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## **The Strategic Implications of the Rise of Populism in Europe and South America**

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**THE STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE RISE  
OF POPULISM IN EUROPE AND SOUTH AMERICA**

**Steve C. Ropp**

**June 2005**

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## FOREWORD

Populism has received very little attention from military planners. This is understandable. As a political phenomenon, it is viewed as somewhat removed from security concerns and hence as more legitimately within the purview of those members of the U.S. policy community who deal with political issues. Furthermore, as a dynamic, unstable, and ephemeral phenomenon within seemingly stable representative democracies, it is hard to “see” and hence to study. This makes trend extrapolation regarding the growth of populist movements much more difficult than for other future security challenges such as terrorism or unconventional war.

In this monograph, Dr. Steve C. Ropp questions whether the enormous potential strategic consequences of a future burst of populist turbulence in Europe or South America suggest that it be more carefully studied. As Dr. Ropp indicates in his analysis, such bursts of turbulence have dramatically altered the U.S. security environment in the past, present new challenges today, and could provide even greater ones in the future.

The Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to offer this monograph on populism as part of the continuing debate about the nature of the challenges and opportunities facing the United States in coming decades. The analysis contained herein should prove particularly useful to those within the security community who are concerned with the second and third order consequences of the successful spread of representative democracy in Europe and South America. It reflects information, available through March of 2005, regarding populist dynamics in these two important regions.



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STEVE C. ROPP joined the Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) in September 2004 as Visiting Research Professor of National Security Affairs. He is on temporary leave from the Department of Political Science at the University of Wyoming (UW). His principal focus while at SSI is on populist leaders in Europe and the Americas and their impact on national security policy. His research credentials include recognition as one of 65 top U.S. foreign policy experts by the *National Journal*, selection to be the Milward Simpson Distinguished Professor in Political Science at UW, and subsequently as UW's Clarence Seibold Professor in Arts and Sciences. Dr. Ropp has served as a consultant to the Kissinger Commission on Central America, consultant to the State Department on Central America, and as an expert witness on Panama for both the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House Foreign Affairs Committee. He has also been a Fulbright Scholar in several countries, a Research Fellow at the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, as well as a participant in many other "think tank" activities around the world. Dr. Ropp's areas of interest are Panamanian politics and the security of the Canal, Central American politics, global human rights practices, and populist movements in Europe and the Americas. He has published a number of books, book chapters, and articles in Cambridge University Press, The University of New Mexico Press, *World Politics*, *The Latin American Research Review*, and *Current History*. Dr. Ropp holds a Ph.D. in political science from the University of California, Riverside; an M.A. in political science from the University of Washington, Seattle; and a B.A. in history from Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania.

## SUMMARY

The end of the Cold War provided the United States with an enormous opportunity to reshape the national security environment, not only militarily but also economically and politically. Militarily, old alliances such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have been enlarged and retooled, while new partnerships have developed elsewhere to deal with challenges such as humanitarian relief and complex emergencies. Economically, a consensus has increased as to the value of market mechanisms as tools for the promotion of development and sustained economic growth. And politically, processes of democratization have expanded the number of countries in the world that are either partially or fully democratic.

At the same time, our very success in this regard has created the preconditions for future bursts of populist turbulence in two democratic regions of the world where the United States has vital security interests—Europe and South America. Populist politicians already have altered the security environment in both regions and are likely to alter it more dramatically. Were bursts of populist turbulence to occur in either or both regions on a large scale, they would have the potential to undermine the democratic core upon which most of contemporary U.S. security policy is based. And in some regions, such as the Andes, where democratic institutions are particularly fragile, populist turbulence could even lead to state failure.

The potential rise of populism in Europe and South America should not be viewed by policy planners as posing just another specific type of security threat. For unlike the traditional, irregular, catastrophic, or disruptive ones normally considered in future scenarios, populism poses a potential challenge to the underlying political substructure that has given us the collective material capability and moral legitimacy to deal with all of these threats. In the final analysis, our ability to project power to deal with the whole spectrum of security challenges that the United States will face in the future depends upon our ability to deal with the potential challenges emerging from within representative democracy itself.

This monograph takes a fresh look at the contemporary populist phenomenon in Europe and the Americas. It describes populism, discusses the global context in which it is emerging, and then paints a picture of its general characteristics in four subregions in Europe and South America. It concludes with four recommendations for strategic planners as to how best to deal with it and with its potential consequences.

Specifically, these recommendations include:

1. *Considering possible bursts of populist turbulence to be on a par with other major security challenges in terms of future planning.* This would suggest that strategic planners will need to educate themselves concerning the history and current nature of populism, particularly in their regional areas of responsibility. Policymakers should consider revising the U.S. *National Security Strategy* so as to reflect the importance of political systems and dynamics that cannot be classified as either fully democratic or totalitarian.

2. *Focusing policy on containing populist movements before they come to power.* Populists by definition use direct forms of political action to gain power within representative democracies and are thus inclined to continue using such techniques once power has been achieved. Although it may not always be easy or diplomatically feasible to influence the trajectory of populist politicians, efforts should be made to do so. The ultimate goal of policy should be to aid our democratic allies in their efforts to “mainstream” populist politicians and their movements.

3. *Avoiding forming alliances of convenience with populists.* In some cases, populist politicians in Europe and South America may support U.S. short-term political or military goals in order to “gain traction” domestically and/or internationally. Given the importance that preserving the institutional integrity of representative democracy has with regard to the achievement of long-term U.S. security goals, strategic thinkers should resist the temptation to sacrifice these goals for any short-term gain.

4. *Configuring U.S. military forces so that they are capable of dealing with the wide variety of challenges that individual populists or a larger burst of turbulence might present.* Depending on the country and region, such challenges could run the gamut from state failure to rapid changes in the identities and associated strategic interests of powerful and

internally coherent states. Although determination of the precise nature of such configurations is the purview of military experts, the possibility of future bursts of populist turbulence would seem to call for preservation of the broadest range of combat capabilities.





# THE STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE RISE OF POPULISM IN EUROPE AND SOUTH AMERICA

## INTRODUCTION

In November 2004, viewers of Netherlands public television voted by phone and e-mail for the person that they thought should be considered the “greatest Dutchman of all time.” The resulting top ten list represented the flower of Dutch politics and culture. William of Orange who had guaranteed the country’s independence from the Spanish in the 16th century came in second, and other historical luminaries such as Anne Frank, Erasmus, Rembrandt, and Vincent Van Gogh also made the list. But the person voted the “greatest Dutchman of all time” by his contemporaries was a formerly obscure gay university professor named Pim Fortuyn (biographical sketch in appendix). The political career of this dynamic Dutchman lasted only 6 short months before he was assassinated on May 6, 2002, on the eve of general elections.<sup>1</sup> However, his anti-Islamic message still finds a receptive audience in the Netherlands where there is a large Muslim population.

On the other side of Europe in that continent’s second largest country, another young politician became increasingly visible as a participant in a tense electoral stand-off. In the Ukraine, the October 2004 election pitted a former Prime Minister and Western-oriented advocate of market reforms (Viktor Yushchenko) against an Eastern-oriented sitting Prime Minister allied with Russia (Viktor Yanukovich). When Yanukovich won the November 21 runoff under conditions that most international observers felt failed to meet international standards of transparency, Yushchenko supporters took to the streets of Kiev. Among those stirring up the crowd was an outspoken and telegenic member of Parliament, Yulia Tymoshenko. By most accounts, the country’s wealthiest woman and a political ally of Yushchenko, she at one point invited her supporters to join her in storming the legislative building.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, on another continent halfway round the world, a powerfully-built “firebrand” of a former army colonel currently governs Venezuela. Born to schoolteacher parents in a small rural

town, President Hugo Chavez is much better known within the U.S. security community than either Pim Fortuyn or Yulia Tymoshenko. President Chavez has governed the oil-rich South American country of Venezuela for the past 6 years and has increasingly done so through the use of presidential decree laws. Since surviving a recall referendum in August 2004, through which the political opposition attempted to have him ousted from office, he has further consolidated his power. And Chavez has sought to extend his influence regionally through the promotion of values that he associates with Latin America's great 19th century revolutionary hero, Simon Bolivar.

Finally, a ruggedly handsome 45-year-old Bolivian indigenous leader has become a major participant in the ongoing struggle over that country's political and physical survival. Opposition-led demonstrations in October 2003 in the capitol city of La Paz resulted in the death of a number of participants and to the flight into exile of President Gonzalo Sanchez Lozada. As a consequence, his successor, Carlos Mesa, has governed in uneasy alliance with the indigenous supporters of Evo Morales.<sup>3</sup> Morales' peasant roots in the Andean heartland of Bolivia have given his political message resonance in a region filled with impoverished farmers. His Movement to Socialism (MAS) party is now the largest political force in the country.

As intriguing as their individual stories may be, why should anyone in the U.S. strategic community take more than a passing interest in these four political figures? This monograph suggests that we should be very interested because they may represent, in William Shakespeare's famous words, "the baby figure of the giant mass of things to come."<sup>4</sup> Although participating in politics in different regions and on two different continents, each of them became a dynamic force in national politics within a very short period of time. Each has become such a force within either a well-established or newly-formed representative democracy. And each has emerged in a country whose people are under great stress because of global change. Most importantly for our purposes here, each is a *populist* who quickly carved out a personal political "space" within the framework of representative democratic institutions.

Populism is a concept that needs to be discussed briefly because of the variety of definitions that are sometimes used to capture its essence. Because populist political figures first appeared in countries

around the world that were rapidly industrializing, there has been a tendency to associate it exclusively with the dislocations and stress experienced by blue collar workers, and thus with left-wing politics. The problem with this definition is that Europeans today tend to associate populism in countries like France, Germany, and Italy with right-wing politics. Thus, we clearly need to look beyond simply the politics of the Left and the Right to see what populism is really all about.

Populism can make its presence felt among any group of ordinary people in any democratic country which is being subjected to stressful forces. As a result of such stress, this group of people may identify itself with a leader who they believe can provide them with more material support and hope for the future than the elite politicians running the country. Indeed, the whole dynamic supporting populism relies on the fact that some group of ordinary citizens does not view the government as legitimately and properly representing their interests. As a consequence, they lose respect for the institutions associated with representative democracy (political parties, legislatures, courts) and are perfectly willing to bypass these institutions when necessary through recourse to direct political action.<sup>5</sup> Such direct political action often (though not always) involves some measure of illegality. It frequently takes the perfectly legal form of using referendums to bypass national institutions.<sup>6</sup>

Populism always expresses itself in the form of a direct and unmediated *relationship* between “the people” and their leader. This leader is typically charismatic—meaning that, by force of personality and sheer animal magnetism, he or she can form a direct bond with followers. In the modern media age, this dynamic and outspoken leader is also usually handsome/beautiful or otherwise ruggedly “compelling” in a movie star kind of way. And there is good reason why populists possess these personal attributes. Given the grip that elite politicians have on traditional representative democratic institutions and the media, the populist leader needs to present his or her ideas theatrically to bypass these institutions and to reach the “chosen people” directly.<sup>7</sup>

As will be discussed in greater detail later, populism is a force that is eroding the institutional foundations of liberal representative democracy in a wide range of countries in Europe and South America.

And it is evident that a number of existing U.S. security dilemmas in both regions already are associated with the handful of populist politicians that have been used here as examples. The Netherlands has been a reliable ally in the War on Terrorism, and yet it is a country haunted by the populist “ghost” of Pim Fortuyn.<sup>8</sup> In the Ukraine, populist sentiment triggered by the disputed presidential elections and their aftermath threatens to complicate U.S. relationships with both it and Russia.<sup>9</sup> In Venezuela, Hugo Chavez’s policies vastly complicate the regional strategic equation. And Evo Morales “co-presidential” relationship with Carlos Mesa creates a dilemma with regard to implementation of U.S. drug control policies.

However important these individual security dilemmas might appear to be, they pale in comparison to those that could emerge. The rapid rise of additional populist politicians within existing representative democracies in Europe and South America would have far more profound implications for U.S. national security. The strategic political context is no longer that of the Cold War where authoritarian regimes of various kinds predominated in Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America, while traditional representative democracies governed in Western Europe. Rather, it is one in which a wide variety of seemingly but not necessarily stable and obviously unstable democracies occupy the political landscape in both regions.

Paradoxically, the successful end of the Cold War has created new challenges for those concerned with the relationship between national security issues and democratic governance. Democracies in the “New Europe” such as Ukraine are under tremendous stress, partly because they are new but also because of strains imposed by the transition to market economies. Democracies in the “Old Europe” are under similar pressure from the forces of globalization, as well as from those associated with expansion of the European Union (EU) in 2004. And throughout South America, representative democracies suffer from the stresses and anxieties of publics attempting to adjust to the forces of change.

The “bottom line” for those involved in thinking about national security policy is that we can no longer take for granted the democratic base that the old Cold War environment provided to the United States in Europe and South America. Forces for change are afoot which

render the assumption that we can treat this base as a “constant” in our security equation increasingly problematical. These same forces make problematical the assumption that we can deal with both Europe and the Americas as if ever increasing levels of stable representative democracy can undergird future U.S. security policy. Rather, recent developments suggest just the opposite. Future bursts of populist turbulence in these two vital regions of the world could occur, with the whole becoming larger than the sum of its parts.

The following sections of this monograph first describe the current economic and political context for the rise of populism in Europe and South America. This is followed by a discussion of why so little attention has been paid to populism within the U.S. security community, and why more attention should be paid. A more in-depth discussion of the nature of populism follows, and a framework is presented that suggests the type of democracies in which it is most likely to appear in the future. The last sections describe the general nature of the populist terrain in four subregions—“Old Europe,” “New Europe,” the Southern Cone, and the Andean region of South America.<sup>10</sup> Regional and transregional scenarios for the rise of populism and associated bursts of turbulence are presented, followed by a discussion of their security implications and some associated recommendations for policymakers.

## **THE GLOBAL CONTEXT FOR THE RISE OF POPULISM**

Although the premise of this monograph is that U.S. policymakers should be particularly concerned by the future security challenges that could be created by bursts of populism in Europe and South America, various global changes are eroding support for representative democracy in other world regions as well. Scholars and civic leaders increasingly are concerned about the so-called “democratic deficit,” a tendency for citizens to disengage from organized party politics and hence, in some ways, to stop thinking of themselves as citizens. And strange as it may seem, popular support for the key institutions of representative democracy is declining almost as rapidly in developed countries as it is in less developed ones.

Many observers attribute declining levels of civic engagement in developed countries to domestic environments in which a

combination of growing consumer wealth, expanding leisure time, and a pervasive media presence have reduced the appeal of local “retail politics.” Going to vote is viewed as less exciting than making a trip to the mall. In the face of a constant barrage of advertisements, adults in various representative democracies (particularly young adults) increasingly have come to view themselves as consumers first and citizens second.<sup>11</sup> Thus, while other reasons for declining civic engagement may be important, the primary explanation seems to be that the institutions of representative democracy are increasingly in competition with other more dynamic forces in the larger society.

As for why support for representative democracy is declining in developing countries, the reasons have more to do with concrete “bread and butter” issues. In regions such as “New Europe,” the Andes, or South America’s Southern Cone, the democratic deficit often results not so much from competition from consumerism, but rather from the stress and uncertainties associated with transitioning to a market economy. To the extent that the institutions of representative democracy are seen as not “delivering the goods” in this respect, the public will look elsewhere for solutions to its daily problems. This public disenchantment with representative democracy in developing countries is reflected in both low voter turnout for national elections and in declining levels of public trust for democratic institutions.<sup>12</sup>

Also underlying the general decline in support in Europe and South America for representative democratic institutions are stresses and uncertainties related to ongoing processes of globalization. As some observers have pointed out, economic and cultural globalization has not taken place as rapidly as its critics would suggest.<sup>13</sup> However, it is not so much the reality of globalization but rather people’s perception of it that has raised levels of concern throughout both regions.<sup>14</sup>

In the western part of Europe, people of all political persuasions fear that their economic security will be undermined not only by increased exports from non-European low-wage countries such as China, but also by future exports from the EU’s newest member states. This has led to increasing calls for protectionist measures and for curbs on the activities of multinational corporations. The fears and stresses associated with globalization are pronounced,

particularly in countries such as Germany that are important industrial exporting countries and hence subject to job losses and wage depression.<sup>15</sup> And they are reflected in recent public opinion polls that show rapidly rising levels of pessimism about the impact of EU expansion, particularly in Central Europe.<sup>16</sup> As for people in European countries lying farther to the east, economic security is now by far the greatest policy concern.<sup>17</sup>

The stresses and uncertainties associated with globalization are also present throughout South America. There, the transition to open market economies in the 1990s increased income inequality in most countries, led to a rise in urban unemployment, and to a widening gap between the wages of skilled and unskilled workers.<sup>18</sup> These harsh economic realities are, in turn, reflected in pessimistic attitudes about the impact of globalization.<sup>19</sup> Discontent with regard to globalization and concerns regarding their economic future are pronounced particularly among people in Andean countries. For example, some 92 percent of those recently polled in Ecuador and Peru said that things were not going well in their countries.<sup>20</sup> And only 19 percent of all Latin Americans expressed satisfaction in the performance of their market economies.<sup>21</sup>

As economic stresses continue to grow, levels of support for representative democratic government further decline. Public distrust today of democratic institutions within the 15 "original" members of the EU is nothing less than shocking. Only 16 percent of citizens trust their political parties and only 35 percent their national parliaments. The overall level of trust in national governments now stands at 30 percent. By way of contrast, television earns the trust of 54 percent, the army 63 percent, and the police, 65 percent. Most strikingly, political parties are the least trusted institution, and national governments are less trusted than the EU and the United Nations (UN) (see Table 1).<sup>22</sup>

To make matters worse, levels of public trust in democratic institutions are even lower in the EU's new member states. Here, political parties only hold the loyalties of 7 percent of the people and an incredibly low 3 percent in Poland. At the other end of the "trust spectrum" stand the media (radio and television) and the army with trust levels in the 60 percent range. More significantly, the levels of



trust for the three institutional pillars of representative democracy (political parties, parliament, and the judiciary) are higher in Latin American countries than in the newly admitted members of the EU.<sup>23</sup>

	OLD EUROPE	NEW EUROPE	LATIN AMERICA
Parties	16	7	18
Parliament	35	16	24
Legal system	43	27	32
Television	54	57	38
Police	65	42	37
Army	63	58	40

**Table 1. Percent of Levels of Trust in Democratic Institutions (“Old Europe,” “New Europe,” and Latin America).**

Under these conditions, it is not surprising that both European and South American political parties and party systems are under a lot of stress. Particularly in South America, parties have proliferated rapidly. For example, Argentina now has 47; Venezuela, 37; and Bolivia, 14.<sup>24</sup> And while the number of parties is more limited in Europe due to high electoral thresholds for admission, they are relatively numerous and ideologically diverse throughout the region. Furthermore, support for old mainstream parties in countries such as the Netherlands, Italy, Argentina, and Uruguay has eroded rapidly, threatening the “hollowing out” of these systems and hence movement toward more extreme types of multiparty configurations.<sup>25</sup>

In sum, the general context for possible future bursts of populist turbulence in both Europe and South America is one where there has been a noticeable recent decline in civic engagement and an increasing democratic deficit. As a result of the stresses and uncertainties associated with globalization and other factors, levels of trust in democratic institutions have declined. The general effect has been to create a volatile and expanded public “space” within the crumbling democratic edifice for a new generation of populist politicians.

## WHY THE STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS OF POPULISM HAVE NOT RECEIVED MORE ATTENTION

As compared to other types of political phenomena, populism has received very little attention. For example, only about 2 percent of the 14,000 books in print on democracy and various forms of authoritarian rule deal with the subject of populism.<sup>26</sup> It seems to be viewed within this vast literature as a mildly interesting “hybrid” form of political rule that does not fit neatly into any of the conventional conceptual boxes.

And until recently, populism has received very little attention within the U.S. foreign policy and security community.<sup>27</sup> The *National Security Strategy* makes no mention of populism as a potential security problem. Indeed, it posits a simple two-part distinction between democratic and totalitarian political systems, with democracy mentioned 20 times and totalitarianism 3 times. The *National Security Strategy* also suggests that there is a general global movement away from totalitarian forms of government and towards democracy, and support for such a trend is posited as one of the U.S. national goals.

Given this perspective on democracy, it is hardly surprising that the *National Security Strategy* does not mention the possibility of the future erosion of existing liberal democratic institutions or of the implications such a development would have for national security. Rather, the strategy suggests that the expansion of the “family of transatlantic democracies” can reliably serve as a political support base for the maintenance or expansion of military alliances such as NATO.<sup>28</sup>

Why is populism such an understudied political phenomenon within the U.S. security community? Part of the reason is the above-mentioned analytical bias toward a view of global democratic processes that is linear and unidirectional. But populism is also hard to “see.” Because it is a dynamic, unstable, and ephemeral force operating within representative democracies, it is as difficult to pin down as are quarks by physicists. Compare, for example, the difficulty of studying the illusive and dynamic populist to that of studying a well-known democratic leader, dictator, or even terrorist. Unlike a Tony Blair, Kim Jong-il, or Osama Bin Laden, a populist

leader such as Pim Fortuyn literally can explode upon the political scene and often just as quickly vanish from it.

Populism is also neglected because we Americans tend to view it as a rather benign or, at worst, slightly malignant force found within a generally healthy democratic body politic. This perspective on populism is the product of our own unique historical experience with it. Who are the populists who come to mind when we think about this American experience, and what were the consequences of their brief sojourns on the national political stage? While the likes of Senator William Jennings Bryan, Father Charles Coughlin, and Governor George Wallace may not be revered figures in the pantheon of great American politicians, they did little long-run damage to representative democracy. Thus, as a result of this perspective on populism, our strategic planners tend to view its appearance in various other countries as an isolated problem amenable to a diplomatic solution rather than as a potential security challenge requiring advanced strategic planning.<sup>29</sup>

Our inattention to the security implications of populism also results from the fact that the last great burst of populist turbulence in Europe and South America occurred more than 60 years ago. In Europe, Benito Mussolini exploded onto the Italian democratic political scene in 1919 when he first ran for a seat in Parliament. A short 2 years later, the King of Italy, Vittorio Emanuele III, asked him to form a new government. While Adolph Hitler emerged less quickly within Germany's post-World War I democratic Weimar Republic, he eventually formed part of a larger cluster of populist politicians who governed on two continents. Mussolini and Hitler's counterparts in South America included populist figures such as President Getulio Vargas of Brazil and Juan Peron of Argentina.

Although a major outbreak of Transatlantic populism has not occurred recently, Latin America did experience what might be considered a regional "mini-burst" some 3 decades ago.<sup>30</sup> Beginning with Fidel Castro's ascension to power in Cuba (1959) and through the mid-1970s, a number of populist leaders held sway in a small subset of the region's countries. These included Panama under General Omar Torrijos Herrera (1968-81) and Peru under General Juan Velasco Alvarado (1968-75). Most of these leaders were populist, both in terms of their style and also in terms of the radical-reformist

policies they pursued. And this “mini-burst” of populist turbulence created major security problems for the United States, including the threat of Soviet Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles in Cuba (the Cuban Missile Crisis) and the possibility of new security threats to the Panama Canal.<sup>31</sup>

## WHY WE NEED TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO POPULISM

Given the large number of major security threats already facing the United States today (traditional, irregular, disruptive, and catastrophic), why should we pay more attention to populism?<sup>32</sup> Three main reasons are:<sup>33</sup>

- Because populism has shown an ability in the past to quickly and dramatically alter the strategic environment in Europe and South America in ways that caught U.S. planners off guard;
- Because populism *already* has changed the strategic environment in Europe and South America—and could change it even more dramatically in the near future; and,
- Because such bursts of populist turbulence would unsettle the core area of representative democracies—increasing the general level of strategic uncertainty and undermining the political base from which U.S. military power has collectively been projected.

With regard to the first of these points, the last great burst of populist turbulence in the 1920s and 1930s dramatically altered the political terrain in Europe and South America in a few short years. However, U.S. strategic planners remained oblivious to its potential consequences because of a deeply grounded belief in the inevitable march toward democracy after World War I.<sup>34</sup>

As a consequence, U.S. military planning between the wars was dominated by scenarios that envisioned no major strategic threats emanating from changes within representative democracies in Europe and the Americas. Rather, such scenarios focused on “minor” global contingencies such as dealing with possible political unrest in the Philippines or in Mexico. It was not until the late 1930s that

planners realized that the strategic environment had been altered dramatically by bursts of populist turbulence in both Europe and South America. By that time, it was much too late to redesign U.S. force structures or change military operational plans.<sup>35</sup>

Second, we need to pay more attention to populism because it *already* has altered the strategic operational environment in both regions over the past few years. As mentioned above, rising populist sentiment in the Ukraine as the result of recent elections has threatened to complicate U.S. relations with Russia. And President Yushchenko's selection of populist Tymoshenko to be Ukraine's Prime Minister makes it tempting for U.S. policymakers to pursue short-term policy goals at the expense of putting the institutional integrity of Ukraine's fledgling democracy more at risk.<sup>36</sup> For example, it becomes tempting to ignore populist developments in a case such as this where the government has provided considerable support for U.S. policy in Iraq.<sup>37</sup>

Another example drawn from South America further illustrates how populism has already altered the strategic operational environment. Until 1998, when military populist Chavez was elected president of Venezuela, there had been no credible spokesperson in the region for an alternative political and economic vision of the future of the Americas. Chavez's articulation of such an alternative Bolivarian vision has in the process created a number of strategic dilemmas for U.S. policymakers. Should we treat his brand of populism as a legitimate regional variant of representative democracy, or treat it as a threatening new form of authoritarianism? What are the security implications of his increasingly close ties to Cuba, Russia, and China? And should we be concerned from a security standpoint with his efforts to create a new "petro-alliance," both within Latin America and across the globe?<sup>38</sup>

That Chavez's unique brand of populism already has changed the strategic equation for the United States in Latin America is perhaps best illustrated by the growing concern within the U.S. policy community about energy security. In November 2004, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Senator Richard Lugar expressed this concern in a letter to the Government Accountability Office (GAO). In the letter, he requested that the GAO look into U.S.

preparations for another disruption of the supply of energy from Venezuela. The concern was not only with disruptive actions that President Chavez might take but also those of the opposition in a highly polarized post-referendum political environment.<sup>39</sup>

The third and final reason for closely following populist developments in Europe and South America is by far the most important. Future bursts of populist turbulence have the potential to unsettle the collective democratic core of countries that undergirds much of U.S. military security policy.<sup>40</sup> Such a political turn of events in either or both of these regions would have multiple negative consequences for those concerned with military-related security issues.

As a result of populist turbulence, there would be less ability to build structural certainty into future security planning. In other words, U.S. strategic planners would have a much reduced ability to take certain things that might or might not happen for granted. Take, for example, the current situation with regard to the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) efforts to bring Iranian nuclear programs under an international inspection regime. Strategic military planners fairly safely can assume in this context that representative democracies in South America that do not presently possess nuclear weapons (such as Brazil and Argentina) are likely to assent to inspection regimes and safeguards similar to those being urged on Iran.<sup>41</sup> But would this remain the case under conditions of populist turbulence?<sup>42</sup>

Future populist turbulence in Europe and South America would also lessen our ability to collectively and reliably project military power into troubled regions and to deal with the growing problem of failed or failing states. This core area of representative democracies served as the political base from which U.S. strategic planners were able to contain the Soviet Union during the Cold War. And following the end of the Cold War, collective diplomatic and military power was used to deal with post-Cold War crises and peacekeeping/peacemaking situations such as those which developed in Iraq and the Balkans.<sup>43</sup>

But what might we expect under conditions of widespread populist turbulence in either or both regions? Here, Venezuela can serve as an example. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, this

representative democracy played an important role in collective regional efforts to bring the civil wars in Central America to a close.<sup>44</sup> Under the leadership of President Luis Herrera Campins (1979-84), Venezuela became a founding member of the so-called Contadora Group in 1983. Together with Colombia, Brazil, and Panama, it served as an “honest broker” in efforts to find political solutions to the ongoing conflict in the region.

In the process of working toward such political solutions in Central America, Venezuela also became a major contributor to UN observer groups that were dispatched in the late 1980s and 1990s to monitor and enforce cease fires in Nicaragua and El Salvador. In fact, the Venezuelan troop battalion sent to Nicaragua in 1989 constituted 75 percent of the military force stationed there under UN auspices. However, today under populist governance, Venezuela’s contribution to UN peacekeeping missions has been minimal.<sup>45</sup>

The current “meltdown” in Haiti provides another example of how a future increase in populist turbulence in the democratic core might be expected to impact our ability to collectively and reliably project power into troubled regions of the world, including some that are very close to the United States. Following the removal of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide from office in February 2004, the UN has assumed the role of a “virtual government” in this failed Caribbean state.<sup>46</sup>

Under such conditions, what effect would future populist turbulence in the Southern Cone have on U.S. and UN ability to deal with the security and humanitarian problems associated with Haitian state collapse? If we look at the composition of the 6,000 military personnel that the UN has deployed there, the majority come from the Southern Cone democracies of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay.<sup>47</sup> And these troops (under Brazilian command) are all that currently ensures that the country will not descend into chaos.

What kinds of adjustments in force deployment would the U.S. military have to contemplate if any or all of these Southern Cone countries were to experience populist turbulence that led their governments to reassess their current level of military troop commitments to present and future stabilization operations in the Americas?<sup>48</sup> And more broadly, what kinds of adjustments would

we need to contemplate in terms of global force deployment? During the first 4 years of the new millennium, the contribution of Latin America's democracies to global peacekeeping operations and efforts to deal with humanitarian emergencies has increased dramatically. A reversal of this trend would put greater pressure on U.S. military personnel.<sup>49</sup>

With regard to our current need to pay additional attention to the strategic implications of populism, we face a dilemma. Our very success in promoting the spread of representative democracy in the former Communist countries of Eastern Europe and the Americas following the end of the Cold War has resulted in the creation of institutional structures that are often fragile at best. The forces of grassroots democracy that the process of democratization has unleashed threaten to overwhelm representative institutions in countries where these institutions are either over- or underdeveloped (see Table 2). Under such conditions, populists who have the ability to directly connect with "the people," or even shape peoples' views of their collective identity, will be empowered to reshape democracy itself.<sup>50</sup>

**Phase 1:** Major global and/or regional changes undermine institutions in representative democracies.

**Phase 2:** Populist leaders emerge to reflect the stresses and uncertainties shared by "the people" in these democracies.

**Phase 3:** New regional "clusters" of populist-led countries form around common interests or even new ideologies.

**Phase 4:** Bursts of populist turbulence occur in and among these countries.

**Phase 5:** New security challenges quickly appear for the United States.

**Table 2. How Populism Could Create New Security Challenges in Europe and South America.**



## HOW POPULISM WORKS

The strategic implications of populism do not arise from the nature of populism itself, but rather from the political context in which it is found. In fact, in a healthy representative democracy, it can provide a form of “therapy.” It can do this by regularly reminding governing political elites that they ultimately must prove themselves responsive to the will of the people or the people will find an alternative route (through populist leaders) of making their voices heard. As pointed out earlier, this has happened many times in the history of the United States.

*Stable democracies* have shown themselves to be adaptable over time, a characteristic that is not always evident in democracies around the world.<sup>51</sup> More commonly, representative democracies are either too rigid and “set in their ways,” or too fluid and hence volatile. *Overly stable democracies* (rigid ones) result either from the imposition of democratic structures by outside Great Powers following a war (for example, Austria following World War II) or from efforts by domestic elites to ensure “social peace” (Venezuela during the Cold War).<sup>52</sup> In either case, the structures of representative democracy were consciously engineered by political leaders to contain, and hence limit the impulses of “the people” to express themselves directly. Such political regimes often are called consociational democracies.<sup>53</sup>

On the other hand, *unstable democracies* (fluid ones) are those where institutions are too much in a state of flux. Here, we are generally talking about the new or so-called “fledgling” democracies that exist in great abundance in “New Europe” and parts of South America. Unlike their overly stable counterparts in “Old Europe” and a few South American countries, these unstable democracies are the product of the wave of democratization that followed the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and end of military dictatorships in Latin America.

The distinguishing characteristics of overly stable and unstable democracies are fairly clear, although there is no agreement as to exactly what ingredients go into the making of a stable democracy.<sup>54</sup> In overly stable democracies, political life is dominated by a small number of parties, and their leaders who negotiate long-term power sharing relationships with each other. Although such arrangements

often do ensure political stability and guarantee social peace in the short-run, their long-run effect is to marginalize groups of people who lie outside the core coalition. For example, such coalitions effectively governed Austria and Venezuela for decades until they were subjected to the populist assaults of Jorg Haider and Hugo Chavez.

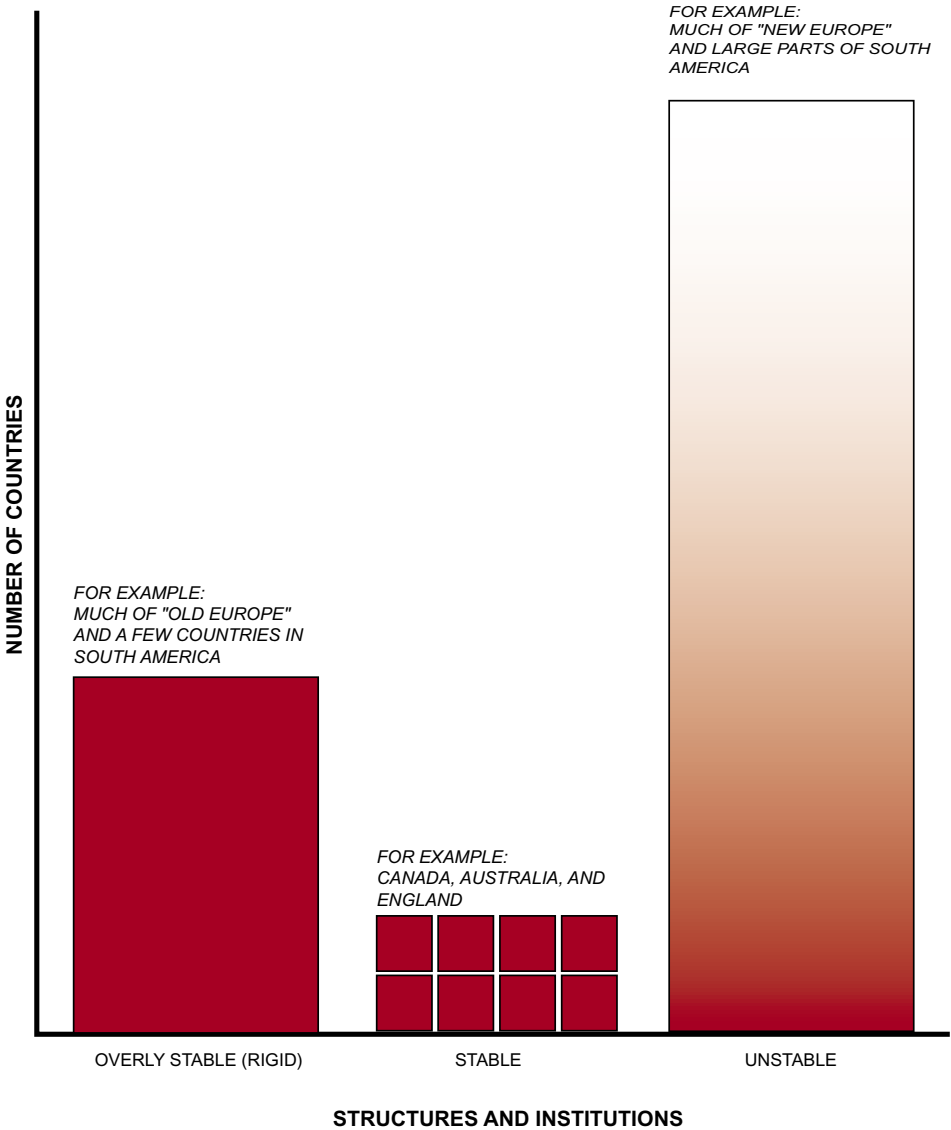
Political life in unstable democracies often is colored by the presence of large numbers of parties with highly divergent ideologies, no one or two of which can regularly capture a majority share of the vote. Such polarized and unstable party relationships may be part of a larger environment that itself is unstable. For example, such an environment can include hostile relationships between the various branches of government and lack of public faith in governing institutions.

In order to understand how populism works, we need to think of overly stable and unstable democracies as occupying the two ends of an unbalanced U-curve, with stable democracies in the middle. (See Figure 1.) The paths to the rise of populism will vary depending on the type of representative democracy in which populist processes are to be found. In overly stable democracies, the difficulties involved in populist representation of “the people’s” interest within the political system means that populists must bypass traditional institutions and attempt to achieve power through the use of theatrical rhetoric and direct action. In stable democracies, populism is eventually absorbed into the mainstream of politics. And in unstable democracies, the absence of strong and stable democratic institutions means that populism simply flows right through them. (See Figure 2.)

## **THE PRESENT-DAY POPULIST ENVIRONMENT**

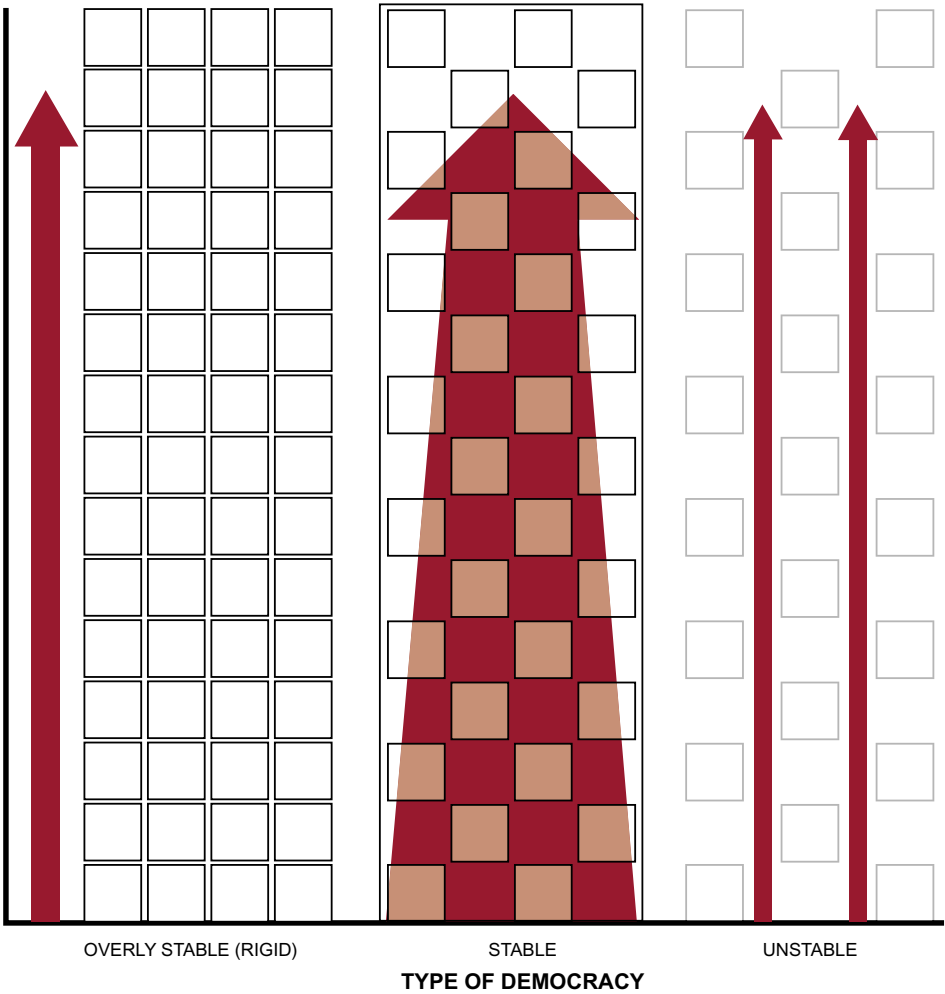
All representative democracies produce populists, and all of these populists share the common characteristics of charisma, dynamism, and “curb appeal” to a popular constituency (“the people”). And in all cases, these populists cater to people who view them as providing answers to problems that elite politicians are believed to be ignoring. However, there are considerable differences in the specific nature of the local environment in different regions within Europe and South

# REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACIES IN EUROPE AND THE AMERICAS



**Figure 1. Representative Democracies in Europe and South America.**

# PATHS FOR THE RISE OF POPULISM



= DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS



= THE RISE OF POPULISM

**Figure 2. Paths for the Rise of Populism in Europe and South America.**

America that fuels populist success. The most important of these differences are:

- The specific features of a region or country's representative democracies—particularly whether they are overly stable, stable or unstable;
- The specific manner in which the stresses and uncertainties associated with globalization affect a particular local population; and,
- The specific nature of the constituency that the populist politician is appealing to and what “the people” see as the essence of their identity.

When examining the present-day populist environment in Europe and South America, it is useful to break each down into two subregions. Europe can be viewed as consisting of “Old Europe,” and “New Europe,” and South America of the Southern Cone and the Andean Region. Each of these subregions has its own distinctive social, economic, and cultural characteristics; and these characteristics, in turn, affect the way in which populism manifests itself.

### **“Old Europe.”**

“Old Europe” consists of those countries that are in the western part of the continent, and whose political and economic systems were shaped during the Cold War.<sup>55</sup> As a response to the burst of populist turbulence associated with the rise of Fascism during the interwar years, there was a tendency to construct democracies that would be more resistant to populist impulses. This, combined with the need to find solutions to labor management problems in highly industrialized economies, led to the creation of rather rigid institutional structures normally dominated and controlled by a handful of political parties.

Within “Old Europe,” many groups (industrial workers, small shopkeepers, farmers) are being exposed to the stresses and uncertainties associated with globalization's competitive pressures. As the EU has expanded from 15 members to 25, companies are

moving their production facilities to the east to take advantage of lower labor costs in countries such as Poland and the Slovak Republic. Take, for example, the case of automobile production. While the Slovak Republic is rapidly becoming the “New Germany” in terms of automobile production, plants are being closed in Germany itself.<sup>56</sup>

The political base on which populist movements build in “Old Europe” is extremely diverse in terms of its social and economic composition. It consists of groups of people such as those mentioned above that are increasingly unhappy about their economic condition. But it also taps into other constituencies that are worried about the challenge that immigration presents to the preservation of basic national values and identities. Public dissatisfaction seems to be everywhere, for example, as expressed with regard to cuts in national welfare benefits and failure to deal with corruption within the EU bureaucracy. These multiple sources of popular grievance recently have spawned a kaleidoscopic array of new parties and movements.

“Old Europe” is now home to a number of populist politicians, and also many others who are mislabeled as “populist” simply because they express right-wing points of view.<sup>57</sup> In the category of “real populists,” we can place people like the late Pim Fortuyn (Netherlands), Jean Marie Le Pen (France), and Jorg Haider (Austria). And there are also a number of populists emerging as players within the EU as well as within various local jurisdictions. These include figures such as “Euro-populist” Hans Peter Martin, an Austrian journalist and member of the European Parliament, who campaigns against corruption.<sup>58</sup>

### **“New Europe.”**

The countries of the “New Europe” lie in the central and eastern parts of the continent. Their political and economic systems also were shaped by the Cold War but in ways quite different from that of their western neighbors. Representative democracies in the “New Europe” are new because they emerged from the ashes of the Soviet bloc. Unlike “Old Europe” where democratic institutions were designed after World War II to resist populist impulses and ensure labor-management peace, in the “New Europe” they build

on a foundation of mass political movements (such as Solidarity in Poland) that opposed the former Communist authoritarian regimes.

Just as in “Old Europe,” many groups in the “New Europe” are being exposed to the competitive pressures of globalization and open markets. This is particularly true of miners, industrial workers in large Soviet-era factories, and farmers. Among such groups of people, these pressures have led to high levels of unemployment and low levels of economic growth.<sup>59</sup> The result has been a feeling among a significant part of the population that the market-oriented economic policies put into place during the 1990s by the region’s new democratic governments unfairly were exposing “the people” to the stresses and uncertainties associated with the global marketplace.<sup>60</sup>

While Western Europe is home to many populists, the Central and Eastern European countries provide the perfect political environment for this phenomenon today. During the Communist era, there was a conscious effort to repress feelings of national identity among Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Ukrainians, and other regional groups. Attempts then were made to create a larger overarching working class identity along the lines of Marxist-Leninist thought. In the process, the people had been stripped of their sense of common history, customs, and political institutions. They thus became the perfect “available mass” for future populists to build their movements upon.<sup>61</sup>

The lack of trust that citizens of the “New Europe” have in their democratic institutions (see Table 1) is reflected in low voter turnout for recent elections. For example, only 21 percent of eligible voters in Poland and 16 percent in Slovakia turned out for the June 2004 European Parliamentary elections. It is no coincidence that the same countries that saw low voter turnout for these elections also experienced a rise in populist success at the ballot box. Polish populist Andrezej Lepper and his Self-Defense Party did extremely well in these elections. This was also the case in Slovakia where populists Vladimir Meciar (Movement for a Democratic Slovakia [HZDS]) and Roberto Fico (Social Alternative for Slovakia [SMER] or Direction Party) captured 35 percent of the vote between them.

The various populist parties and politicians found in the “New Europe” are difficult to classify as left-wing or right-wing since they invite government intervention on certain issues, but not on others.

Some populists come from the peasantry and claim to defend their interests against the “cultural pollution” coming from the West and from the market forces that threaten to overwhelm “the people.” Others such as Tymoshenko are self-made business people who decide it is time to directly market themselves and their ideas. In either case, they exist in virtually every country in Central and Eastern Europe.

### **The Southern Cone.**

The Southern Cone is a group of countries in the southernmost part of South America (Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay). To many, this region of the world is most closely associated with populism. More specifically, they think of Argentina where mid-20th century industrialization produced the populist movement led by Juan and Eva Peron. Their loyal followers were the so-called “shirtless ones,” poor unemployed rural workers who had moved to Buenos Aires to try to find work in the growing number of factories.<sup>62</sup>

The Southern Cone historically has produced a unique kind of industrial “working class populism” that is significantly different from that found elsewhere in South America. Lying in the temperate zone, its vast agricultural potential attracted large numbers of immigrants from European countries such as Germany and Italy. In turn, these immigrants imported working class attitudes and ideologies that predisposed them toward fascism when the region began to industrialize rapidly. Politicians, such as Juan Peron in Argentina and Getulio Vargas in neighboring Brazil, drew on the fascist and corporatist doctrines that were prevalent in Europe during the 1920s and 1930s to build their own populist political movements.<sup>63</sup>

The environment within which populism might possibly reemerge in the Southern Cone differs in another significant way from that which exists in Europe and throughout the rest of South America. Unlike “New Europe” where Communist parties laid the groundwork for future bursts of populist turbulence by stripping away preexisting loyalties and institutions, the military played this



role in South America. Long and brutal periods of military rule during the 1970s and 1980s greatly weakened the preexisting structures of representative democracy.<sup>64</sup>

Take, for example, the case of Argentina. This country has remained virtually ungovernable during the half-century since Juan and Eva Peron came to power in the 1940s. Periods of military rule have been punctuated by episodic outbreaks of renewed populism and left-wing urban guerrilla warfare. However, since their military defeat by the British in the Falkland Islands War (1982), the armed forces have stayed out of politics. Unfortunately, subsequent civilian efforts to establish a fully functioning representative democracy and to reinvigorate the economy have not proven successful. As a consequence, the government defaulted on some \$100 billion in national debt in 2001, the largest default in the history of any sovereign country.

Today, Argentine democracy is in deep trouble. Not only are there many political parties vying for power, but there are also numerous factional groupings within these parties. In this particular case, democratic structures are being weakened further by ongoing crises within both the executive and judicial branches. Argentina has been “governed” by six different presidents in the past 4 years, and half the members of the Supreme Court have been forced from office.<sup>65</sup>

Currently, economic conditions in Southern Cone countries are improving and may help allay the fears of those who expect to see another burst of populist turbulence in the near future. These fears may be further allayed by the fact that no real charismatic populists like President Chavez are currently in power there. However, the region’s historical association with populism, its continuing economic problems, and the growing weakness of traditional political parties suggest that a future burst of turbulence is far from out of the question. The history of populist movements shows that they can emerge “out of nowhere.”

### **The Andean Region.**

The “industrial populism” historically found in the Southern Cone is not replicated in the Andean Region. Rather, Peruvian, Bolivian,

Ecuadorean, and even to a certain extent Venezuelan populism has its roots in that the Andean mountain chain is the homeland of millions of indigenous people. Unlike the Southern Cone, the Andes in a very real sense have been occupied since the Spanish Conquest.<sup>66</sup> From this perspective, many populist movements in the region seek to express the indigenous identities of politically disenfranchised and culturally repressed peoples.<sup>67</sup>

The Andean Region has a rich history of populist expression through such political figures as Victor Raul Haya de la Torre in Peru, Romulo Bethancourt in Venezuela, and Jose Maria Velasco Ibarra in Ecuador.<sup>68</sup> Often these populists were of mixed racial background and emerged from either existing political parties or from the military to give partial political expression to the cultural identity of marginalized groups. However, in recent years, this process has been vastly accelerated under pressure from the forces of globalization. Particularly hard hit have been small agricultural producers who have been buffeted by exposure to global markets.<sup>69</sup>

Under such conditions, the historically disenfranchised and poverty-stricken peoples of the Andes have gravitated toward those populist politicians who are not viewed as subservient to the traditional Spanish and *mestizo* elites. As one observer of the Andean political scene has noted, they are increasingly drawn to indigenous populists who carry a message of "economic nationalism, anti-Americanism, anti-imperialism, and anti-globalization."<sup>70</sup> The increasing convergence of anti-Americanism and nationalism in the minds of growing numbers of indigenous people should be a grave concern for those charged with the furtherance of U.S. policy interests in the Andes.<sup>71</sup>

Take, for example, the case of Bolivia. When prices for commodities such as tin collapsed during the 1980s, the government reacted by instituting market reforms. During the 1990s, these reforms were "deepened" through measures such as the privatization of some communal water rights. These measures, coupled with efforts to reduce acreage devoted to the growing of coca and to increase gas production, led to a major burst of populism.<sup>72</sup> The populist politician most closely associated with this burst is Evo Morales, the Aymara leader of the Movement toward Socialism (MAS) and a former candidate for the presidency of the country.

Elsewhere in the Andes, the situation is equally unstable. In Peru, President Alejandro Toledo put down an uprising in January 2005 by a former army major who leads a movement that combines militarism with ethnic nationalism.<sup>73</sup> And in Ecuador, President Lucio Gutierrez faces a deteriorating political situation that eventually could make him the fourth of the country's leaders to be forced into exile over the past decade. He continues to cling to power by virtue of a political alliance with several powerful populist politicians.

Venezuela deserves special attention because President Chavez is already governing his country.<sup>74</sup> In fact, he in many ways serves as our best example of the strategic implications that may arise when a "sitting" populist politician begins to develop ties to other aspiring populist politicians in the region or globally. Venezuela is also an important case because the country has had a unique experience with populism. It is a form of populism that combines Latin American, indigenous Andean and Afro-Caribbean elements. In this sense, President Chavez's brand of populism could potentially have the broadest appeal across various racial and cultural groups of any populist movement currently existing in the Americas.<sup>75</sup>

## **SOME SCENARIOS FOR THE MID-TERM (5-10 YEARS)**

A burst of populist turbulence in Europe and/or South America is something that, by definition, would not be easy for security planners to prepare for at the last minute. And given populism's inherent instability and unpredictability, it is probably best dealt with in advance through exercises that look at the various combinations and permutations of this phenomenon that might conceivably arise rather than at specific anticipated events. Just because we cannot envision the precise paths that populist movements will take does not mean that we should ignore populism's strategic implications. These can be examined by using scenarios.

What are scenarios and how do we use them? Simply put, they are alternative visions of the future that are based on plausible assumptions about underlying conditions that might lead to their eventual creation.<sup>76</sup> For purposes of strategic planning, it is not necessary (or even desirable) that a particular scenario reflect collective wisdom about the most likely future outcome. Rather, it is

only necessary that it be a plausible one, given the “logic” of some already visible trend or condition such as the large-scale challenges facing many traditional representative democracies.

Scenarios have been used for decades by strategic planners who cannot afford to ignore low probability future events that could have undesirable or even catastrophic consequences. And while not all of the scenarios discussed below would necessarily have such consequences, they are at least worth thinking about. The following regional scenarios concerning populism are offered to the security community for those concerned with examining the future under conditions of low probability but potentially very high impact.

Imagine a future in which the Andean Region is politically dominated by an informal alliance between two or three indigenous populist heads of state. These leaders would represent (or could at least claim to represent) the millions of indigenous people who historically have been marginalized and disenfranchised by Spanish and *mestizo* elites.

A conventional first look at the region usually builds around a “Fire in the Andes” scenario. This is to say that it envisions the emergence of more indigenous guerrilla movements like *Sendero Luminoso* in Peru that attempt to undermine and eventually topple existing elite-dominated democracies from the outside. Increasingly, however, such scenarios seem less compelling than one that incorporates elements of populism. In a region where representative democratic institutions exist within weak or even failing states, it seems more likely that these democratic institutions themselves will serve as the path to power for populist-led indigenous peoples.<sup>77</sup>

Such a burst of indigenous populist turbulence in the Andean Region would be revolutionary and transformative rather than just politics as usual. It would be revolutionary and transformative because representative democratic institutions could be used not only as a populist path to political power, but also as a means of transforming the racial identity of countries themselves. Given centuries of repression, it is likely that indigenous populists would be under great pressure to “invert the racial pyramid” in ways that could drastically affect previously dominant groups. The result could easily be inter-racial civil wars, with serious implications for the U.S. and global peacemaking community. Imagine how the

strategic interests of the United States might be affected in a region where democratically elected indigenous populist leaders had the power and legitimacy to reorient foreign policy so as best to serve the perceived economic interests of their electoral constituency.<sup>78</sup> And further imagine what the implications might be if broader regional and even transregional alliances were forged between such populist leaders.<sup>79</sup> Under such conditions, U.S. policymakers eventually might have to deal with several new “failed states” resulting from efforts by previously-dominant elites to protect their interests through involvement in secessionist movements or movements to establish greater regional autonomy.<sup>80</sup>

If a scenario envisioning the impact of revolutionary and hence transformative populism increasingly is compelling for the Andes, what about the Southern Cone? Can we envision a situation in which we might see populist “Pyrotechnics on the Pampas?” While democratic governments in this group of South American countries are under tremendous pressure due to economic forces associated with globalization, the situation gradually is improving.<sup>81</sup> However, the institutions of democracy remain weak, and loyalties to traditional political parties are rapidly eroding. Is it conceivable that a burst of populist turbulence might occur in this region?

Picture a scenario in which populist leaders in several Southern Cone countries emerge from the ashes of failing representative democracies. Certainly, political developments in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay often have moved in tandem in the past, as was the case when military leaders with similar programs governed in all three following a series of coups during the 1970s.<sup>82</sup> The dire economic conditions associated with the “overhang” from the debt crisis in Argentina and Uruguay, together with accelerating political change there, suggest that these two countries might be fertile ground for populists.<sup>83</sup> And such populists could draw on deep currents of resentment among ordinary people. Many Argentines and Uruguayans believe that great injustice has been done to them by those foreign countries and global institutions that they view as controlling their national destiny.<sup>84</sup>

Furthermore, a scenario involving a more comprehensive burst of populist turbulence throughout Latin America and the Caribbean is certainly imaginable. Given the close personal relationship

that already exists between two “sitting populists” in Cuba and Venezuela (Castro and Chavez), such a development might occur if and when they found common ground to share with an emerging new generation of regional populist leaders. In this process, President Chavez would be the most likely intermediary between populist generations because his vision for the future of the Americas incorporates the broadest range of economic, cultural, and racial themes.

On the surface, a scenario built upon the premise of a future burst of populist turbulence in Europe would seem less compelling than one for South America. Over the past half-century, Western European politicians such as Robert Schuman have done a remarkable job of first imagining a unified Europe and then going about the much more difficult task of actually constructing one. The eventual result was creation of the EU, a community of 25 representative democracies that has managed to bridge what once seemed to be the insurmountable gap dividing Europeans politically during the Cold War.

However, as pointed out earlier, the great paradox of modern regional governance is that the tremendous success that Europeans have experienced in promoting democratization has sown the seeds for potential future problems. While Europe’s “democratic space” has been vastly expanded, the country-level democracies which inhabit that space have become progressively weaker. Both eroding representative democratic institutions in Western Europe and fragile new ones in Central and Eastern Europe are increasingly at risk of being overwhelmed by populist-led demands for protection of “the people” from the forces of change.

Picture a scenario in which a future burst of populist turbulence in Europe is grounded in a number of developments that are viewed by most observers as reflecting the region’s success rather than its failure to spread democracy and stimulate economic growth. Such developments include ongoing enlargement processes, efforts to ratify a new constitution, and others to increase the region’s level of competitiveness in the global economy.<sup>85</sup>

Take, for example, the political impact of enlargement. Most observers believe that the recent rapid expansion of the EU is a “net plus” with regard to consolidating regional democratic institutions. However, enlargement also is sowing the seeds of a populist reaction

to it. A high level of anxiety exists among many Europeans regarding where this seemingly inexorable drive for further expansion eventually will lead.<sup>86</sup> And the EU's recent agreement to launch accession talks with Turkey has raised levels of anxiety even further. The successful conclusion of these talks would result in the addition of a Muslim country to the EU whose population is about the size of Germany. Not only does this raise the specter of future job losses among Europe's people, but also of the possible future loss of the region's historically Christian identity.<sup>87</sup>

Imagine a scenario in which a number of charismatic populist politicians are able to bond with "the people" by tapping into the rich vein of fear, anxiety, uncertainty, and apprehension that has been created by the recent activities of that rapidly expanding "quasi-state" known as the EU. Picture a situation in which several more terrorist incidents like the 2004 Madrid train bombing and the assassination of Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh occur in rapid succession.<sup>88</sup> And then throw into this scenic "witches' brew" the possibility of continued economic stagnation in Europe. It is not hard to imagine how the intersection of such conditions and events could produce a burst of populist turbulence that would be region-wide.<sup>89</sup>

A burst of populist turbulence in Europe would have much more serious security implications for the United States than one in South America because the populists eventually coming to power could determine the policy direction of much stronger countries. Whereas in the Andean region, populism threatens to further undermine representative democracy in weak countries in ways that might eventually lead to their collapse, populism in Europe could conceivably strengthen country-level institutions. This was certainly the historical experience in Europe during its first encounter with populism during the 1920s and 1930s.

Picture then, if you will, a Europe where majority national groups in various countries look inward rather than "outward" to the EU for solutions to their problems. Populist politicians increasingly are likely to identify various internal and external groups who can be used to "put a human face" on the stresses and anxieties that afflict common people. Unfortunately, this human face would probably be that of "Old Europe's" population of immigrant workers (Turks,

Kurds, Arabs, Asians, Africans) and “New Europe’s” population of minority groups such as the Roma.<sup>90</sup> The responsibility for the problems that these groups are alleged to have created would be laid at the feet of elite politicians acting in consort with the incompetent bureaucrats of the EU.

Is this too stark a set of scenarios for the future of representative democracy in Europe and South America? Perhaps it is so. On the one hand, the United States faces a real dilemma in terms of squaring our support for existing representative democracies with the populist politicians and their new demands that such democracies often produce in overly stable or unstable settings. On the other, we have a real opportunity to influence such populist movements in ways that not only stabilize but also potentially improve the performance of the representative democracies of which they are a part.

But if there is one thing that the history of strategic planning teaches, it is that such hopes and aspirations for a better world should not be confused and conflated with the realities on which policy should be based.<sup>91</sup> In the case of contemporary Europe and South America, this underlying reality is one where “the people” increasingly are looking for charismatic saviors to emerge who can free popular will from the constraints imposed by representative democratic institutions.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Populism is a political phenomenon that has received little attention within the U.S. security community. The primary reason is because its dynamic, unstable, and ephemeral nature makes it particularly hard to “see” and to evaluate. Because populists by definition operate within the political context of representative democratic governments, they often take on the “coloration” and assume the legitimacy accruing to these governments. This makes them difficult to deal with when they adopt policies that are at odds with those of the United States.

Despite the difficulties of assessing the strategic implications of populism, it is important to do so for a number of reasons. Precisely because post-Cold War Europe and Latin America are now full of representative democracies, there is more potential for future bursts



of populist turbulence in both regions. Populist politicians have already altered the U.S. military's operating environment in Europe and Latin America and are likely to alter it much more dramatically. Were bursts of populist turbulence to occur on a large scale, they would have the potential of undermining the democratic core of representative democracies in two regions of the world that are vital to the protection of U.S. global security interests. And in some South American countries, it could even result in state failure.<sup>92</sup>

For the above-mentioned reasons, the potential rise of populism should not be viewed as posing just another specific type of security challenge (traditional, irregular, catastrophic, or disruptive) within the current matrix.<sup>93</sup> Rather, it should be viewed as posing a challenge to the underlying political "substructure" that gives us the collective capability and legitimacy to deal with all of these problems. In the final analysis, the ability of the United States to project power in order to deal with the whole spectrum of security problems is contingent upon our ability to deal with the potential challenge emerging from within representative democracy itself.

With these points in mind, U.S. policymakers should:

1. *Consider possible bursts of populist turbulence to be on a par with other major security challenges in terms of future planning.* This would suggest that strategic planners will need to educate themselves concerning the history and current nature of populism, particularly in their regional areas of responsibility. Policymakers should consider revising the U.S. *National Security Strategy* so as to reflect the importance of political systems and dynamics that cannot be classified as either fully democratic or totalitarian.

2. *Focus policy on containing populist movements **before** they come to power.* Populists by definition use direct forms of political action to gain power within representative democracies and are thus inclined to continue using such techniques once power has been achieved. Although it may not always be easy or diplomatically feasible to influence the trajectory of populist politicians, efforts should be made to do so. The ultimate goal of policy should be to aid our democratic allies in their efforts to "mainstream" populist politicians and their movements.

3. *Avoid forming alliances of convenience with populists.* In some cases, populist politicians in Europe and South America may support

U.S. short-term political or military goals in order to “gain traction” domestically and/or internationally. Given the importance that preserving the institutional integrity of representative democracy has with regard to the achievement of long-term U.S. security goals, strategic thinkers should resist the temptation to sacrifice these goals for any short-term gain.

4. *Configure U.S. military forces so that they are capable of dealing with the wide variety of challenges that individual populists or a larger burst of turbulence might present.* Depending on the country and region, such challenges could run the gamut from state failure to rapid changes in the identities and associated strategic interests of powerful and internally coherent states. Although determination of the precise nature of such configurations is the purview of military experts, the possibility of future bursts of populist turbulence would seem to call for preservation of the broadest range of combat capabilities.

## APPENDIX

### POPULIST BIOGRAPHIES

HUGO CHAVEZ was born in 1954 in Sabaneta, a small town in Venezuela's interior where the Andes meet the lowland plains. The son of middle-class schoolteachers, he attended Venezuela's military academy and graduated in 1975. Having risen to the rank of lieutenant colonel in the army, he participated in an unsuccessful coup against President Carlos Andres Perez in 1992 that resulted in a short jail term. After his release from prison in 1994, he successfully built a political movement which led to his election to the presidency in 1998. Since that time, the country has been in a state of perpetual turmoil as Chavez has moved to consolidate his hold on power and his political opponents have sought to oust him through an attempted coup and subsequent referendum.

W. S. P. (PIM) FORTUYN was born in the Netherlands in 1948 into a Catholic family. He became a professor of sociology, teaching first at the University of Groningen in the north, and later at Erasmus University in Rotterdam. During the 1990s, he gained a reputation as an outspoken advocate for gay rights, particularly after the publication of his book, *Babyboomers*, in 1998. Dr. Pim became involved in politics in 2001, joining one of Europe's new parties that challenged the establishment on issues such as immigration. His meteoric political ascent ended in May 2002 when he was assassinated by an animal rights activist just before Dutch parliamentary elections.

EVO MORALES was born in 1959 in the Bolivian province of Oruro. His parents were traditional Aymara peasant farmers, who were trying to raise seven children in the extremely harsh conditions prevailing throughout much of the Andes. Forced to move from his home province because of family problems and economic circumstance, he sought land for himself elsewhere. Finally, he settled in Chapare, where he got involved in the union movement which pitted coca-growing peasants against a succession of Bolivian governments that supported U.S. policy in the War on Drugs. As

a representative of this part of the peasant class, he ran for the presidency in 2002 against Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, the architect of Bolivia's neo-liberal economic reforms. Although he lost that election, he has remained an important player in Bolivian politics.

YULIA TYMOSHENKO was born in 1963 in rural Ukraine when it was still part of the Soviet Union. Raised by her single mother, she married and had a child while in her teens. Following Ukraine's independence, she was able to parlay opportunities presented to her through personal contacts into a financial empire in the energy sector. After serving as deputy prime minister of the country, she was accused by her political enemies of illicit enrichment and thrown in jail. Considered a martyr by her adoring fans, she emerged from jail politically stronger. This so-called "Goddess of the Orange Revolution" has played an important role as a close ally of Victor Yushchenko in his recently successful bid to become President.

## ENDNOTES

1. "Slain Populist Voted Greatest Dutchman," *Deutsche Welle*," [http://www.dw-world.de/dwelle/cda/detail/dwelle.cda.detail.artikel\\_drucken/0,3820,1433](http://www.dw-world.de/dwelle/cda/detail/dwelle.cda.detail.artikel_drucken/0,3820,1433).

2. "People wake up to their strength in the streets of Kiev," *Financial Times*, December 2, 2004. Tymoshenko was subsequently named Prime Minister by newly-elected President Yushchenko.

3. As of this writing, Mesa is barely hanging on to the presidency. Under chaotic political conditions brought about by protests led by MAS that paralyzed several major cities including La Paz, he offered to resign in early March 2005. His resignation was rejected by the Bolivian Congress in the hopes of preventing further political turmoil.

4. William Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, Act 1, Scene 3.

5. These direct action techniques include things such as setting up road blocks, occupying government buildings, and holding violent mass street demonstrations.

6. The use of plebiscites or referendums has been a favorite tool of populists since the French Revolution. Political institutions are bypassed through the use of a direct vote for the acceptance or rejection of a particular proposal. Plebiscites are widely used in Latin America and are growing in popularity in Europe. The new European Constitutional Treaty that is being debated today includes provision for more direct democracy through the holding of a plebiscite on constitutional matters if deemed necessary by one million citizens. The existing mechanisms for the exercise of direct democracy through the use of plebiscites in various Latin American countries are described in a recent report by the United Nations Development Program, *La democracia en America Latina: Hacia una democracia de ciudadanas y ciudadanos*, 2004, pp. 97-98. On the growing use of referendums in Europe, see Bruno Kaufmann and M. Dane Waters, eds., *Direct Democracy in Europe: A Comprehensive Reference Guide to the Initiative and Referendum Process in Europe*, Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2004.

7. My formal definition of populism is "the theatrical presentation of ideas and/or use of direct action techniques by a political leader of any ideological persuasion in order to bypass traditional representative democratic institutions and to connect directly with his or her people." This definition is in general conformity with scholars such as Kurt Weyland and Herbert Kitschelt who argue that populism is really more about charisma, leadership style, and tactics than it is about the politics of Left or Right. Kurt Weyland, "Clarifying a Contested Concept: Populism in the Study of Latin American Politics," *Comparative Politics*, October 2001, p.1; and Herbert Kitcheldt, *The Radical Right in Western Europe*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1995, p. 160. Some additional sources on populism include Michael Conniff, ed., *Populism in Latin America*; Jack Heyward, ed., *Elitism, Populism and European Politics*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996; and Yves Meny and Yves Surel, eds., *Democracies and the Populist Challenge*, New York: Palgrave, 2003.

8. The Netherlands can properly be described as “haunted” by the ghost of Pim Fortuyn because his anti-Islamic message continues to resonate deeply in local politics. The political situation became even more explosive after the November 2004 assassination of filmmaker Theo Van Gogh by a Dutch-born alleged Islamic militant. Van Gogh had appeared on several death lists because of his participation in producing a short film called “Submission” that carried an anti-Islamic message. As a consequence of their perceived anti-Islamic stance, a number of other well-known Dutch politicians have received death threats, been forced to temporarily live abroad, and hired bodyguards to protect them in their own country. Among those currently living under such conditions are several members of Parliament and Amsterdam Mayor Job Cohen. Keith B. Richburg, “In Netherlands, Anti-Islamic Polemic Comes With a Price,” *Washington Post*, February 1, 2005. For an account of how Van Gogh’s assassination raised concern about the threat from indigenous radical Islamists not only in the Netherlands but also throughout Europe, see Arthur Waldron, “Europe’s Crisis” *Commentary*, February 2005, p. 49.

9. On the rising tension between the United States and Russia, see “Echoes of the Cold War as Bush and Putin Differ over Ukraine Polls,” *Financial Times*, December 6, 2004; and “Powell points up differences with Russia,” *Financial Times*, December 9, 2004.

10. For purposes of this analysis, the countries of “Old Europe” are considered to be the 15 member states of the EU before it was expanded to 25 in June 2004. These states are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. “New Europe” consists of Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. The Southern Cone of Latin America consists of Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay; and the Andean region of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru. It should be noted that there is no fully satisfactory and universally accepted view concerning the exact territorial boundaries of any of these regions.

11. “When the Party’s Over,” *Financial Times*, September 26, 2004; and James Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism are Reshaping the World*, New York: Random House, 1996.

12. Throughout this monograph, I will rely heavily on the *Eurobarometer* polls regularly conducted by the EU and the more recent *Latinobarometro* polls for Latin America for documentation of such trends.

13. Robert Gilpin, *The Challenge of Global Capitalism: The World Economy in the 21st Century*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000, pp. 296-297.

14. Globalization can also serve as a convenient scapegoat for national leaders who are not willing to recognize its existence and to take advantage of the opportunities it presents. Nevertheless, it is a process that, under the best of circumstances, brings with it economic and social dislocation that creates political openings for populists.

15. Professor Franz Lehner is quoted to this effect as follows: "The Europeans, and in particular the Germans, have considered globalization to be a big threat, and they have discussed it in a very pessimistic mood. It is seen as a huge competitiveness problem." Chris Ansell, Vanna Gonzales, and Conor O'Dwyer, "The Variable Geometry of European Regional Economic Development," in Steven Weber, ed., *Globalization and the European Political Economy*, New York: Colombia University Press, 2001, p. 76.

16. European Commission, *Eurobarometer EB61- CC-EB 2004.1*, p. 3.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

18. Jeffrey Stark, ed., *The Challenge of Change in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Coral Gables: North-South Center Press, University of Miami, 2001, pp. 6-7.

19. "Institutional Vulnerability in Latin America," Special Report-November 2004, p. 21, *LatinNews.com*.

20. "Informe-Resumen Latinobarometro 2004," *Latinobarometro*, August 13, 2004, p. 37.

21. *Latinobarometro* has been in existence as a polling organization for a decade. The original polls surveyed people in the largest countries in the region—Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. By 2004, the only Spanish-speaking countries where polls were not conducted were Cuba and the Dominican Republic. *Ibid.*, pp. 3, 38.

22. European Commission, *Eurobarometer 61*, Spring 2004, p. 5.

23. European Commission, *Eurobarometer EB 61 – CC-EB 2004.1*, p. 5.

24. *Institutional Vulnerability in Latin America*, p. 11.

25. The Italian scholar Giovanni Sartori has drawn attention to the relationship between various types of party systems and representative democracy. He has discussed at length the differences between the moderate multiparty systems on which democracy historically has been based in continental Europe and the extreme multiparty systems often established in interwar Eastern Europe and parts of Latin America. Moderate multiparty systems are characterized by a relatively small number of parties, usually less than five, few major ideological differences between them, and bipolar coalitional arrangements. In extreme multiparty systems, large numbers of parties compete in an ideologically-charged political environment in which some parties explicitly or implicitly reject the rules of the democratic game itself. Sartori refers to these as "anti-system parties." Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*, Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1976, Vol. 1, Chapters 5 and 6.

26. First Search – Books in Print.

27. Those who closely follow developments in Latin America, and particularly the Andean region, have noted a growing undercurrent of populist sentiment there. See, for example, Michael Shifter and Vinay Jawahar, "No Left Turn: Latin American Populist Politics," *Current History*, Vol. 104, No. 679, February

2005; Michael Shifter, "Breakdown in the Andes," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 83, No. 5, September/October 2004; and Peter Hakim, "U.S.-Latin American Relations Post-9/11," *Great Decisions*, 2004, [www.greatdecisions.org](http://www.greatdecisions.org). The outgoing and incoming commanders of the U.S. Southern Command (Generals James T. Hill and Bantz J. Craddock) also have discussed the populist phenomenon in Latin America in committee hearings. "Testimony of General James T. Hill" before the House Armed Services Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, March 24, 2004. And its potential emergence as a response to globalization is noted in the U.S. National Intelligence Council's *Mapping the Global Future: Report of the National Intelligence Council's 2020 Project*. However, in spite of this increasing attention within the foreign policy and security community to the phenomenon of populism, it is important to note that it focuses exclusively on Latin America.

28. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, September 2002. This lack of attention to populism in the *National Security Strategy* is also found in the Key Strategic Issues List (KSIL) of the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College. There is no mention of any type of political system (democratic, populist, authoritarian) as a factor to be studied as part of the U.S. Army's strategic environment. *U.S. Army War College Key Strategic Issues List*, Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, August 2004.

29. Our own historical experience suggests that bursts of populist turbulence can be contained by the strong institutions of representative democracy and at the same time perform a useful function. This shadowy "cousin" of representative democracy can be rendered useful by drawing attention to problems that might otherwise be ignored by the powers that be. For example, Michael Kazin writes: "At the core of the populist tradition is an insight of great democratic and moral significance. . . . No major problem can be seriously addressed, much less nudged on the path to solution, unless . . . Americans of all races who work for a living, knit neighborhoods together, and cherish what the nation is supposed to stand for . . . participate in the task." *The Populist Persuasion: An American History*, New York: BasicBooks, 1995, pp. 283-284. It should be added that the view that American populism is generally benign is not universally held. See, for example, Anatol Lieven, *America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004; and John Lukacs, *Democracy and Populism: Fear and Hatred*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.

30. The fact that this latest "mini-burst" of populism occurred in Latin America only served to confirm the rather dubious assumption that populism is largely a regional phenomenon associated with the weaknesses and peculiarities of representative democracies in this particular part of the world. It is an assumption that is not only dubious but dangerous.

31. Several recent accounts of the Cuban Missile Crisis are Max Frankel, *High Noon in the Cold War: Kennedy, Krushchev, and the Cuban Missile Crisis*, New York: Ballantine 2004; and Sheldon M. Stern, *Averting 'The Final Failure': John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003.



32. For a short description of these threats as described in the Pentagon's 2006 *Strategic Planning Guidance*, see Jason Sherman, "Facing a New Reality: Nontraditional Threats Change Pentagon's Weapons Priorities," *Armed Forces Journal*, December 2004.

33. Only the main reasons for paying more attention to populism are discussed here. There are others such as the fact that an outbreak of populism is often the precursor to a military coup or long period of military rule. For example, this was the case in Argentina where a period of populist governance under Juan Peron was followed by military rule from 1966 until 1977.

34. Gordon Martel describes this mood among strategic planners as follows:

Anglo-American officials and propagandists had created a dream world during the course of The First World War, a castle in the air that was most alluring because it was constructed from materials of their own design, brought together from their own experience, and cemented by their most deep-seated beliefs about themselves, the nature of progress, and the meaning of civilization.

Gordon Martel, "Military Planning and the Origins of the Second World War," in B. J. C. McKercher and Roch Legault, *Military Planning and the Origins of the Second World War*, Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2001, p. 15.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 148-152.

36. Democratic institutional stability is still highly problematic in Ukraine. Existing patterns of dynamics in this regard are discussed in Konstantinos J. Papadoulis, "Institutional Relationships in Ukraine: a stable polity?" *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 37, 2004.

37. At the time of this writing, Ukraine has the fourth largest contingent of troops supporting U.S. operations in Iraq. However, they are to all be removed by the end of 2005. Aleksandar Vasovic, "Ukraine votes to pull its troops from Iraq," Associated Press, December 4, 2004.

38. Chavez has proposed that a South American oil and gas company called Petroamerica be created that would be based on Bolivarian solidarity and serve as a counterweight to the influence of U.S.-based energy companies in the region. The creation of such a "petro-alliance," either formally or informally, would add a populist dimension to the political economy of the energy sector. "Venezuela Pushes to Lead Regional Oil Economy," *The New York Times*, August 13, 2004.

39. Currently, Venezuela is fourth in terms of the amount of its total energy exports to the U.S. market. Given the high level of uncertainty about supplies coming from other regions such as the Middle East and Africa as well as its geographical proximity to the United States, it has assumed increasing importance with regard to calculations about the overall energy picture. "U.S. Senator Worried About Cutoff of Venezuelan Oil," *The Washington Post*, January 13, 2005.

40. It bears mentioning that this core of representative democracies in Europe and the Americas is considerably larger today than it was during the Cold War

years. Indeed, during the 1970s, such a democratic core did not exist in Latin America. However, this very fact makes the point that a democratic core of representative democracies is critical to the legitimate projection of military power beyond the respective regions (Europe and the Americas) where these core democracies exist.

41. Albert R. Coll, Professor of Strategy and Policy at the U.S. Naval War College, has written on the importance of nuclear issues in U.S.-Latin American relations. "United States Strategic Interests in Latin America: An Assessment," *Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs*, Vol. 39, No.1, Spring 1997, p. 4.

42. As of this writing, the IAEA has negotiated a tentative agreement with Brazilian officials that will allow for the limited enrichment of uranium at a facility in Resende. In this particular case of initial resistance to the IAEA verification regime, Brazil argued that it had the right to protect a centrifuge technology that was much more fuel efficient than other currently available methods. "Brazil in Deal with Nuclear Watchdog," *Financial Times*, November 24, 2004.

43. For example, during the Gulf War of 1990-91, 12 of the then-existing 16 NATO countries participated in the coalition that liberated Kuwait. The representative democracies of Europe also served as a territorial base from which the United States projected its military power into the Middle East. A full third of all U.S. European Command (EUCOM) forces moved from Europe into the Middle Eastern region during the War. David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security*, Washington, DC: United States Institute for Peace, 1998, p. 61.

44. This is not to say that Venezuela's representative democracy was perfect. It experienced many of the problems that are associated with elite settlements that lead to rigid and exclusive power sharing arrangements between favored political parties.

45. See *Peacekeeping: the Benefits and Risks for Latin America*, Latin American Special Report, Latin American Newsletter, September 2004, p. 9. As of 2004, Venezuela had no personnel committed to UN peacekeeping operations, either in the form of observers, military personnel, or police. P. 2.

46. Haiti was already an environmentally degraded country when it was subject to increasing pressures brought on by a continuing leadership crisis and two major floods. At present, former President Aristede is living in exile in South Africa. In the meantime, UN personnel are attempting to deal with the urban chaos that has been unleashed by Aristede's supporters in the slums of Port-au-Prince. There, they have launched "Operation Baghdad" and a number of policemen were beheaded. "Crisis-hit Haiti cracks down on political gangs," *Financial Times*, October 7, 2004.

47. Argentina and Brazil are particularly important to the stabilization effort, playing a role far broader than simply supplying troops. Argentina has used its position on the UN Security Council to encourage national reconciliation in Haiti. And Brazil has played a positive role in encouraging military disarmament

through a UN-sponsored weapons "buyback" program. "Argentina and Brazil guide pressure on Latortue," *Latin American Weekly Report*, January 18, 2005. On the other hand, the United States has been able to reduce its own troop presence to a minimal level. As the lead country of the UN-authorized Multinational Interim Force that entered Haiti in the wake of President Aristide's February 2004 departure, the United States made an initial contribution of 2,000 troops. Daniel P. Erikson, "Haiti after Aristide: Still on the Brink," *Current History*, Vol. 104, No. 679, February 2005, pp. 88-89.

48. We should recall how frequently U.S. troops historically have been used in the Caribbean. Following the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the subsequent establishment of bases in Cuba and Puerto Rico, U.S. naval forces and Marines were regularly dispatched to settle local disputes. In the Haitian case, cycles of conflict and local unrest led to a long period of U.S. occupation that lasted from 1915 until 1934. For an excellent account of the historical relationship between the United States and Latin American countries, see Lars Schoultz, *Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy toward Latin America*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998.

49. The number of military and police personnel that Latin America's democracies made available for such missions increased six-fold between 2000 and 2004. To a considerable extent, this was the result of efforts by the region's democratic leaders and U.S. experts such as Professor Jack Child of American University to engage the militaries of regional "middle powers" in the global collective security and humanitarian enterprise. "Peacekeeping: The benefits and risks for Latin America," *Latin American Special Report*, September 2004, pp. 2, 11.

50. This is a point that Latin Americanist Russell Crandall makes extremely well. He has called it the "democratic paradox." "Latin America's Populist Temptation," *In the National Interest*, February 4, 2004.

51. The very existence of some stable representative democracies that lie between the two extremes remains something of a mystery to be explained. Normally, such countries have a relatively small number of political parties that regularly command the lion's share of citizens' allegiances and that are not polarized by extremist ideologies. Constitutions tend to be amended infrequently, are rarely replaced, but remain flexible enough to change with the times. In addition, these polities may benefit from federal structures that provide additional flexibility in the form of local institutions more responsive to local needs.

52. The elite settlement which resulted in the establishment of an overly stable democracy in Venezuela during the late 1950s has been studied extensively. See, for example John H. Peeler, "Elite settlements and democratic consolidation: Colombia, Costa Rica, and Venezuela," in John Higley and Richard Gunther, eds., *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992; and Jennifer McCoy, "Chavez and the end of Partyarchy in Venezuela," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 1999. As for Austria, an overly stable democracy resulted from the demands of the victorious

allies following WWII for strict neutrality and the end to previously destabilizing domestic bickering between the country's political elites. The result of these allied demands was the creation of a Grand Coalition based on the overwhelming voting strength of two political parties. The Austrian People's Party (OeVP) represented conservative rural groups and the Social Democratic Party of Austria (SPOe) urban workers, particularly in Vienna. Frederick C. Engelmann, "The Austrian Party System: Continuity and Change," in Steven B. Wolinetz, ed., *Parties and Party Systems in Liberal Democracies*, London: Routledge, 1988.

53. A discussion of the general nature of consociational democracies can be found in Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977.

54. We can thus only approximately estimate the extent of stable democracy in the world today. A good starting point is the list of countries that Samuel Huntington includes in his "first wave" of 19th century democracy: Australia, Canada, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, Chile, Austria, Belgium, Colombia, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Argentina, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Uruguay, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. However, this monograph suggests that even this core of stable representative democracies may be defined too broadly. Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991, pp. 14-15.

55. While I realize that the terms "Old Europe" and "New Europe" carry a certain amount of "political baggage," within the global policy community, they provide a convenient shorthand way of making these regional distinctions.

56. Drawn by a skilled workforce and low-cost labor, a number of the world's major automobile companies have established a base in Slovakia. They include Volkswagen, Peugeot-Citroen, and Kia. Within the next few years, Slovakia will probably become the largest producer of automobiles on a per capita basis of any country in the world. Robert Anderson, "Success from Nowhere at All," *Financial Times*, May 26, 2004. In the meantime, General Motors is closing its plant for producing Opels in Frankfurt, Germany, with the elimination of some 12,000 jobs. Hugh Williams and Richard Milne, "German workers feel chill of General Motors job cuts," *Financial Times*, December 11-12, 2004.

57. The list of so-called "right-wing populists," who are often rather colorless politicians mislabeled by their left-wing adversaries, includes Filip Dewinter of Vlaams Belang (VB) in Belgium, Christoph Blocher of the Swiss People's Party (SVP) in Switzerland, and Edmund Stoiber of the Christian Social Union (CSU) in Germany.

58. As a general rule, populists in "Old Europe" rely less on direct physical action and more on direct rhetorical action to connect with "the people." More specifically, the overly stable representative democratic institutions in these countries place a premium on the ability of populists to use the media (particularly television) to reach their constituents. Pim Fortuyn provides an excellent example in this regard.

59. Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic (the largest of the “New Europe” countries to recently join the EU) ran fiscal deficits of 6 percent GDP during the first years of the new millennium. And unemployment there remains stubbornly high. Martin Wolf, “Coming Together,” *The Financial Times*, April 26, 2004.

60. Given such attitudes, many citizens of “New Europe” are skeptical about the additional economic impact that membership in the enlarged EU will have on their well-being. Only 47 percent believe that such membership is a “good thing.” *Eurobarometer, EB61-CC-EB 2004.1 May 2004*, p. 4.

61. Cas Mudde, “Populism in Eastern Europe,” *RFE*, Vol. 2, No. 5, March 8, 2000.

62. The rise of populist politicians in Argentina during the first half of the 20th century is discussed by Joel Horowitz, “Populism and Its Legacies in Argentina,” in Conniff, ed., *Populism in Latin America*.

63. For an overview of Southern Cone populism and the rise of Latin American populism in general, see Conniff’s “Introduction” to *Populism in Latin America, ibid.*

64. The best account of the nature of these military regimes remains Guillermo A. O’Donnell’s *Modernization and Bureaucratic Authoritarianism*, Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1979.

65. See “Kirchner Sets New Record for Bypassing Argentina’s Congress,” *Latin American Weekly Report*, June 29, 2004; and “Argentina: Political Representation Explodes into Small Fragments,” *Latin American Weekly Report*, September 28, 2004.

66. Among countries in the Andean region, Colombia is the exception that proves the rule. Historically, two strong political parties limited the influence of populist politicians. The only major populist figure to emerge in Colombian politics was Jorge Eliecer Gaitan who was assassinated in 1948.

67. The experiences of Andean countries with attempts to incorporate indigenous peoples into political life are similar in some ways and different in others. Some countries, such as Colombia and Venezuela, have proceeded further with regard to incorporating provisions into their constitutions that recognize indigenous rights. Other countries, that have not made as much progress with regard to granting much formal protection to indigenous groups, have progressed further when it comes to incorporating indigenous cultural groups into the larger national identity. This, for example, is the case in Bolivia which underwent a process of radical cultural change as the result of a social revolution in the 1950s. For a good discussion of these similarities and differences between Andean countries, see “Introduction,” Jo-Marie Burt and Philip Mauzeri, eds., *Politics and Identity in the Andes: Identity, Conflict and Reform*, Pittsburgh: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004.

68. A good source of information on the historical experience with populism in the Andean region is the various chapters by Steve Stein (Peru), Steve Ellner

(Venezuela), and Ximena Sosa-Bucholz (Ecuador) in Conniff, ed., *Populism in Latin America*.

69. John Peeler provides a good description of the interaction between the forces of globalization and those associated with political change in Andean countries today. "Political Mobilization, Elections and Democratic Instability in the Andes," *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Vol. XI, No. 1, Summer/Fall, 2004.

70. Russell Crandall, "Latin America's Populist Tradition," *In the National Interest*, February 4, 2004.

71. The perception that the Andean region is in crisis is shared widely within the U.S. policy community. Good discussions of the nature of this crisis can be found in Peter Hakim, "U.S.-Latin American relations post-9/11," *Great Decisions*, 2004, [www.greatdecisions.org](http://www.greatdecisions.org), p. 27; and Michael Shifter, "Breakdown in the Andes," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 83, No. 5, September/October, 2004.

72. Given the widespread resistance by various domestic groups to the privatization of what are perceived as public goods and services, and to the foreign exploitation of natural resources, one can begin to talk about the emergence of "patrimonial populism" in many South American countries. Patrimonial populist movements are those that seek to preserve what is viewed as the national patrimony (e.g., water, minerals, hydrocarbons) from exploitation by foreign multinational corporations. Juan Forero, "Latin America Fails to Deliver on Basic Needs," *New York Times*, February 22, 2005.

73. "Peru: New Year brings unexpected uprising," *Latin American Weekly Report*, January 4, 2005.

74. There are numerous books in English and Spanish on Hugo Chavez. Different points of view on the so-called "Chavez Phenomenon" can be found in Steve Ellner and Daniel Hellinger, eds., *Venezuelan Politics in the Chavez Era: Class, Polarization, and Conflict*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2003; and Richard Gott, *In the Shadow of the Liberator: Hugo Chavez and the Transformation of Venezuela*, London: Verso, 2000. On the broader issue of the evolving pattern of interaction between the United States and Venezuela, see Janet Kelly and Carlos Romero, *The United States and Venezuela: Rethinking a Relationship*, New York: Routledge, 2002.

75. The case of Venezuela is also important because Chavez's appeal reaches far beyond Latin America itself. Particularly for the Left worldwide, he is viewed as the author of a new type of democracy that by virtue of its populist base and policies can authentically challenge what are perceived to be pseudo-democratic and elitist governments in capitalist countries such as the United States. This is a particularly dangerous trend because it suggests that the content of government policy rather than the presence or absence of democratic institutions is the best gauge for measuring democratic progress. On Chavez's global appeal, see Juan Pablo Lupi and Leonardo Vivas, "(Mis)Understanding Chavez and Venezuela in Times of Revolution," *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, Vol. 29, No. 1, Winter 2005, p. 84.

76. For a brief introduction to the use of scenarios as a tool for strategic planning, see Peter Schwartz, *Inevitable Surprises: Thinking Ahead in a Time of Turbulence*, Gotham Books, 2003.

77. For purposes of strategic planning, guerrilla wars are much easier to deal with than bursts of populist turbulence. There are several reasons why this is the case. First, while guerrilla wars are relatively stable and long-lasting, populism is neither. Compare, for example, the ongoing guerrilla war in Colombia with the currently unstable populist political situation in neighboring Venezuela. Second, since populist politicians arise from within representative democracies, they can avail themselves of the power and legitimacy of the democratic states with which they are associated in a way that insurgent groups cannot. On the nature and durability of modern guerrilla wars, see Steven Metz and Raymond Millen, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the 21st Century: Reconceptualizing Threat and Response*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2004, pp. 1-15.

78. U.S. interests might be most dramatically affected with regard to future energy security. At the same time that access to supplies of crude oil and natural gas from the Middle East is becoming more problematical, the Andes are increasing in importance. Venezuela has substantial proven oil reserves, Ecuador is a potential South American "Angola" in this regard, and both Peru and Bolivia sit atop huge potential reserves of natural gas. See Thomas F. McLarty III and Richard Klein, "A Latin American Opportunity in World Energy Woes," *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, Vol. 29, No. 1, Winter 2005, pp. 75-80.

79. In a recent editorial in the *Financial Times*, Argentine scholar Juan Gabriel Tokatlian discusses the rapidly deteriorating political situation in Andean countries. However, he believes that there is little possibility that any sort of transregional political alliance could emerge among the leaders of what he sees as a group of failing states. Also, he believes that other regional states such as Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina could serve as a democratic political "platform" for the collective projection of military power into this troubled region. "Only Joint Action can Counter Andean Tensions," *Financial Times*, January 6, 2005.

80. The Andean country where state failure is most likely to occur is Bolivia. The dynamic southeastern city of Santa Fe is the country's Kirkuk, demanding local autonomy or outright independence so as to be able to better exploit the region's energy resources. As a response to their sense of abandonment by the free-market-oriented *Crucenos* and their own growing sense of national identity, highland indigenous leaders have advocated the restoration of the Inca Empire, including portions of Bolivia and Peru. "Santa Cruz Delivers Ultimatum on Autonomy," *Latin American Regional Report*, November 2, 2004; "Rebellious Santa Cruz to Declare Autonomy," *Latin American Weekly Report*, January 25, 2005; and "Mesa Tries to Wrest Leadership of Regional Autonomy Drive from Rebel Santa Cruz," *Latin American Weekly Report*, February 1, 2005.

81. The UN Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC) estimates 2005 GDP growth in Argentina as 5 percent; Brazil, 4 percent; Chile, 6 percent; and

Uruguay, 6 percent. Except for Argentina, these estimated growth rates are much better than they were several years earlier. *CEPAL News*, Vol. XXV, No. 1, January 2005, p. 2.

82. Both the Chilean and Uruguayan militaries seized power in 1973, and military governments were in place from 1973-89 and 1973-84, respectively. There was a military regime in Argentina from 1976 until 1983. Brian Loveman, *Por la Patria: Politics and the Armed Forces in Latin America*, Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1999, p. 168.

83. Currently, the political situation in Argentina and Uruguay is ambiguous in this regard. Certainly, the horrible economic conditions and fragility of democratic institutions (particularly in Argentina) provide fertile ground for populism. But true charismatic populist politicians are not a feature of the contemporary political scene. Neither President Nestor Kirchner of Argentina nor President Tabare Vasquez of Uruguay falls in this category. Indeed, Uruguay would appear to be one of the great "success stories" so far with regard to making the transition from an elite-dominated two-party representational democracy to a more open but still democratic configuration that is not dominated by a charismatic populist who came to power through use of direct action techniques. For this reason, the Uruguayan case deserves more careful study for its policy implications.

84. Satisfaction with their market economies and the global institutions associated with their function is only 16 percent in Argentina and 18 percent in Uruguay. It is considerably higher in Chile where the economy has been doing better in recent years. *Informe-Resumen*, August 13, 2004, p. 38.

85. Member states of the EU agreed to move ahead with the process of ratification in June 2004. Although the constitution is really a new iteration of the Treaty of Rome, it has raised popular fears concerning the further loss of sovereignty vis-à-vis the EU and the further expansion of the powers of what is perceived to be a distant, unresponsive, and corrupt bureaucracy. And efforts by leaders of the EU to create a new knowledge-based economy of world class quality by the year 2010 have failed not only to produce results, but have raised the level of anxiety about the future among union members in the industrial sector. Europe's economic mood is discussed by Tobias Buck and Daniel Dombey, "Missed Targets: Why Has the EU Failed in Its Efforts to Match the Economic Strides of the US?" *Financial Times*, March 25, 2004.

86. For a summary of current attitudes toward enlargement, see *Eurobarometer EB61-CC-EB 2004.1*, May 2004, pp. 2-5. At the time of this writing, people in the newly admitted member states were more skeptical about the future of the EU than were their West European counterparts. However, levels of skepticism and distrust were also very high in certain West European countries that have shown themselves to be particularly susceptible to the appeal of populists, e.g., Austria and the Netherlands.

87. For an excellent discussion of the Islamic presence in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, see Robert J. Pauly, Jr., *Islam in Europe: Integration or Marginalization?* Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004.



88. For example, as part of a broad strategy aimed at shaping the perception of the value of representative democracy in the Middle East, al-Qaeda might increase its terrorist attacks in Europe. Its calculation might be that European leaders would then be forced to respond to these attacks through the adoption of repressive measures that would “unmask” democracy and reveal its “true” nature to Islamic peoples.

89. In this author’s personal estimation, one of the most likely “triggers” for a burst of populist turbulence in Europe would be the assassination of a prominent regional politician by an indigenous radical Islamist individual or terrorist group. For example, several members of the Dutch Parliament (Ms. Hirsi Ali and Mr. Geert Wilders) regularly receive death threats and have been forced to live under official protection in secure locations such as military bases and prisons. Anti-Islamic rioting might take place in the Netherlands if either were killed that could spread throughout Europe and lead to the rapid emergence of new populist leaders. Marlise Simons, “Dutch Deputies on the Run, From Jihad Death Threats,” *New York Times*, March 4, 2005.

90. With regard to the current political situation today in the “New Europe,” Slovakia is a particularly important case. Although there are large minority populations of Roma and Hungarians, it is a democratic “success story” because populist politicians such as Vladimir Meciar and Roberto Fico largely have been contained. As with the case of Uruguay in South America, it can provide some important clues as to the policies that might work best for the long-term strategic containment of populism.

91. Were it not for politicians who have the vision to imagine a better democratic future, we would be doomed to live in a world dominated by authoritarian values and political regimes. And were it not for security strategists and soldiers, we would be doomed to live in one where the mismatch between visions and political reality created unimagined and hence dangerous national vulnerabilities.

92. Stanford University’s Stephen Krasner has recently suggested that some new approaches are needed by policy planners to deal with the global security problems created by collapsed or failing states. More specifically, he has suggested the possible sharing of sovereignty by states and multilateral institutions, as well as the possible introduction of new forms of trusteeship. Given the history of involvement by the Great Powers in Latin American affairs, it seems highly doubtful that such proposals would be well-received by regional leaders, should one or more South American states fail in the future. Stephen D. Krasner, “Sharing Sovereignty: New Institutions for Collapsed and Failing States,” *International Security*, Vol. 29, No. 2, Fall 2004, pp. 108-118.

93. These challenges are laid out in DoD’s present *Defense Planning Guidance*, as described in “Facing a New Reality: Nontraditional Threats Change Pentagon’s Weapons Priorities,” *Armed Forces Journal*, December 2004.