent, their sabotage demonstrated by their refusal to adhere to the Castroist line.

During 1967 Castro himself condemned, with varying degrees of vituperativeness, the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, the People's Republic of China, the pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese communist parties of Latin America, the Trotskyites, and virtually every other presumably natural or at least potential Marxist-Leninist ally. Castro and the Castroites, who were active in many countries, among the most important being Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela, and Peru, only had eyes for each other.

Finally, there was the Cuban effort to export revolution to all of Latin America through Bolivia. In most countries during the mid and late 1960s, Cuba supported small but indigenous groups. Bolivia, however, was a different case. Guevara arrived in that

Andean country in late 1966 without telling most Bolivian revolutionary leaders that he was coming. Talks with pro-Soviet and other Bolivian revolutionaries who trekked to Guevara's jungle camp brought no support because, as Guevara's diary subsequently made clear, Che insisted on maintaining control of the guerrilla operation, with all Bolivians subordinated to him.

Though the Bolivians didn't like Guevara's idea, it made sense from the Castroist perspective because, in the words of Guevara's chief Cuban lieutenant—see Pombo's diary in *The Complete Bolivian Diaries of Che Guevara and Other Captured Documents*, edited by Daniel James—the objective was not a Bolivian but a continental revolution: "Bolivia will sacrifice itself so that conditions (for revolution) can be created in neighboring countries. We have to make another Viet Nam out of America, with its center in Bolivia." Since Guevara had little support for his program from Bolivian Marxist-Leninists, and none at all from the Bolivian people as a whole, he had to rely on Castroites from several other countries, the belated support of the then-Castroist Trotskyites of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, and a large number of Cubans. But with no popular support, Guevara spent all his time running friendless through the Bolivian wilds until he was hunted down and killed.

The death of Guevara in October 1967 and subsequent guerrilla setbacks in other countries at the end of the decade, coinciding as they did with mounting chaos in the Cuban economy and Cuba's increasing dependence on the Soviet Union, made Castro reconsider his dream of waves of revolution sweeping the continent. And it became increasingly obvious to insurgents throughout the Americas that, despite occasional short-term successes, rural Castroism had failed. Many insurgents had lost their lives, and so had "establishment" forces and innocent bystanders, the latter sometimes accidentally caught in, sometimes deliberately thrust into the crossfire. Even Debray—back in France after visiting Guevara in Bolivia and spending time in several Bolivian jails—acknowledged that his analysis had been superficial *gauchisme*, in particular because he had failed to see the need for broad alliances as advocated by Mao Zedong. And so, responding to reality and pressure from Soviet leaders, who insisted that Castro overcome his "leftist adventurism"—which Lenin had called an "infantile disorder"—Castro reduced his support for the remaining Latin American guerrillas.

Alternative Revolutionary Strategies

Nevertheless, the hands-on experiences of the 1960s had spawned changes and alternative forms of insurgency characterized by (1) fewer ties to Cuba because of the Cuban withdrawal and because some groups made small fortunes of their own—which they passed around to other guerrilla groups—from kidnappings and ransoms; (2) an increase in urban struggle, typified in particular by movements in Brazil and Uruguay; and (3) a move toward broadening support for revolutionary movements, a practice that brings us to the present day.

A few of these new groups claimed inspiration from China, but most, in varying degrees, were still inspired, if not always significantly aided, by Cuba. The most important groups claiming to be Maoist emerged, in the wake of the Sino-Soviet dispute, in rural areas of Bolivia and Colombia—where the People's Liberation Army formed the first all-woman front in 1968—and other countries, and among students and others in Ecuador and Peru.

In reality, most Latin American "Maoists" had little interest in applying the broad front and "protracted struggle" aspects of the Chinese experience (critical distinctions in a continent dominated by Castroist impatience) or had little idea how to work toward those Maoist objectives. To most Latin American Maoists, looking at the Cultural Revolution period in China, "pro-Chinese" mainly meant relentless, no-holds-barred insurgency. In Guatemala, Marco Antonio Yon Sosa demonstrated some grasp of Maoist base areas, as did some revolutionaries in Peru who have emerged in recent years as the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path).

More important, because from the mid 1960s to the mid 1970s they were more active and destructive, were the largely independent organizations in Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, and Argentina. Urban guerrilla warfare had been employed for years as a secondary form of insurgency, but it was an insignificant factor in the hard-line Castroist model of 1967. Now several groups began to specialize in urban insurgency.

This line was propounded in Abraham Guillen's *Strategy of the Urban Guerrilla* (1966, 1969)—Guillen called for a continental revolution in 1966, a year before Guevara's more famous "Message to the Tricontinental" did the same—and in the much better known *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla* (1969) by Brazilian guerrilla leader Carlos Marighela, which circulated throughout the continent. In the most widely circulated Cuban version of the *Minimanual*, carried in the Castroist journal *Tricontinental* (January-February 1970), Marighela stressed that the urban guerrilla must have two essential qualities: (1) a Marxist "politico-revolutionary motivation" and conviction of "moral superiority," which comes from the realization that "to be an assailant or a terrorist is a quality that ennobles any honorable man"; and (2) training in insurgent warfare, because his "reason for existence . . . is to shoot" and his activities will be assaults, ambushes, expropriations, executions, kidnappings, sabotage, and wars of nerves. And so it was in Brazil from the late 1960s until the early 1970s, by which time Marighela and his successors had been killed.

In Uruguay the Tupamaros emerged during the early 1960s and by the end of the decade became the most widely known and feared of Latin American insurgent groups. For a while the Tupamaros cultivated a "Robin Hood" image, gaining a broad following at various levels of society, and carried out daring attacks on government forces. Spectacular kidnappings of foreigners brought extensive international attention in 1969-70. But when attacks on Uruguayans escalated in 1972, much local support dried up and the terrorism precipitated a police and military crackdown that within a year paralyzed the guerrillas and terminated Uruguayan democracy. The Robin Hood image of the Tupamaros was presented in the popular, polemical Costa Gravas film "State of Siege," released in 1973 after the group was in decline.

In Chile the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) engaged in armed opposition to the government of Christian Democrat Eduardo Frei in the late 1960s. For all practical purposes, the MIR also played a major role in the overthrow of the democratically elected socialist-communist government of Salvador Allende in late 1973, though the latter was trying to carry out a revolutionary program. While Socialist Party leader Allende, with the support of some of his party and all of the communists, wanted to move step by step and "consolidate" all revolutionary gains, at least arguably within the Chilean constitutional system, the Miristas and the radical branch of Allende's own party wanted to move faster under the slogan "Push ahead without compromise." The Miristas and extreme Socialists effectively organized many workers, peasants, students, and the poor in several parts of the country. The difference between the insurrectional class struggle of the Miristas and the more gradual revolution of the Allende government was highlighted when the former joined other radical forces in a Paris Commune-type government that seized power in defiance of the law and President Allende's wishes in the city of Concepción in July 1972.

In the months before the military coup in September 1973, the MIR and some socialists harassed Allende by charging that his government had capitulated to the bourgeoisie and by ignoring and defying "bourgeois legality." These radicals also pushed ahead with their efforts to create what they considered a truly revolutionary "alternative power to the bourgeois state," as outlined in the Chilean journal *Punto Final* (31 July 1973) and other places. Thus provoked, amidst rocketing inflation, the military, with broad popular support, overthrew the Allende government and the president reportedly committed suicide. (According to the left, which wanted a martyr, Allende was assassinated.)

The overthrow of the Allende government suggested two sorts of conclusions as to how the Chilean revolution should have proceeded. Some concluded that the Miristas and other "ultra-leftists" should have supported Allende's more gradual program so as not to have alienated Chilean moderates and precipitated the military coup. Others, led by the MIR and radical socialists, charged that the revolution failed because it was not aggressive enough and did not immediately overthrow the "bourgeois" power structure. After the coup many leftists, including the communists and many Soviet leaders, leaned toward the latter conclusion.

In Argentina the Trotskyist People's Revolutionary Army (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo—ERP), which began as a branch of the Fourth International/United Secretariat, took on an even broader assignment. The ERP's actions ranged from extensive organization of workers and kidnappings for ransom in the cities, through surprise attacks on the military and police in urban and rural areas, to major military campaigns in the northern province of Tucumán. The ERP and the Peronist Montoneros created widespread chaos in Argentina for several years while the military turned its guns on the insurgents and many other Argentines, and in the process shot down many Argentine citizens and the incompetent Argentine democracy.

REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGIES TODAY

Insurgents in Latin America and their international supporters moved to the head of the class in the mid 1970s and demonstrated conclusively that they had learned a great deal from their experiences of the preceding fifteen years. At the same time their national and international opponents often began flunking tests they had passed only a few years earlier. In this new stiuation Cuba and the Soviet Union have given significant support to many insurgent movements.

Several changes in the international scene, beginning in the mid 1970s, served as catalysts and set the stage for the insurgent successes since 1979. US foreign policy toward the Third World was crippled by the neo-isolationism that followed the political-military defeat in Vietnam and by the loss of confidence that flooded the country after the Watergate scandal. Meanwhile, in an obviously related development, the Soviet Union reappraised its policies toward the Third World. The failure of the "peaceful road" of the Allende government in Chile and the increasing withdrawal of the United States from international affairs prompted the USSR to probe the limits of détente and look more favorably on the use of force in the Third World. The Soviet move into Angola in 1975 was, as Adam Ulam noted in his book *Dangerous Relations*, "an escalation in both methods and intensity of the Soviet expansionist push in the Third World." It was the first time massive Soviet power, partly in the form of Cuban troops, was used to support pro-Soviet forces in a civil war thousands of miles from the Soviet homeland.

Major cooperative efforts by the Soviet and Cuban governments became commonplace in Africa and the Middle East during the 1970s and kindled no significant resistance from any other power, most importantly, none from the United States. Then, when Carter administration policies led to a break in military ties with several Latin American governments and Washington adopted a more benign line toward insurgents in the Americas, both the Soviet Union and Cuba looked with increasing interest toward this hemisphere. Castro, for his part, jettisoned most of his former impatience, elitism, and intolerance—that is to say, the infantile "Castroism" that had for so long alienated Soviet leaders—while the Soviet Union came halfway to the Cuban position of the decade before by throwing its support behind some armed insurgent movements in the area.

In this new context, Cuba and the Soviet Union have played an important role in several major Latin American insurgencies of recent years. Of course, Cuba did not create the poverty, corruption, and oppression that, in varying degrees, plague so many countries in the region, and there would be dissident individuals and forces even if Cuba offered no assistance whatsoever. But in several important instances Cuba has played a significant role in organizing, focusing, expanding, and publicizing the domestic discontent. And despite certain differences between Havana and Moscow—for example, over the Bishop government overthrown in Grenada in October 1983—there is little evidence that cooperation between Cuba and the Soviet Bloc will be interrupted in the near future.

The diverse components of this strategy for the 1980s range from massive Soviet support for the Cuban government to Cuban good offices in bringing together fratricidal insurrectional factions within individual countries. These components include—

- The Soviet presence in Cuba, which includes more than 13,000 military and civilian personnel, a major intelligence network, extensive aid—an estimated $4 billion per year in economic support, constituting one-quarter of the Cuban GNP—and an estimated $4.5 billion in military aid since 1960, half of it in the past four years. The Soviet economic support assures the survival of the Cuban government, despite its notoriously inefficient economy—and even makes possible those health and education programs Cuban leaders publicize so widely in the West and the

Third World—while the military support guarantees tiny Cuba the military capability to be active in the affairs of other countries thousands of miles from home.

- Cuba's providing assistance to Latin American insurgents at various levels, from strategic planning and military/intelligence training, through the provision of war material, to sending "advisers" to participate in combat missions. But Castro now refuses to give support to the squabblers he nurtured in the late 1960s. His aid, beyond some individual training sessions in Cuba, now is contingent upon unification of revolutionary forces within the country and the creation of a broad, popular front.
- The evident preference to support one regional revolution at a time. Cuban concentration on Nicaragua (see below) was followed by attention focused on El Salvador. The rationale seems to be twofold: it is costly enough in personnel and material to support one major revolution at a time; and it is safer to make progress bit by bit—a touch of Allende's salami tactic here—so as not to overly alarm the other governments in the region, the United States, or even organizations and governments in Europe and elsewhere, which hardly notice one revolution at a time in distant Latin America but might take notice if "many Vietnams" were shaking the Western Hemisphere.

Nicaragua and El Salvador provide the two most consequential case studies of this new strategy. Cuba had provided help and haven to Carlos Fonseca Amador, founder of the Sandinista Front of National Liberation (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional—FSLN), since the movement was set up in the early 1960s and Fonseca officially "declared war" on the Somoza government at the 1967 OLAS conference in Havana. But the Sandinista Front was a small, harassed, and generally ineffective organization in those days and had much less impact than Castroist groups in Guatemala, Colombia, and some other countries. Then in 1977, when Cuban leaders again turned their attention to the Americas, the Cubans considered Nicaragua the most promising target in the region. In that year Cuban negotiators got the three feuding factions of the FSLN to work together on the battlefield and to back a broad political support front in order to overthrow the Somoza government. Once unity was established, Cuba provided critical support in training, logistics, and supplies, as did some other countries. Somoza fell in July 1979, and step by step the Sandinista extremists have eliminated the moderates. Cuba and the Soviet Union have extended their contacts with the Sandinista government and made Nicaragua a focal point for revolution in the region.

Cuba had been in touch with Salvadoran guerrillas for years, but 1979 proved a turning point both in those relations and in the prospects of Salvadoran insurgents. In October 1979, three months after the fall of Somoza, young Salvadoran civilians and military officers carried out a coup and formed a broadly based government determined to undertake major reforms within a democratic context. Concerned that the new government might prove successful, the right began to rally its forces while the forever-feuding guerrillas, under direct Cuban influence, formed a front to maximize their efforts to prevent a reformist alternative from succeeding. Three of the guerrilla forces in the present Farabundo Martí Front of National Liberation (FMLN)—including the large Popular Liberation Force—came together in December, the month before the short-lived government fell; the other major guerrilla force, the Popular Revolutionary Army, came in line at a meeting in Havana in May 1980, and the FMLN and the Democratic Revolutionary Front, the more broadly based political front organization, were formed.

Among the classic tactics, all practiced during the Salvadoran war since 1979, are—

- Sabotaging the reformers who might make revolution seem unnecessary, as both the reactionary right and Marxist-Leninist left did to the October 1979 government in El Salvador, and as both—particularly the FMLN—will try to do to the José Napoleón Duarte government elected in 1984.
- Exacerbating existing differences among the anti-insurgent forces, causing them to weaken each other.
- Provoking the opposition, often through acts of terrorism, to overreact and discredit itself in domestic and foreign eyes, which often is a woefully easy thing to do.

- Increasing the problems of the country through sabotage of infrastructure—losses caused by direct sabotage in El Salvador between 1979 and mid 1984 totaled nearly $1 billion, equal to the total of US economic aid to the country during the same period.
- Waging an international campaign through activities of the FDR to win support for the insurgent forces and dry up aid for the government.

This final activity—a critical component of many insurgent movements in recent years—requires further comment because cutting off international support for a government under siege can mean the difference between success and failure for an insurgent movement. In many countries, attitudes toward foreign nations and government policies toward those nations are formed largely on the basis of what the media report; and over the years the media often have tended to look more critically at the right and even the center than at the left. The right has a long and often unimpressive record that is easy to condemn; the reformers of the center, often with real or alleged historical links to the right, have had little opportunity to prove themselves while out of power and, when in power, have labored under severe restraints.

From the time of Fidel Castro's interview with Herbert Matthews in the Sierra Maestra in 1957 to today, the insurgents' spokesmen have often found sympathetic and sometimes uncritical listeners in the media and in certain other groups, particularly those affiliated with US universities and churches. Using the familiar vocabulary of democratic societies, these spokesmen criticize oppression, advocate equality, demand improved living conditions for all people, and proclaim their preference for national sovereignty and international independence. (And they do so as young, romantic-looking guerrillas in the countryside or as respected intellectuals, like FDR spokesman Rubén Zamora, in the capitals of the Western world, not as rigid army generals scowling in dark sunglasses and surrounded by equally sinister-looking officers and their tanks, which is the style of most Latin American military leaders.) Pulitzer Prize-winning Central American correspondent Shirley Christian demonstrated this generally unintended bias in the media in a study of US reporting from Nicaragua during the last years of the Somoza government.

Several other correspondents from major US newspapers and television networks have expressed to me in Cuba and El Salvador that they "learned a lot" about the need to be more aggressive and critical from their experiences with the Sandinistas.

Although the revolutions of most immediate concern to the United States have a significant Cuban-Soviet component, others evidently do not. The most important of these in mid 1984 is the Sendero Luminoso movement in Peru. While most Marxist-Leninists in the country, and other leftists besides, are members of the extraordinarily broad United Left, the Maoist Peruvian Communist Party—Sendero Luminoso is carrying out a destructive terrorist war. Insurgency also is present in several other countries from Guatemala to Chile, though in no case is it as consequential as in El Salvador or Peru. On the other hand, there is some hope that a cease-fire reached between the Colombian government and several Colombian guerrilla groups may bring down the level of violence in that country, at least temporarily.

FACTORS INHIBITING THE GROWTH OF INSURGENCIES

A progressive government striving to develop the country may be a deterrent to insurgent movements, but it is no guarantee of domestic tranquillity for several reasons. Substantial development is very difficult to achieve, as it may not benefit all levels of society or it may simply make people impatient for more than can be done. And of course, "substantial" development to one observer may be minimal development to another. Finally, for some potential insurgents, development is not the issue; power is the issue.

The realities of domestic life and international interests often inhibit the growth of insurgencies in the Americas. Domestically, the problem of winning popular support can be paramount. Even when national conditions are very bad, mass commitment to an insurgency is difficult to obtain until victory seems probable, but victory generally doesn't seem probable until there is substantial popular support for the movement. Even those living in the most miserable of conditions are reluctant to risk their own lives, not to mention the lives of family and friends, in pursuit of vague promises of revolutionaries who drift in from a distant city or countryside and can just as suddenly disappear when the government's security forces descend upon the village.

Furthermore, the revolutionary objectives of the insurgent forces are by no means universally popular with the workers and peasants in these countries, not to mention the "establishment" members of society. In the early 1960s Castro said he had hidden his long-term objectives because they would have diminished support for his movement. In the years after Castro's radicalization, many guerrillas in Guatemala and other countries admitted that it would be more difficult for them to make headway in their own revolutions because of the extremist turn in Cuba. As former Sandinista junta member Arturo Cruz has noted, the Nicaraguan people are not at all sympathetic toward communism. In recent years the "stress the moderation" line has been represented in the formation of broad political fronts, first against Somoza and then in El Salvador, both of which have been remarkably successful. Many moderate leftists in exile from these countries are more willing to be openly associated with insurgent movements today than they were some years ago.

What is more, the governments in power have most of the advantages, at least in the beginning—above all, the military and police forces, which generally have had experience in suppressing insurgents. And in some countries people have, perhaps of necessity, developed a considerable tolerance for violence; many Salvadorans admit that this has happened in their country. But, as Yonah Alexander and Richard Kucinski note in this volume, the international community, too, has failed to adequately recognize and condemn terrorism.

An equally serious problem over the years has been the fratricidal tendencies of the revolutionaries themselves, a tendency Castro cultivated during the heyday of Castroism. All of the guerrilla organizations in the Salvadoran FMLN today are, for example, directly or indirectly outgrowths of the Communist Party of El Salvador. These organizations formed when individuals or groups objected to party policies or when a leader of their faction was murdered by opposition forces within the insurgent movement. One of the most important events in recent years in El

Salvador, virtually ignored by the US media, was the assassination-suicide of two top leaders of the Popular Liberation Forces, one of the largest and most important organizations in the Salvadoran FMLN. Although the full story remains to be uncovered, it clearly reflects major ongoing differences within the guerrilla leadership, and there are hints of Nicaraguan and Cuban involvement.

International factors also inhibit insurgencies. US support for governments opposing military uprising is based chiefly on American strategic concerns regarding the region. The strategic importance of Latin America, and particularly the Caribbean Basin, for the United States is derived from the region's natural resources, its markets, a high level of US investment, and its location astride transportation and communication routes not only to the Americas but to Europe and Asia as well. Thus, the American preference is for friendly governments that will not obstruct US interests in the area.

US concern was reflected first during the nineteenth century in the Monroe Doctrine. More recently there have been John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress, Ronald Reagan's Caribbean Basin Initiative, and the 1984 Kissinger Commission report, all of which stressed military as well as economic aid to the region, though mostly at minimum levels. US aid has taken many forms, from supplying trainers and arms for government forces to supplying "covert" support for guerrillas fighting an established government, the latter a policy introduced against the Arbenz government in Guatemala several years before the Cuban revolution and used most recently in supporting guerrillas fighting the Sandinista government from bases in Costa Rica and Honduras.

The United States may apply pressure in a variety of ways. The government adopted a "hands-off" policy toward Cuba in 1958 and a would-be mediating position toward Nicaragua in 1979, in both cases after the insurgencies had become major uprisings. Both dictators were replaced by unfriendly revolutionary governments, suggesting to some analysts—who do not look carefully enough at the immediate post-revolution policies of the new governments—that if Washington had adopted a neutral position earlier, better post-revolution bilateral relations would have been possible.

The United States has generally been skeptical of the value of negotiations with insurgent movements or revolutionary governments in Latin America, in the belief that they are not interested in settling for only part of the cake as long as the whole thing may still be up for grabs. There may be exceptions, however, as appeared to be the case with the Bishop government shortly before it was overthrown in Grenada and, perhaps, according to Daniel Ortega (*Washington Post*, 12 August 1984), in talks between the Nicaraguan and US governments. In any event, the failure to carefully explore non-violent alternatives sometimes leaves the impression that the insurgents are more "reasonable" than those they challenge.

The United States has threatened the use of force on many occasions by moving around military troops and ships near insurgent areas, as President Reagan has done on several occasions in the Caribbean Basin, sometimes in an effort to make insurgents and those who support them take negotiations more seriously. Or the United States may train forces to "go to the source," as was tried in the Bay of Pigs fiasco in 1961 and again with the anti-Sandinista guerrillas in the early to mid 1980s. Finally, Washington may intervene directly, as was done most recently with multinational participation in Grenada, the latter a move intended to eliminate one problem altogether—in Grenada—and convince other adversaries that the United States will take whatever steps are necessary to maintain its security interests in a disputed region.

The Cuban government and other governments and groups, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, have become involved in Latin American insurgencies because they conclude they serve individual or national needs. But their interests or capabilities can change and they may withdraw some or all of their support, as Castro did almost fifteen years ago, to the dismay of many top Latin American guerrilla leaders. Should present differences between Havana and Moscow become worse, the Soviet Union could apply pressure for change by cutting its support for Cuba, and resulting shortages in Cuba could then be felt in other countries. And it is possible, though not likely so long as Castro is around, that Cuba and the United States could come to some sort of understanding that would at least reduce the former's support for regional insurgencies.

FACTORS FAVORING THE GROWTH OF INSURGENCIES

Insurgencies are helped along by a number of circumstances and actions in individual countries and abroad. Living conditions for people in many countries are so miserable that any substantial change may seem for the better. The option of an entirely different political, social, and economic order appeals to more than professional Marxist-Leninists, particularly to some young Latin Americans of more than average education in schools with a distinct leftist bias, to many labor leaders, and to practitioners of "liberation theology," who often are active in factories and the countryside. They generally conclude from the realities around them that in their countries the government, the landed classes, the military establishment, and the traditional church are beyond reform and must be eliminated. So must the primary international supporter of those institutions, the United States.

There are ample reasons for foreign groups and governments to support insurgents. These may be humanitarian reasons, natural sympathy for the plight of oppressed or impoverished people, or matters of self-interest—the conviction that a moderately progressive government will be a better neighbor than a dictator, in part because there will be less likelihood of a revolutionary movement coming to power with a perceived obligation to promote radical regimes in the region. Some leftist organizations, like the Socialist International, are inclined to give the benefit of the doubt to governments, like the Sandinistas, or groups, like the FMLN, in hopes they will carry out constructive, humanitarian programs. So are some governments in Europe and around the world.

The prospects for an insurgent movement are considerably brighter if the United States can be eliminated as a supporter of the government in power. The United States has withdrawn its support for two unpopular leaders in the past before they were thrown out of power—Batista in Cuba and Somoza in Nicaragua. Since 1980 there has been almost constant agitation in the United States and abroad to get the US government to terminate its support for the Salvadoran government. Naturally, there is much disagreement in the United States about US ties to the hemisphere's governments and the relationship of the same to US security. These uncertainties and the off-and-on positions of US administrations encourage insurgent movements to reject compromise. Unofficial personal "diplomacy," such as Democratic presidential hopeful Jesse Jackson's trips to Central America and Cuba in early 1984, can be interpreted as serving the interests of insurgent leaders.

What is more, under present conditions, given the levels of Latin American nationalism and historically based concerns about US intervention in the area, it would be very difficult for the United States to try to overthrow a revolutionary government in power. Today even supporting exiled nationals of the country in question may not be a workable strategy, as has been demonstrated by congressional and other opposition to US support for anti-Sandinista guerrilla movements.

In their extreme forms the US options include (1) supporting any government, however brutal it may be, so long as it defeats the insurgents, by providing US arms and personnel as needed; (2) defending traditional governments while encouraging or pressuring them to eliminate oppression and inequalities within their borders, the United States providing economic and military aid as needed; or (3) pulling out of the area altogether to "let them work it out for themselves," partly in hopes that such a policy will win the friendship or at least avoid the hostility of whatever group comes to power.

In the past the US government and people have shown little sustained interest in contributing to the balanced development of Latin America and thus trying to forestall insurgencies [illegible] improving living conditions) in the area. If El Salvador [illegible] over by Marxist-Leninist forces (and other countries [illegible] moving in the same direction), there is the distinct [illegible] a panicked United States will opt for one of the [illegible] Most likely that will mean trying at the eleventh [illegible] insurgents' progress, a move that could [illegible] US troops, an eventuality many US [illegible] to avoid as are critics of American [illegible]

REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGIES [illegible]

Revolutionary [illegible] variety of [illegible]

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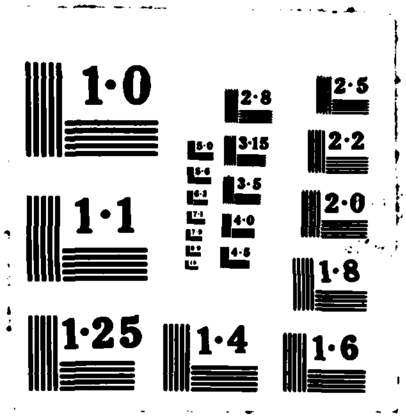
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American countries and the support they get from beyond their borders to the insurgents' access to tactical nuclear weapons for blackmail purposes. The best one can do is to suggest some of the most likely developments in the near future.

Cuba has been an important inspiration and source of support for many Latin American revolutionaries over the years; though its aid has waxed and waned, it is waxing again at this writing. Since Castro has demonstrated a compulsion for supporting revolutions abroad, Cuban support is likely to continue for the foreseeable future, at least until more major setbacks—in addition to Grenada in late 1983—occur in the Caribbean Basin, in relations with the Soviet Bloc, or in the collapse of the Cuban economy, or until Castro is removed from power.

Castro's importance might decline if insurgents were to take power in some other major country, with or without significant Cuban support. This could take place in Peru, where the Sendero Luminoso is waging an increasingly disruptive terrorist campaign and where the Soviet Union has its second most important military toehold in the hemisphere; or it could be in some larger country. If this were to happen, the larger country, with land borders that could serve as staging areas, might well adopt an expansionist strategy and supersede Cuba as the primary supporter of revolution in the area. Pressures on Mexico, for example, a country that has a more unequal division of wealth than El Salvador had in 1979, are certain to increase, both because Mexico has domestic inequities that can be made legitimate grounds for mass discontent and because Mexico is on the border of the United States and the country of greatest strategic concern to the US government and people.

A serious assault on Mexico—which probably will not take place before several other countries are secured—would probably be accompanied by other pressures on the United States abroad intended to distract attention from what is happening in Mexico. These would range from coordinated propaganda campaigns, to pressure on the United States to withdraw its support for existing governments, to uprisings in the Caribbean Basin, including Puerto Rico. Tactics most likely would include harassment and assassination of US nationals abroad—itself both a threat to the lives of individuals and pressure on the US Congress and public to withdraw from the fray—and terrorism by the insurgents' sympathizers in the United States and abroad, beginning in, but not limited to, Miami and other areas where Latin American immigrants are most numerous. This terrorism could be coordinated to a considerable degree through many of the international links noted in this volume by Yonah Alexander and Richard Kucinski.

Indeed, the foco theory of revolution could be revived with some impact if fanatical elitists get their hands on weapons of mass destruction that they can wield for blackmail either in a Latin American or US city. The threat could be made plausible if the organization is known to have suicide squads that would sacrifice themselves as well as others to achieve their objectives. Furthermore, an attack on Mexico would probably be coordinated with Soviet Bloc support for anti-US insurgencies elsewhere in the world. (And one can never completely discount the terrorists, perhaps mentally unbalanced or frustrated, who might mine seaways or threaten populations just for vengeance or to win a sort of perverse notoriety.)

Much of this possible activity would be a deliberate switch from the basic insurgent strategy today, which holds that major insurgencies should move salami or domino style, from one country to another. An attack on the United States on several fronts would be a return to the line of Guevara's 1967 "Message to the Tricontinental," which called for creating two, three, or many "Vietnams" in order to dissipate the resources of the United States and any potential adversary. These "Vietnams" need not all be staged by groups under significant influence from Havana. The Peruvian insurgency could turn in this direction, as could movements in several other countries.

Although the foco with nuclear arms could be decisive in certain instances, overall, insurgencies will be more successful in the immediate future if they can both cultivate broad international support and continue to form broad fronts at home, as described above. The demands of broad fronts are difficult for besieged governments to ignore because they can raise legitimate issues, putting pressure on existing leaders to solve problems the insurgents proceed to make worse by sabotage of the economy, by harassment and assassination of civilian and military leaders at home, and by campaigns against the government waged abroad.

RESPONSE TO FUTURE INSURGENCIES

The critical problems in US policy toward Latin America have long been indifference and ignorance, problems that have pervaded government, academe, the media, and the population as a whole. As a result, constructive response to problems in Latin America, from insurgency to economic development and political freedom, must begin with interest. It must continue with solid information—from scholars, the media, and the US and other governments—available to people with a broad enough grasp of the region and its history to put that information to intelligent use. That is, use in the interests of the United States and of the vast majority of Latin Americans as well.

Ongoing interest, information gathering, and analysis can be prosaic stuff when compared to the events in Latin America that customarily attract attention—wars, earthquakes, debt crises—and throughout history most non-radical Americans have routinely ignored them. In recent years most groups or individuals who have taken an ongoing interest in Latin America have had a particular axe to grind, and if they ground it long and loudly enough they had a greater impact on opinion and policy than their positions warranted. Today policy-oriented radical research groups produce at least ten times more "studies" than moderate and rightist groups outside of the government. And the work of the radicals, often unabashedly biased and intellectually shoddy, has had and will continue to have an important but not always obvious impact on thinking about the region. Even the current crisis in Central America has not greatly increased support for high-quality analyses by moderates who are outside of the government, as essential ingredient if objectivity is to be assured. And whereas radical researchers frequently share their information, the moderates, within or outside the government, often do not, whether out of professional possessiveness or an obsession with secrecy, the latter sometimes simply an ego-building trench coat worn to cloak ignorance or incompetence. In the long term, the danger is that when the crisis becomes so acute that policymakers—even Congress—must act decisively, they will have to do so without the body of information and analyses they need for informed decisionmaking.

The crisis of Latin America, in its present form, has been emerging for decades and it will become much more serious in the years ahead. A constructive response to it, now decades overdue, must incorporate substantial short-, medium-, and long-term economic, military, technological, developmental, and other assistance that will seem extravagant to many Americans. The Kissinger Commission recommendations in early 1984 were a move in the right direction. But it is far from certain that Congress will seek refinements of the recommendations and then enact the required legislation, because "we can't afford it as long as there is a poor wretch on the streets of Philadelphia." However, if we don't manage to afford these programs now, we may before long be stuck with a security crisis that will call for military expenditures in the Caribbean Basin alone that will dwarf the figures in a dozen Kissinger Commission reports.

Have Congressmen not noted that the Soviet Union puts more military and financial aid into Cuba every two years than the Commission recommends for the entire Caribbean Basin in five years? Have they not asked themselves why Cuba is so important to the Soviet Union? Once begun, the US commitment will have to continue for many years to come. And to be perfectly realistic, we must recognize that we have been so indifferent to the Caribbean Basin for so long that we may have that security crisis upon us even if we do undertake several Kissinger programs.

In whatever measures are taken, the United States will need to work more closely with other governments in the region, as often as possible with Venezuela, Colombia, Costa Rica, and others with a democratic orientation. Their fundamental interests in the security field are essentially the same as our own, though there will be differences on how to advance those interests. Furthermore, we must be sensitive to the problems many Latin American leaders will have selling these policies to people in their countries who, for historical and hyped-up reasons, look on the United States as a meddler in the affairs of their nations.

The cooperation will be directed toward eliminating the conditions that nurture discontent as well as working through international meetings and inter-American training programs to respond more effectively and humanely to subversion, terrorism, and other insurgent threats. In the peacekeeping field, for example, this will mean responding positively but not blindly to such inter-American endeavors as the Contadora sessions. The cooperation will have to involve the building of confidence and trust, and the granting of concessions on all sides for the common good; there must be a lot of the trial-and-error, give-and-take experimentation described by Jack Child in this volume. It is unlikely that the Organization of American States in its present form will be able to provide the institutional framework for many aspects of this cooperation.

Technological advances in weaponry, surveillance systems, and other devices increase the capacity of the US and allied governments to respond quickly and more efficiently to insurgent challenges, for in the years ahead most insurgents will still have to depend largely on "conventional" weapons, in most cases secured largely from abroad. We must incorporate technological advancements into security operations in the vast territory of Latin America, so as to block the shipment of arms and deny insurgents the relatively easy refuge that is possible in the innumerable out-of-the-way places of the region.

But these technological advancements must not be used by the United States alone. We must work toward combating insurgencies either bilaterally or collectively, as the particular circumstances dictate. This approach might best be inculcated at multinational academies, which will train students in the use of simple and high-tech equipment while they strive to both break down some of the nationalistic antipathies that have developed since independence arrived in the early nineteenth century and convince the coming generations of military leaders of their dependence upon other countries in the region, the latter a lesson in cooperation many insurgents learned long ago. For example, we can now tell when planes penetrate the isolated borders of El Salvador, but we must provide the multinational technological and personnel backup capacity to check out those penetrations, which we have not done well to date. And Salvadoran borders are very short compared to those of Mexico, Brazil, Chile, and other countries where some of the conflicts of the future will doubtless take place. In addition, for both humanitarian and counterinsurgency reasons, the inter-American academies must convince forthcoming military leaders of their responsibilities to their own citizens; for, as the ancient Chinese strategist Sun Tzu observed, a guerrilla without support among the people is like a fish without water.

Unfortunately, high technology also greatly increases the power of revolutionary movements, individual ideologically motivated insurgents, and even simple terrorists who construct or otherwise secure devices that for a short time put them on a roughly equal power footing with the constituted authority of a country. International agreements on the construction and sale of weapons and other devices will prevent their proliferation, at least for a time, but they will not altogether prevent their falling or being put into the hands of insurgents for use against the United States and other countries. The United States must stay in the technological vanguard, sharing necessary developments with its allies.

Simón Bolivar once remarked that trying to make a revolution in Latin America was like plowing the sea. But contemporary revolutionaries—who admittedly have a different definition of revolution than Bolivar—have been much more sanguine about the prospects for revolutionary change. Indeed, perhaps unconsciously playing with Bolivar's metaphor, Castro in 1967 spoke of "waves" of revolution sweeping across the continent.

Bolivar may have been overly pessimistic and Castro too optimistic, but in recent years the Americas have seethed with the hope and fear of change. The great challenge of the 1980s will be for reformists to guide that change so successfully as to put the blind reactionaries and the insurgents out of business. It hardly need be added that the insurgents have a different scenario in mind. And since theirs, at least initially, is largely a destructive strategy for grinding governments and societies to a halt—and tearing down is always easier than building up—the need for progressive cooperation among the United States and moderate forces of Latin America should be evident to rapidly increasing numbers of people in the United States. It should be. But is it?

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Georges Fauriol
and
Andrew Hoehn

Conflict, especially low-intensity conflict, has long plagued the people and governments of Latin America. Almost incessantly, government forces and opposition parties have waged insurgent battles as a means of eliminating each other's base of operation, thus controlling the governing apparatus. Although military tactics are employed, political objectives are sought. Government counterinsurgency programs, which include both "carrots" and "sticks," in the form of political and economic development programs and military operations, are designed to eliminate hostile opposition in order to maintain governing authority. Insurgent activities, which have both a political and a military dimension, do not seek reform; instead they focus on overthrow and destruction for the purpose of ultimately transforming political power. In the end, both insurgent and counterinsurgent activities seek one objective: the maintenance and control of political power.

The historical presence of insurgency movements in Latin America comes as no surprise to even the most casual observer. Spanish colonial rule was terminated by guerrilla activity; domestic political battles were often fought with insurgent tactics; and nationalistic forces often terrorized foreign residents, including diplomatic and commercial representatives, as a method of asserting national identity. Though complex in and of themselves, had these insurrectionist activities remained static there would be little need for further study. Insurgent activities came to be recognized as the weapon of weak parties against strong ones. Within narrow limits these undertakings were fairly well understood.

However, Latin American insurgent activity, as discussed throughout this volume, has remained anything but static and will continue to change far into the future. The fact that insurgent activity has been inseparably linked to ideological forces hostile to the United States presents the issue in a more urgent light. Successive guerrilla victories have the potential for undermining US interests throughout the region.

The long-held belief about insurgent activity is that insurgent tactics are the weapon of weak forces seeking change by violent means. Possessing neither material nor organizational strength, guerrilla forces have involved themselves in insurgent activities in order to harass and humiliate, but not directly confront, government institutions, especially military forces. These lines of distinction, however, can no longer be clearly delineated.

Beginning in the 1950s the Soviet Union placed its support on the side of the world's "national liberation" forces. It became all too clear that the Soviets were willing to undermine stability by developing an international support structure designed to assist insurgent forces. In this volume, Yonah Alexander and Richard Kucinski clearly describe how the Soviets have linked ideological and practical considerations in the development of an insurgent support structure that includes funding, propaganda and political support, intelligence, training, and weapons and supplies. The resulting situation defies traditional beliefs. With extensive international support, insurgent movements are no longer weak, poorly equipped forces. They have evolved into highly trained, well equipped, sophisticated organizations capable of producing instability in a host of environments.

But this new breed of "super guerrillas" did not come to be overnight. Through most of this century, ideologically inspired insurgent forces have challenged government rule, which also meant challenging American influence in the hemisphere. Until 1959 these movements were largely unsuccessful, presenting themselves more as a burden than as an effective challenge to longstanding governmental regimes. Ineffectual organizational apparatuses, outdated supplies and training methods, and infighting among competing groups characterized early twentieth century guerrilla forces. More often than not, these insurgents defeated themselves; and when they were able to mount an effective challenge they were defeated by efficient, though brutal, counterinsurgency operations.

After Castro's 1959 victory in Cuba, Latin American insurgents were provided with renewed impetus, but for many years they were unable to mount an effective challenge. This can be largely attributed to insufficient and certainly misapplied theoretical foundations. After the Cuban revolution, theories of Latin American revolutionary activity proliferated. The most notable contributors were Ernesto "Che" Guevara and Regis Debray, two participants in the Cuban revolution. Guevara and Debray set out to develop a general theory of Latin American revolution based on their Cuban experiences. The resulting scheme placed small units of armed guerrillas, "focos," against government forces in outlying rural areas. The focos, according to Guevara and Debray, would ignite the fire of revolution, which would spread throughout the continent. The problem with Guevara's and Debray's formula was that revolutionary fire was not easily kindled: neither the governments nor the people of Latin America were as prepared for revolution as were Guevara and Debray.

On a more fundamental level, revolutionary doctrine of this period overlooked political planning and organization in favor of military action. Therefore, guerrilla activities could be treated strictly as a military threat, and far-reaching counterinsurgency campaigns effectively destroyed the insurgents' challenge. Even when insurgent activity achieved temporary military gains, there was no political mechanism from which military victories could be transformed into political control. Despite a shift from rural- to urban-based attacks, the lack of political organization prohibited far-reaching success.

Two case studies contained in this volume attest to the central importance of political organizations. Peru's Sendero Luminoso emerged in the early 1960s in the outlying region of Ayacucho. Despite a rural orientation, its efforts in many ways defied the foco example. Sendero's leadership had strong university links; hence, it had channels of influence with the peasant population. Through both classroom instruction and community service, Sendero accomplished what few insurgent groups have been able to achieve: mass popular support in the form of political organization. It had effectively prepared the Ayacucho Indian population for prolonged conflict with Peruvian governmental officials. Yet Sendero's strong identification with the Ayacucho Indian population has hindered its attempts to broaden the national conflict. Sendero's appeal for pure native peasant communism, an appeal that is very attractive to Ayacucho's Indians, offers little to those active in the modern national economy. Based on its limited appeal, Sendero is unlikely to succeed with its objectives. However, Sendero has established the precedent of widespread political organization, and its persistent activities have gradually provided a perverse legitimacy for radical violence.

The Guatemalan case offers another fine example of the necessity of political organization and the consequences awaiting those who neglect it. Growing out of the 1944–1954 revolution, Guatemalan insurgents adopted the focoist strategy of revolutionary activity. With little effort on the government's part, this phase of violence was eliminated primarily because of the insurgent's inadequacies, especially their lack of planning. Having learned somewhat from their failures, Guatemalan insurgents began a second wave of activity. This time the insurgents worked for much greater political organization, including the creation of an umbrella organization that set out to coordinate movements and activities. Though government counterinsurgency efforts have been successful in containing this wave, its potential for success was much greater than that of its forerunner. As successive phases emerge, political planning and organization will acquire increasing significance.

A major factor inhibiting the success of Guatemala's insurgent forces has been the ability of the government to mount an effective, comprehensive counterinsurgency campaign. The government has not relied only on military measures; it has also incorporated the "beans and rifles" campaign, seeking to increase peasant nutritional standards along with containing insurgent military advances. As David Scott Palmer notes in his case study of Peru, an effective counterinsurgency campaign must seek to eradicate causes as well as symptoms. Thus far in this area, the Guatemalan government has had some measure of success. In many respects, however, this issue raises questions regarding US policy in the region.

To a large extent US policy regarding Latin American insurgency has been forced to evolve along with insurgent activities. In other words, it has been a reactive policy, aimed at treating symptoms rather than alleviating causes. As Jack Child notes, there was no US insurgency policy for Latin America until the insurgents' strength grew to where it threatened US regional interests. Following Castro's victory in Cuba and the proliferation of both insurgent doctrines and insurgent movements, the Kennedy administration attempted to modernize Latin American security forces. Specifically, it encouraged a military response to military activity. Though economic reform was encouraged through the Alliance for Progress, symptoms were treated first. Because of the insurgents' organizational inadequacies, this approach was more than adequately effective, at least in the short term. Consequently, causes were basically ignored while symptoms were treated wherever and whenever they emerged. The logical outgrowth of this policy, as Child maintains, was the emergence of the national security states in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and elsewhere.

As insurgent operations became more sophisticated, military responses became more and more inadequate. When insurgents abandoned the hope of military victory, they were less subject to military defeat. Thus, political victory was emphasized over victory in a military confrontation. Armed with a political infrastructure, insurgent movements were able to survive traditional counterinsurgency operations.

Faced with changing conditions, the United States began reconsidering its policies. Acting on the recommendations of several key policy studies, the Carter administration attempted to accommodate revolutionary activity, at least as far as respecting the demands of such forces, meanwhile emphasizing the primacy of human rights. Unfortunately, Carter's human rights policy was only intermittently applied, the full force falling on the repressive regimes of Central and South America. Faced with an increasingly unstable environment, the Carter administration was forced to abandon its principles in favor of a more "hard-line" approach. As a consequence, the Carter administration alienated both the repressive military governments and the leftist insurgent forces.

In the first months of the Reagan administration a policy shift occurred. Terrorism and insurgency replaced human rights as the issue of primary importance. In the midst of instability, it may be impossible to ensure human rights. Once stability is restored, however, attention can shift to human rights and basic human needs. The core of the Reagan administration's policy rests on the "four d's"—democracy, development, diplomacy, and defense. Critics argue that the administration's "four d's" cloud its "single d" objective: defense. Supporters argue that the military component is merely the most obvious aspect of a much more complex program. Elections in El Salvador, negotiations with the Nicaraguans, and the Caribbean Basin Initiative are offered as examples of the other three "d's" at work.

Regardless of the outcome of this debate, one factor remains: Latin American insurgency is a reality that will haunt the United States for years to come. Wishing it away will not remove the instability it generates. With the region's tumultuous economic and political conditions, many active insurgent movements might erupt simultaneously. As William Ratliff notes, the likelihood of continuous low-intensity conflict is immense in the years to come. The roots of conflict are in place and support for such conflicts, in terms of both internal and external sources is more than abundant. The one factor that is not yet known is the direction these conflicts will take.

Given the history of Latin American insurgency movements and the courses they have followed, it appears that US interests will best be served by opposing all forces that display open hostility to the United States and to the ideals it represents. However, as made abundantly clear throughout this volume, insurgency has its causes, many of which are internal, some of which are external. An effective counterinsurgency policy will not only focus on symptoms, but will also seek to eradicate those causes.

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