

# The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters

---

Volume 24  
Number 1 *Parameters* 1994

Article 30

---

7-4-1994

## US Strategy for Latin America

Russell W. Ramsey

Follow this and additional works at: <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters>

---

### Recommended Citation

Ramsey, Russell W.. "US Strategy for Latin America." *The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters* 24, 1 (1994). <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters/vol24/iss1/30>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by USAWC Press. It has been accepted for inclusion in The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters by an authorized editor of USAWC Press.

# US Strategy for Latin America

RUSSELL W. RAMSEY

---

From *Parameters*, Autumn 1994, pp. 70-83.

---

"My mission is to protect the innocent oppressed, to help the unfortunate, to restore their rights to the inhabitants of this region, and to promote their happiness," wrote General Jose Francisco de San Martin, the military architect of independence for southern South America, on 8 September 1820.[1] General Simon Bolivar, the emancipator of northern South America, opined in 1826, "The man of honor has no country save that in which the citizen's rights are protected and the sacred character of humanity is respected." [2] Colombia's first President, the lawyer-General Francisco de Paula Santander, stated repeatedly in the 1820s that "arms have given us independence; laws will give us freedom" as he established the principle of civilian control over the armed forces.[3]

Yet Bolivar himself expressed anguish over the apparent triumph of *caudillismo*--rule by para-military strongmen--that frustrated constitutional democracy in several Latin American countries for a century. The movement to professionalization of Latin America's small armed forces, after 1880, included a tendency during the Cold War years for military leaders in several countries to exert an extra-constitutional praetorian role.[4] At various points in the Cold War, military and police forces in a dozen Latin American countries carried out human rights abuses under the guise of national security. Marxist-Leninist regimes in Nicaragua and Cuba engaged in massive increases in troops and armaments, achieving force levels not previously seen in the region.

## Redeeming the Dream

Latin America's armed forces now emerge at the end of the Cold War as a positive force amid bold democratization and economic development within the world's oldest and largest homogeneous block of constitutional and independent nation-states. Measured since 1830 by percent of the gross domestic product spent on the armed forces, percent of the national manpower in military uniform, number of wars, relative levels of armaments, and percent of citizens killed or displaced by war, Latin America is also the world's least bellicose and least militarized region.[5]

Military praetorianism under all banners is today in disrepute, and the posse comitatus principle is now the law throughout Latin America except in Haiti and Cuba.[6] There are 12 Latin American military contingents serving in the 26 international peacekeeping forces operational in 1994.[7] Shared linguistic, training, and operations experiences between US and Latin American military officers today contribute to democratically obedient armed forces relationships.[8] Finally, a case can be made that Latin America's armed forces, since 1961, are among the world's regional leaders in low-cost civic action programs that improve the quality of life for remote populations and help the general public in times of civil disaster.[9]

## The Core of a US Policy

US military policy for Latin America in the 1990s, and into the 21st century, calls for quiet, inexpensive steps through which to institutionalize and strengthen the functional linkage among the Western Hemisphere's military leaders. The strategic applications all flow from that policy, save in the cases of Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti, and Panama, whose military and public security officers are estranged from their US counterparts for differing historical reasons. A renewal of the once cordial military-to-military relations with these four nations is attainable during the remaining years of the 1990s.

The possible strategies emanating from this *hermandad* (translated as "brotherhood" without gender, the name for a defensive municipal structure in medieval Spain) hold bright hopes for regional peace. With a tiny per capita regional investment of national security funds, this "brotherhood of the Americas" can be an exportable model by which to secure democratic liberties and open-market economic success in a climate free of international wars, unilateral

military interventions, class revolutions, ethnic and religious conflict, and organized crime.

Much analytical literature on Latin America stresses the praetorian and abusive nature of its armed forces. US national security programs during the Cold War era often are blamed for having fostered both tendencies. Yet one analyst concluded in a multi-regional analysis that the United States had little leverage through which to force behavioral change. Careful analysis of these US programs in Latin America reveals that they rarely exceeded two percent of all security assistance allocations and four percent of authorized foreign military sales carried out worldwide during the period. The programs had little effect on armed revolutions led by the military.[10]

Current US security assistance programs in the region barely total one-half billion dollars annually, most of which is concentrated in closing out the Central American conflicts of the 1980s, and in the Andean counternarcotics campaign, two areas where the United States bears indisputable moral responsibility to assist.[11] The total cost of continuing the policy of cordial, constructive US-Latin American military-to-military relations would remain a tiny fraction of the US national defense budget. If this sum could be divided into the total strategic value of the region,[12] the ensuing ratio would reveal a highly cost-effective defense policy.

### **A Permanent Military Dialogue**

The first item on the strategy agenda is to build an institutionalized future for the continued relationship. The Organization of American States is the world's oldest regional assembly. The Inter-American Defense Board (IADB), a military advisory body, has only a consultative relationship with the OAS. There is much preoccupation in Western Hemispheric political circles about militarism within Latin America and about armed interventionism by the United States in Latin America. While a factual case can be made that these concerns are outdated by events, the future of the IADB is under debate. Some see it as a positive vehicle for international peacekeeping operations, while to others it is warmed-over Cold War baggage.[13]

The United States is only one actor on the stage. Clearly, the era of gunboat diplomacy (1870-1933) and the era of Cold War preemptive interventionism (1947-1989) are over; Uncle Sam neither can nor should attempt to force a regional security regime upon nations which reject the structure. But to the extent that quiet diplomacy can prevail, the United States should work actively to preserve and enrich the existing Western Hemispheric security policy and structure.

Under the Carter-Torrijos Treaties ratified in 1979, US Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) in Panama must depart or have its presence renegotiated prior to the last day of 1999. A useful US policy, therefore, would be to work for the creation of a regional structure that provides focused national security planning for the United States in a cooperative hemispheric security setting. A US Western Hemisphere Command (WHC) should be created to replace SOUTHCOM, and an OAS Security Commission, an enhanced version of the IADB, should be created by amending the OAS Charter. The WHC would be structurally located within the newly empowered OAS Security Commission, whose geographic headquarters should be in a convenient, neutral, and uncontested location. Five sub-regional planning elements of this proposed OAS Security Commission would structurally parallel the current family of trade pacts organized under the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT).[14]

<b>Region</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Economic Parallel</b>
North America	Canada, USA, Mexico	NAFTA
Caribbean	Caribbean Independent Nations	CARICOM/CAFTA
Central America	Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama	Central American Common Market
Andean Region	Columbia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia	Andean Regional Free Trade Pact
Southern Cone	Brazil, Paraguay, Chile	MERCOSUR

Figure 1. OAS Security Commission

Thus, the North American Region would manage security planning for the North American Free Trade Alliance (NAFTA) countries (Canada, the United States, and Mexico); the Caribbean Region would do the same task for the Caribbean Common Market and Caribbean Free Trade Agreement countries (CARICOM/CAFTA); the Central American Region for the Central American Common Market nations; the Andean Region for the Andean Regional Free Trade Pact countries; and the Southern Cone Region for this sub-region's trade pact members (called MERCOSUR, by the Spanish acronym). The creation of a small, sub-regional headquarters for each of these elements would help to reduce fears of a "military monolith" on Latin American soil.

Any successful national security system depends upon the balanced triad of political, economic, and military objectives and policies. Discussions of future US-Latin American relations call for the fostering of cordial, consultative relationships in the political sphere, a goal quite achievable given the excellent quality of US State Department career service diplomats who worked in Latin America during the last decade of the Cold War. The economic dimension of the triad may be more difficult to achieve. Economic power is clustered in bewildering arrays of multinational corporations, governmental agencies, regional trade treaty boards, national companies with private and public ownership, and, to be sure, powerful extra-hemispheric interests which neither parallel nor owe allegiance to the political structures in the region.[15] Nevertheless, the emergence of a subculture of economic superstars in a dozen Latin American countries in the past decade suggests that a consultative hemispheric network in the economic sphere is already taking form and will not lack for competent personnel.[16]

### **The Possible Strategy Agenda**

With the political, economic, and military spheres of the Western Hemisphere moving toward structural collegiality, the military strategies for maintaining peace and defense at minimum cost are workable. The military and law enforcement strategy agenda for the remaining years of the 20th century and the early 21st century contains ten objectives. These are:

- maintain and improve the hemispheric national security framework, with seats at the roundtable for every country
- bolster military professionalism
- reduce the power of the region's drug cartels
- cope humanely with mass migration
- increase Latin American participation in protection of air and sea lanes of communication, with special emphasis on the Panama Canal
- foster the blue-helmet and civic action capabilities of Latin America's armed forces
- institutionalize the protection of human rights by the armed forces
- maintain a regional defense philosophy which opposes the use of nuclear, chemical, biological, and other inhumane weapons
- secure peace and democratic stability in Central America and the Caribbean
- develop military and police capabilities to protect both the natural environment and the use of financial resources.[17]

Political and economic policies must be congruent if the military and law enforcement systems of the hemisphere are to meet these objectives.

### *Hemispheric National Security Framework*

Perfecting the hemispheric national security framework, and the US role in it, calls for a mix of political and military diplomacy. This topic is ranked first in priority because, while parts of the other nine agenda items are possible through bilateral and sub-regional accords and programs, the goal of a peaceful, democratic, and prospering Western Hemisphere requires a structure that no major sector of the world has ever had: a multinational security roundtable without a perceived immediate foreign military threat. Circumstances are right for creating this mechanism.

## *Foster Military Professionalism*

The immediate concomitant to the structural imperative is the strategy of fostering military and law enforcement professionalism. The conceptual dimension is a continuing process of cognitive (dealing with facts) and affective (dealing with values) professional education. The delivery means have existed in part for half a century. These are the US Army School of the Americas at Ft. Benning, Georgia; the Inter-American Air Force Academy at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas; and the Naval Small Craft Instruction and Technical Training School at Rodman Navy Base in Panama. These three institutions all present, in Spanish, professional courses that use US curriculum models filtered through the platform delivery of a sophisticated inter-American faculty. Since the early 1960s the Inter-American Defense Board has operated the Inter-American Defense College (IADC), at Ft. McNair, in Washington, D.C. While not entirely analogous, the IADC in many ways resembles the NATO Defense College in Rome.[18]

Cognitive professional education is available to most Latin American military and police personnel through a wide spectrum of schools and foreign advisory mechanisms, both at home and abroad. What makes the IADC and the family of US-operated schools so valuable is the affective dimension of the education they provide. Students study military and police topics in Spanish, as the most universal of the region's native languages, sharing the experience with hemispheric classmates who face differing challenges but who share cultural bonds.[19] An officer or a sergeant can memorize a tactical or technical procedure in the cognitive domain, but one converts those procedures into functional morality and professionalism via the affective learning channel.

The existing family of US-operated professional military education schools should be expanded to permit all participating nations, not just the United States, to serve as teachers and role models. The Colombian army, for example, is a world leader in humane peacekeeping operations, both at home and abroad, with a long record of public affirmation to prove it. The Costa Rican civil guard and the Barbadian defense force are world-reputed models for the national defense institution in a small, democratic country. The Brazilian navy is effective in both fluvial and blue-water regional security operations. Canada and Colombia are world leaders in blue-helmet operations. In an expanded learning environment, these countries would share their areas of military and law enforcement success with officers and noncommissioned officers of the hemisphere.

US strategy should include the expansion and inter-Americanization of the School of the Americas concept to embrace several campuses in a variety of host countries. One campus, with a heavily civilian faculty, should offer a one-year professional foundations course, "Military and Police Professionalism in the Americas," with a strong curriculum in history, law, ethics, human rights, democracy, economics, and the inter-American system. A subculture of civilians from the Latin American defense and law enforcement ministries should attend these schools regularly with their military counterparts, just as US civilian security careerists now attend the Department of Defense family of senior service colleges. The hemispheric nations should be encouraged to provide modest financial support plus administrative machinery to encourage attendance at the courses and career tracking of the graduates.

## *Marginalize the Narco-traffickers*

Reducing the violent and inherently destabilizing effects of the narcotics empires is a task that cuts across political, economic, and military interests. US strategy should acknowledge that much of the problem begins in the United States, among the cocaine users who have the cash to buy the drug.[20] Any counternarcotics strategy must recognize that Mexico or the Andean Region is just one facet of the worldwide supply and distribution network, and that any solution must attack the challenge at every level from grower to consumer.

The narcotics kingpins operate bogus nation-states, heavily armed and ruthless beyond description. Colombia alone, for example, has lost more troops in fighting the narco-traffickers since 1983 than the United States lost in all foreign conflict during the same period. Each of the three Inter-American networks for dialogue--political, economic, and military--must work for a coordinated solution that matches resources to measured effectiveness. The roundtable principle means that within Latin America, at least, US views on how to conduct anti-drug operations within sovereign countries would rest upon the wishes of the host nation.[21]

The drug scourge can never be ended; it is a dimension of human vice that can be changed only in degree through

applied public policy. But much of the military training and force configuration that has proved useful in fighting the drug war is also appropriate for other military and security scenarios such as border control, disaster relief, anti-terrorism efforts, regional and international peace operations, and small coalition force campaigns.

### *Humane Migration Control*

Coping with migration as a national security problem translates into close dialogue between armed forces and police forces. Armed forces participation on this topic may include the occasional dedication of surveillance, communications, and transportation equipment to back up what is clearly a law enforcement challenge. Several Latin American countries have paramilitary forces, such as the Venezuelan national guard and the Argentine national gendarmerie, who do these tasks skillfully; the US role in the regional effort would be to serve as supporting logistics provider, not as primary operator. US law enforcement agencies, such as the Customs and Immigration Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and state and local police organizations across the sunbelt states, should be major participants in this effort. Clearly, long-term victory over this particular challenge would be enhanced by the success of the GATT family of trade accords, especially NAFTA, CARICOM, and the Central American Common Market. History suggests that there will always be problematic countries within a region, and therefore mass migration remains a mixture of humanitarian, legal, and national security challenges. The national security role in mass migration is professionally underdeveloped and should become a curriculum initiative within the hemispheric system of schools for military and police leaders.[22]

### *Sea Lanes, Air Lanes*

The future strategic task on the seas adjacent to Latin America is to enhance the region's navies as they assume increased roles during an era of economic development and industrialization, without stimulating a costly and disruptive naval arms race. The blue-water navies of Argentina, Brazil, and Chile have been influential in the region since the 1880s. US naval captains have played a quiet role in bilateral and multilateral maritime diplomacy with these three navies ever since that era.[23] Just prior to World War II, US Navy policy added the Andean Region navies in coastal and blue-water security missions, and, as Cuba became a mid-range military threat late in the Cold War, the Caribbean navies joined US naval security activities in that sub-region.[24]

Latin America's air forces find their principal employment, at present, in logistical support of land forces. One of Latin America's most important decisions during the Cold War was not to emulate the airpower arms races in progress in the Middle East, much of Asia, parts of Africa, and all of Europe. The Andean Region air forces have roles in the anti-narcotics conflict, although the growth of national police forces in the region has brought about a proliferation of aviation assets among the national security forces, some of it duplicative and inefficient. While the role of the Latin American armed forces in developing a technical sector within the educational sphere is well known, a less known aspect is the role of the air forces in stimulating a multi-sectoral aviation industry.[25]

Discussion of future seapower and airpower strategies within Latin America during a time of economic growth must address the issue of persuading the region to take on a sense of importance about protecting the neutrality of the Panama Canal. Uncle Sam's motives about defending the neutrality of the Panama Canal always have evoked mixed perceptions in both the United States and in Latin America.[26] The Carter-Torrijos Treaties and the Cold War's end now offer the perfect opportunity for Washington to divest itself of this chronic national security dilemma. A future strategy is for US diplomats, in coordination with US air and sea officers, to encourage the region's own air forces and navies to proclaim and maintain the neutrality of the Panama Canal. The locus of Panamanian foreign relations concerns then becomes the OAS.

### *Military Civic Action and Blue-Helmet Operations*

Enhancing Latin America's blue-helmet and civic action roles is a strategy of value to the region and to the world. The effectiveness of Colombian soldiers in Korea (1952-1954, UN) and in the Sinai (1956-1958, UN; 1981-present, Multinational Force and Observers) has caused village mayors in turbulent regions to ask for them by name.[27] Several measures would take advantage of the skills and experiences developed in those kinds of operations. First, curriculum units in peacemaking and peacekeeping operations, taught by Colombians and Canadians with actual blue-helmet experience, should be added to the curriculum of the hemispheric professional military schools. Second, as

other nations join in the teaching process, a pilot staff for an Inter-American Defense Force (IADF) should be set up within the OAS Security Council. Third, the hemisphere's political and economic structures should be provided with a statement of capabilities and control measures for this IADF in order to defuse concerns about the force becoming a new kind of gunboat diplomacy.[28]

The civic action role for the Latin American military forces was well established, legally and morally, in the early 1960s.[29] Core curriculum programs at the hemisphere's professional military schools can highlight specific abuses that have occasionally tainted an otherwise excellent civic action record. Civic action programs should not compete with civilian economic activity, should only function where civilian government and the private sector cannot operate, and should not be used as a philosophical cover for military-operated arms factories. The maturation of democratic governmental institutions and free enterprise economic systems now alleviates many of these concerns in the region. The Colombian National Civic Action Council, where the Minister of Defense is the only voting military representative among 16 members, is the best functional model.[30] Civic action by military forces, done efficiently under civilian control, can be a vital contributor to Latin American regional economic and political development.

### *Guaranteeing Human Rights*

The securing of human rights by the armed forces of the Americas is a universally attainable goal by the end of the 20th century. Human rights as an academic subject is taught at the School of the Americas. It is really a mixture of several international accords (Hague, 1907; Geneva, 1949), military and civil law of each country, and an expanding body of ideas based upon the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Public knowledge about the subject comes from government sources of mixed accuracy, international humanitarian groups such as the Red Cross, nongovernmental organizations (called "NGOs" in the literature) dedicated to human rights advocacy, news media sources of widely varying credibility, political groups often having ideological agendas, and criminal organizations such as the Andean narcotraffickers. While controversy and emotion attend every facet of the process, Latin America has produced legitimate, battle-decorated human rights heroes like General Manuel Sanmiguel Buenaventura of Colombia and police General Antonio Ketín Vidal of Peru; unfortunately, the deeds of these men rarely appear in the news.[31]

Developing respect for human rights among uniformed personnel lies more in the affective psychological domain than in the cognitive domain. Further, the contextual authority setting, the state of troop training, and the level of the armed threat all play strong roles. It is one thing to posture for the concept of human rights from the safety of the podium and quite another to place one's life at risk among murderous drug cartel gunmen. Each country needs training initiatives such as the 1993 contract between the Ecuadorian armed forces and the Latin American Association for Human Rights.[32] The hemisphere's armed forces could then share techniques for training troops in this matter, while their political counterparts ensure parallel commitment to human rights training by law enforcement agencies. The case for terminating US training assistance, currently called Enhanced International Military Education and Training (IMET), to punish Latin American human rights violators in uniform may be viewed as another example of the a priori assumption that all US military actions in the region are morally tainted, or are corrupted by exposure to the Latin American military profession.[33]

### *Arms Limitations*

Latin America is the world's only region having no inventory of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. Despite some controversy in the 1980s about nuclear arms and nuclear power development in the Southern Cone, Latin America's governments without exception stand opposed to the existence of weapons of mass destruction in the region. Further, there is a strong initiative under way in Central America to remove the land mines implanted by several antagonists during the 1980s.[34] The US Army School of the Americas has trained packets of Latin American military and police to do some of this dangerous work. One of the strongest ways to build confidence in the region's armed forces and police is for all commanders to declare and show opposition to human rights violations and inhumane weapons.

### *Burying Hatchets*

Putting to rest the earlier conflicts and repressions in Central America and the Caribbean is an agenda which cannot be avoided, if the proposed OAS Security Council is to be taken seriously. Burying old hatchets in Central America is not enough; new political and economic thinking, protected by a new breed of military and police personnel, is an urgent necessity. Those who work directly with Central America's younger generation of military officers see hopeful signs: armies are getting smaller, police forces are being created, and the rising junior officers in many forces now concern themselves with professionalism, not ideology. The hemispheric political community must give change a chance to occur. Demilitarization of former combatants in Nicaragua and El Salvador has been helpful and must continue; supervised electoral processes that seem to work must be affirmed by accompanying economic growth.[35]

Two current problems threaten the impulse to move away from armed interventions--the situation in Haiti and the continuing deterioration of Cuba under Castro. The United States must restrain the understandable urge to employ its own military force unilaterally in Haiti. A combination of coercive diplomacy and negotiation must first restore a constitutional government, and peacekeeping commitments must come from the hemisphere at large.[36] Training of a new Haitian police force by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1993 and 1994 is precisely the right kind of foundation step required for ultimate success.

With regard to Cuba, military invasion would be the one certain way to foster Cuban and hemispheric sympathy for Fidel Castro and thereby lengthen his faltering stay in power. Any national security measures attending the ultimate collapse of Castro's regime must be hemispheric.[37]

In all these cases, the divisive leftist vs. rightist rhetoric pertaining to US policy in Latin America must be put aside if Uncle Sam is to retain post-Cold War leadership among equals in the region. Full but self-restrained participation in the triad of hemispheric political, economic, and military roundtables, however constituted, is in the US national interest. US leaders and Latin American interest lobbies within the United States can scarcely expect Latin Americans to end feuds if US policy toward the region is made with moralistic zealotry.[38]

### *Environment and Resources*

The Western Hemisphere's military leaders must become champions of the natural environment and of scarce economic resources within their countries. The dismal environmental record of the communist armed forces in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union has sent the world a shocking message, one which probably helps nail down the coffin of Marxist ideology. Their unexploded shells, unregistered land mines, spilled toxic wastes, rusting junkyards, and crudely managed nuclear programs will cost the world countless casualties and billions of dollars in restoration. Similarly, the Western world's armed forces consume too much fuel, emit excess toxic wastes, and often fail to budget funds for cleaning up discarded military sites. Latin American militaries are not alone in having lessons to learn.

The Latin American armed forces already have done some good work in the environmental area. Brazilian troops have turned up in the frontier zones in recent years to confront environmental abusers who were laying waste the land and killing workers who dared to object. Colombian troops in the field have always been a model case for leaving their area of operations just a bit better than before they arrived.[39] Ecuadorian army troops were fighting fires in the Galapagos Islands in April 1994, rescuing one of the earth's most important natural habitats.

Resources management is another topic now taking root among the Western Hemisphere's armed forces and police. It is defined as the distribution of scarce resources among abundant alternatives; scholastically, it embraces microeconomics, decision science, operations research, scientific management theory, and cyclical budgetary processes. Like human rights, resources management must penetrate the affective realm of the learner to have value. The military officer or police commander must learn to do the most with the least, and to do rational cost and benefit analysis as a matter of routine. For Latin America's small armed forces, this could mean comparing five different ways to interdict border smuggling, combining the measures with illegal immigration control and the anti-narcotics campaign, and then blending the resources of land, sea, air, and police forces in the most effective, and hopefully efficient, mix. By stretching scarce cash during an era of economic privatization, the Latin American militaries can set a good example and help their governments provide desperately needed social services with the money not spent on military things.[40]

### **US Influence on the Region's Militaries**



US land, sea, and air officers have done excellent work with Latin America. They have been perceived as helpful modernizers more than as invaders. Illustrious officers like Colonel George W. Goethals, General Leonard Wood, and General Matthew B. Ridgway served with distinction in Latin America long before the Cold War. General Ridgway figured prominently in the early days of the Inter-American Defense Board and the transition to Cold War policy era. General Vernon L. Walters was influential in linking Latin America's armed forces to appropriate Cold War roles. General John R. Galvin and General Frederick F. Woerner were senior Latin American experts during the height of the Cold War challenges; both officers served prominently in other theaters. General George A. Joulwan and General Barry R. McCaffrey combined military success in other world theaters with great knowledge of Latin America's changing security challenges at Cold War's end.

The US Navy and the US Marine Corps bore the brunt of US military policy in Latin America during the age of gunboat diplomacy (1870-1933). Both developed a cadre of senior officers who knew Latin America well, and who are remembered positively in the region despite the military interventionist roles they often played. The US Army was the major actor that linked Latin America to the Cold War challenges (1947-1989), mostly through countering armed subversion, and simultaneously served as role model and teacher for professionalization and acceptance of civilian authority. Those two missions were done with devotion and skill, and with limited resources, since neither had high priority for defense expenditures.

In the 1990s, the repository of US Army national security knowledge about Latin America must not be discarded for lack of a strategic initiative, nor lost through attrition of personnel. Working cooperatively with the other armed forces and federal law enforcement agencies, the US Army is the logical senior executive agent to carry out the ten strategic initiatives, to build the military linkage (*hermandad*) that will make the Americas, once and for all, the bastion of freedom and opportunity that George Washington and Simon Bolivar both fought to achieve and labored to build.

---

## NOTES

1. Henry M. Brackenridge, *Voyage to South America* (London: T. and J. Allman, 1820), pp. 212-16.
2. Bernardo Jurado Toro, *Bolivar y la ley* (Caracas: Dirección de Artes Graficas M.D., 1991), pp. 166-68.
3. David Bushnell, *The Making of Modern Colombia* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1993), pp. 55-56.
4. Russell W. Ramsey, "The Spanish Military Orders: Alcantara, Calatrava, and Santiago," *Army Quarterly & Defence Journal*, 113 (June 1983), 345-46.
5. Russell W. Ramsey, "A Military Turn of Mind: Educating Latin American Officers," *Military Review*, 73 (August 1993), 13.
6. Literally, "power of the county"; contextual praxis connotes that the army may be used only for national defense, and police who answer to judges must be used for domestic law enforcement.
7. John T. Currier, "The Role of Latin American Armed Forces in Peacekeeping Operations," unpublished paper, Troy State Univ. at Ft. Benning, March 1994, p. 3; and International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1993-1994* (London: IISS, 1994), pp. 253-60. Three of these peacekeeping forces are multinational but not under the United Nations.
8. Russell W. Ramsey, "U.S. Military Courses for Latin Americans Are a Low-Budget Strategic Success," *North-South, the Magazine of the Americas*, 2 (February-March 1993), 38-41.
9. Richard L. Sutter, "The Strategic Implication of Military Civic Action," in *Winning the Peace: The Strategic Implications of Military Civic Action*, ed. John W. DePauw and George A. Luz (New York: Praeger, 1992), pp. 185-89; and Russell W. Ramsey, "The Role of Latin American Armed Forces in the 1990s," *Strategic Review*, 20 (Fall 1992), reprinted in *Proceedings, 5th Latin American Conference* (Ft. Benning, Ga.: US Army School of the Americas,

1993).

10. Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley, *Guerrillas & Revolutions in Latin America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1992), pp. 68-85; and Jennifer Morrison Taw, "The Effectiveness of Training International Military Students in Internal Defense and Development," National Defense Research Institute (Santa Monica, Calif: RAND, 1993, pp. 15-22.

11. US Congress, *Congressional Record*, Security Assistance Programs, Fiscal Year 1994 (Washington: GPO, 1994), pp. 3-16, 19-21, 27-28, 38, 44-46, 48-60.

12. Abraham F. Lowenthal, "Changing U.S. Interests and Policies in a New World," in *The United States and Latin American Relations in the 1990s: Beyond the Inter-American System*, ed. Jonathan Hartlyn, et al. (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1993), pp. 65-85. This article is easily the best short calculus of US strategic interests in Latin America.

13. James R. Harding, "Security Challenges and Opportunities in the Americas," *North-South, the Magazine of the Americas*, 3 (February-March, 1994), 48-51.

14. Peter Hakim, "NAFTA . . . and After: A New Era for the US and Latin America?" *Current History*, 93 (March 1994), 97-102.

15. Robert Devlin, *Debt and Crisis in Latin America: The Supply Side of the Story* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1992), 7-8, 253-56; and Sidney Weintraub, "The Economy on the Eve of Free Trade," *Current History*, 92 (February 1993), 72.

16. J. Benjamin Zapata, "The Honduran View," in Russell W. Ramsey, ed., *Proceedings, Eighth Latin America Symposium* (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air Command & Staff College, 1991), pp. 19-21. Minister-Counselor Zapata's ability to explain national security in terms of the political economy is but one example of these economic "superstars" in action.

17. Gabriel Marcella and Fred Woerner, "Mutual Imperatives for Change in Hemispheric Strategic Policy: Issues for the 1990s," in *Evolving US Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean*, ed. L. Erik Kjonnerwood (Washington: National Defense Univ. Press, 1992), 56. The inventory of Inter-American strategic agenda items in this article is the most complete and coherent in the literature to date.

18. "The Inter-American Defense College," *Military Review*, 50 (April 1970), 20-27.

19. This explains the "Manuel Noriega Syndrome," namely, that the School of the Americas produced an academically superior graduate whose personal standards were vicious. Noriega avoided the affective education environment, filtering out useful technical information for his own purposes. All schools have conspicuous failures among their alumni.

20. Russell W. Ramsey, "U.S. Narcotics Addiction Wrecks Colombian Democracy," *Army Quarterly & Defence Journal*, 120 (January 1990), 27-34. US cocaine cash intercepted in Colombia during 1990 was \$1.2 billion dollars, the annual worldwide profit of Coca-Cola International that year.

21. Kate Doyle, "The Militarization of the Drug War in Mexico," *Current History*, 92 (February 1993), 83-88; James Van Wert, "Bush's Other War," in *War on Drugs: Studies in the Failure of U.S. Narcotics Policy*, ed. Alfred W. McCoy and Alan A. Block (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1992), pp. 27-34; Bruce M. Bagley and Juan G. Tokatlian, "Dope and Dogma: Explaining the Failure of U.S.-Latin American Drug Policies," in *The United States and Latin American Relations in the 1990s: Beyond the Inter-American System*, ed. Jonathan Hartlyn, et al. (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1993), pp. 214-33; and Kevin Dougherty, "The Role of the U.S. Military in Interdicting the Latin American Drug Traffic: How the Latin Americans See It," unpublished paper, Troy State Univ. at Ft. Benning, March 1994.

22. Diego Ascencio, "Immigration and Economic Development for the 21st Century," in Kjonnerwood, pp. 147-58.
23. Naval Ministry, *Gazetta de Noticias* (Rio de Janeiro), 12 October 1923, trans. US Dept. of State Serials File on Brazil, 1910-29, State Dept. archive code no. 823.20/34; and Armin K. Ludwig, "Two Decades of Brazilian Geopolitical Initiatives and Military Growth," *Air University Review*, 37 (July-August 1986), 56-64.
24. In 1915, Captain Edward L. Beach, US Navy, was commended by the Navy Department for averting great bloodshed in Haiti. He negotiated a truce between the armed forces of the principal rivals during a violent overthrow of the government, at great risk to his own life. See also Lars Schoultz, *National Security and United States Policy towards Latin America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1987), pp. 199-215.
25. Paul G. Havel, "The Role of Latin American Air Forces in Modernizing Society," unpublished paper, Troy State Univ. at Ft. Benning, March 1994; and Jorge A. del Carpio Tejada, "La Policia Nacional en la Guerra Anti-narcotraficante en Peru," US Army School of the Americas, July 1993.
26. Michael L. Connif, *Panama and the United States: The Forced Alliance* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1992), pp. 169-71. A positive dimension of US policy in Panama is the training of the new Panamanian National Police by the International Criminal Investigative and Training Assistance Program, a US Department of Justice operation. The program is strictly concentrated upon law enforcement, not national defense. This policy represents an alternative national security training paradigm of great potential for other countries.
27. Russell W. Ramsey, "The Colombian Battalion in Korea and Suez," *Journal of Inter-American Studies*, 9 (October 1967), 541-60.
28. Robert A. Pastor, *Whirlpool: U.S. Foreign Policy toward Latin America and the Caribbean* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1992), pp. 287-89.
29. H. H. Fischer, "Contribucion de las Fuerzas Armadas en el Desarrollo Economico-Social de los Paises," Inter-American Defense Board, Washington, D.C., 1 June 1961.
30. Russell W. Ramsey, "Defensa Interna en los Anos 80: El Modelo Colombiano," *Military Review*, Spanish edition, 67 (July 1987), 62-77.
31. Jaime Gonzalez Parra, "Gracias, Capitan," *El Tiempo*, Bogota, 27 April 1970, p. 2; and *Caretas* (Lima), 9 September 1992, p. 87.
32. Ecuadorian Correspondent, "The Army Learns of Human Rights," *The Economist* (London), 16 October 1993, p. 49; and Jennifer M. Taw, "The Effectiveness of Training International Military Students in Internal Defense and Development," National Defense Research Institute (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1993), pp. 15-22.
33. Charles Coll and Rachel Neild, "Issues in Human Rights," Paper #3 (Washington: Washington Office on Latin America, 1992), pp. 28-34. This analysis by a leading NGO sums up the pros and cons of training foreign military forces on moral topics.
34. Kenneth Anderson and Stephen D. Goose, *Landmines, A Deadly Legacy* (New York: The Arms Project of Human Rights Watch, and Physicians for Human Rights, 1993), pp. 216-20.
35. Richard L. Millett, "Central America's Enduring Conflicts," *Current History*, 93 (March 1994), 124-28.
36. Pamela Constable, "Haiti: A Nation in Despair, a Policy Adrift," *Current History*, 93 (March 1994), 108-11. For the idea that Latin America's predisposition to place sovereignty above all other diplomatic values may be declining, see Richard J. Bloomfield, "Suppressing the Interventionist Impulse," in Richard J. Bloomfield and Gregory F. Treverton, *Alternative to Intervention: A New U.S.-Latin American Security Relationship* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynn Reinner, 1990), pp. 132-33.

37. The most rational and compatible strategy to date appears in Gillian Gunn, *Cuba in Transition: Options for U.S. Policy* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1993).

38. Robert B. Toplin, "Many Latin Americanists Continue to Wear Ideological Blinders," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 30 March 1994, p. A48.

39. For indications that the Colombian public has long held their army in highest esteem, see Centro de Investigación y Acción Social (CIAS), *Estructuras políticas de Colombia*, Colección "Monografías y Documentos," #3 (Bogotá: CIAS, 1969), p. 5; and "Encuesta Nacional," *Semana* (Bogotá), 11 January 1994, p. 55.

40. The School of the Americas instituted a Resources Management Course in 1993, with the curriculum given at the Defense Resources Management Institute in Monterey, California, but tailored for Latin American application.

---

Lieutenant Colonel Russell W. Ramsey, USAR Ret., is Distinguished Resident Professor, US Army School of the Americas, Ft. Benning, Georgia. He received a B.S. from the US Military Academy, an M.A. from the University of Southern Mississippi, and a Ph.D. from the University of Florida, and he is a graduate of the US Army Command and General Staff College. He was a teacher and the pilot project officer who set up counterinsurgency training at the School of the Americas in 1961 and has lectured and published extensively on Latin American security issues. His *Soldiers and Guerrillas* (Bogotá, 1981), published in Spanish, is the standard history of the rural violence in Colombia.

---

Reviewed 8 May 1997. Please send comments or corrections to [carl\\_Parameters@conus.army.mil](mailto:carl_Parameters@conus.army.mil).