

# WAR WITHOUT END

AMERICAN  
PLANNING  
FOR THE NEXT  
VIETNAM

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FOREWORD BY GABRIEL KOLLA

countries. For instance, General Porter, in his 1967 testimony to the House Foreign Affairs Committee, complained that "Reference to the Latin American military still conjures up images of pompous, bemedaled men—'caudillos' with little interest in or understanding of their peoples' problems and aspirations." Porter then quoted David Rockefeller to the effect that "this false concept does a disservice to many members of the armed forces in Latin America. The current generation of military leaders includes men of considerable sophistication in economic and social matters, and a sincere desire to improve the lot of the poor and quicken the pace of economic growth."<sup>53</sup>

The U.S. public-relations effort on behalf of the Latin American armed forces has been particularly well received in those nations ruled by military juntas. Many of the military officers who have seized state power in recent years are particularly enthusiastic supporters of the civic action program (the late René Barrientos of Bolivia is an outstanding example). Barber and Ronning discovered that in countries where the military traditionally plays a decisive political role, "The experienced observer of Latin America can detect in the speeches of its leaders and the publications issued by its defense departments the ideas and arguments advanced by United States spokesmen for civic action. The same ideology and the same phrases are utilized."<sup>54</sup> Thus the National Defense Minister of Colombia, General Alberto Ruiz Novoa, told an audience of Latin American military officers in 1963:

Besides accomplishing an effective program of assistance to the people, military civic action gains the support of the populace for the legitimate and rightful regime and for its armed forces. It also helps to prove the usefulness of the army and to counter the attacks of those who see in military expenditures only a useless drain of public funds.<sup>55</sup>

Many Latin American armies have launched well-publicized civic action programs in the interior of their country; but despite lavish subsidies provided by the United States, these programs do not seem to have had any significant effect on the miserable conditions in which most people of these regions live. In practice, many of the civic action projects backed by the United States are oriented more toward facilitating military operations in rural areas than to the improvement of social and economic conditions. The construction of roads and highways, for instance, is one of the most common forms of civic action activity. Ostensibly, such work is designed to improve integration of the countryside with the cities by extending government services to remote villages while allowing peasants to sell their products to a wider market. In reality, many road-building projects are intended to expedite government surveillance of potentially rebellious areas, and to enhance the mobility of military and paramilitary forces during actual outbreaks of guerrilla warfare.

### TRAINING

Other than the supply of arms and equipment, the most important function of the U.S. military apparatus in Latin America is to provide training to indigenous military personnel. In fiscal 1971, \$10 million or 62 percent of the MAP grant aid program was devoted to this purpose.<sup>56</sup> Training also constitutes the principal day-to-day activity of officers assigned to the seventeen U.S. military missions in Latin America. The high priority given to training activities was underscored by Defense Secretary McNamara in a 1962 appearance before the House Appropriations Committee:

Probably the greatest return on our military assistance investment comes from the training of selected officers and key

specialists at our military schools and training centers in the United States and overseas. These students are handpicked by their countries to become instructors when they return home. They are the coming leaders, the men who will have the know-how and impart it to their forces. I need not dwell upon the value of having in positions of leadership men who have firsthand knowledge of how Americans do things and how they think. *It is beyond price to us to make such friends of such men.*"<sup>57</sup> (Emphasis added.)

This estimate of the Latin American training programs is shared by the present Secretary of Defense, Melvin Laird, who once affirmed that MAP training is "one of the most important and successful programs we have had, not only in South America but in other places of the world."<sup>58</sup>

The United States provides three kinds of training for Latin American military personnel. These three programs were identified in 1967 by Vice Admiral L. C. Heinz, then Director of Military Assistance, as follows:

First, training in the United States, in which we bring students to this country for various types of training. . . .

Second, training in the Canal Zone. Students go to the Army School of the Americas and U.S. Air Force School in the Canal Zone for training. . . .

Finally, training includes mobile training teams which go to countries for particular purposes, from a few days to several months, depending upon the special training required.<sup>59</sup>

To these formal programs, one need only add the informal advisory function performed by the military attachés and mission personnel in each country to complete the picture of U.S. training activities in Latin America.\*

\* All U.S. training programs in Latin America are supervised by the Commander of the United States Forces Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), with headquarters at Quarry Heights in the Panama Canal Zone. With jurisdiction over all U.S. Army, Navy, and Air Force units stationed on the mainland of South and Central America

Between 1950 and 1969, the Defense Department provided training to 50,581 Latin American officers and enlisted men at schools in the United States and the Panama Canal Zone. A total of 22,059 men were trained in the period 1964-8 alone—a number equal to the total armed forces of El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, and Nicaragua combined. A country-by-country breakdown of Latin American military personnel trained under MAP since 1950 is provided in Appendix E.

As one would expect, the countries with the largest armed forces had the greatest number of students trained under MAP programs. However, as in the case of MAP grants, when these countries are ranked on a proportional basis the reverse pattern emerges. As can be seen in Table 9, the countries with the greatest percentage of men trained have relatively small armed forces. Furthermore, of the six countries with the largest proportional training programs, five—Guatemala, Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, and Peru—have experienced serious insurgent challenges within the past decade.

United States training programs in Latin America have several related goals, most of which are clearly political. One objective of such programs is an improvement in the professional competence of indigenous troops; obviously, the better trained the Latin American military is, the less the likelihood that United States troops will have to be called in to save the situation for some favored regime. U.S. strategy also requires that the local military be motivated for the performance of internal security functions, which has not always been the case. Many Latin

(excluding Mexico). SOUTHCOM is one of the regional "unified commands" that reports directly to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. On February 14, 1971, *The New York Times* reported that President Nixon had decided to abolish SOUTHCOM and turn over its functions to the Atlantic Command, based at Norfolk, Virginia; six months later, however, Defense Secretary Laird announced that SOUTHCOM would remain in operation.

Table 9  
U.S. MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAM IN SELECTED  
LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES, 1959-69  
(Countries listed in ranked order)

Total armed forces		Average annual number of military personnel programmed for training		Average percent of total armed forces programmed for training	
Country	Number	Country	Number	Country	Percent
Brazil	194,000	Brazil	580	Nicaragua	3.5
Argentina	120,000	Venezuela	380	Guatemala	2.6
Mexico	68,500	Argentina	370	Bolivia	1.7
Chile	60,000	Chile	370	Dominican Republic	1.4
Peru	54,650	Peru	370	Venezuela	1.2
Colombia	54,000	Colombia	330	Peru	0.65
Venezuela	30,500	Bolivia	260	Chile	0.62
Dominican Republic	19,300	Dominican Republic	260	Colombia	0.62
Bolivia	15,000	Nicaragua	260	Argentina	0.30
Guatemala	9,000	Guatemala	235	Brazil	0.30
Nicaragua	7,100	Mexico	60	Mexico	0.08

Source: Geoffrey Kemp, *Some Relationships Between U.S. Military Training In Latin America and Weapons Acquisition Patterns: 1959-1969* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Center for International Studies, 1970), p. 4.

American military officers would rather command elite units like jet fighter squadrons, naval flotillas, or armored brigades than slug it out with the guerrillas in long, unspectacular jungle campaigns. U.S. training programs are designed, therefore, to emphasize the importance of counterinsurgency operations (and to suggest, thereby, that the United States will reward those officers who make a good showing at this kind of warfare). Another function of training programs is to accustom Latin American military personnel to the use of U.S.-made equipment—so that, upon returning to their countries, they will tend to purchase such equipment when outfitting their own armies (thus further enriching U.S. arms manufacturers and contributing to a favorable balance of trade).

U.S. training is also intended, according to Pentagon doctrine, to foster "a constructive and democratic approach by the military to their professional responsibilities and to the solution of national problems."<sup>60</sup> One can only wonder what is said on this subject in the classroom, out of reach of prying newsmen and skeptical Congressmen; in any case, there is little evidence that U.S. efforts in this direction have had any effect whatsoever on the authoritarian designs of Latin American officers. (In fact, Pentagon emphasis on the "nation-building" role of the military has probably had the opposite effect.) In a 1967 report to a subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Professor Lieuwen reported:

The recent wave of military interventions suggests that the U.S. training programs, the work of the missions, and the contact between United States and Latin American military men did little to improve military respect for civilian authority and constitutional processes. Most of the Latin American military leaders who conducted the nine coups between 1962 and 1966 had been recipients of U.S. training.<sup>61</sup>

If one brings this accounting up to date, the evidence is even more compelling: coups in Panama, Bolivia, and Peru have all been led by men who received at least some training at Pentagon expense in the United States or the Canal Zone. In Peru, for example, ten of the twelve military officers holding cabinet posts in the present regime received at least some training in the United States.

The fact that so many military rulers received U.S. training was cited by Congressional critics of the MAP program in their successful effort to impose a limit on the number of foreign military personnel that can receive such training in any given year. Under Section 510 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1970, the number of military trainees brought to the United States under MAP is lim-

ited to the number of foreign students attending classes here in the previous fiscal year under the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (Fulbright-Hays Act). Adoption of this measure has proved a strong blow against the current Administration, which seeks, as part of the "Nixon Doctrine" plan to reduce U.S. troop strength abroad, to upgrade the capabilities of Third World armies. Pentagon spokesmen have been outspoken in their opposition to the restriction and have seized every opportunity to argue for repeal of the measure. Thus, during hearings on the 1971 foreign aid appropriation, MAP director General Warren asserted that compliance with Section 510 "means that, at the very time we are asking our friends and allies to assume more responsibility for their own and the common defense, we must sharply curtail our efforts to enhance their professional skills and to increase their understanding of what we consider the role of the military in a democratic society."<sup>62</sup> In its effort to expand the training program, the Administration has the backing of Governor Nelson Rockefeller, who reported, after his 1969 tour of Latin America that: "In view of the growing subversion against hemisphere governments . . . it is essential that the training program which brings military and police personnel from the other hemisphere nations to the United States and to training centers in Panama be continued and strengthened."<sup>63</sup>

Considering the importance that has been accorded the MAP training program, it is appropriate at this point to provide a brief sketch of the schools in the United States and the Panama Canal Zone that have the largest attendance of Latin American personnel.

### School of the Americas

The U.S. Army School of the Americas (USARSA), located at Fort Gulick in the Panama Canal Zone, is the major U.S. training institution for Latin American military personnel.

Founded in 1949 as the Army Caribbean School in Panama, it received its present name in 1963 when a new curriculum emphasizing training in counterinsurgency and civic action was introduced. All courses are given in Spanish; faculty and staff consist of U.S. Army personnel and guest lecturers from Latin American military organizations. In fiscal 1969, some 1,600 Latin American officers, cadets, and enlisted men attended courses at the School, bringing its cumulative number of graduates to more than 26,000.<sup>64</sup>

USARSA has four instructional divisions: the departments of Command, Combat Operations, Technical Operations, and Support Operations. The Department of Command, which provides instruction to high-ranking commanders and staff officers only, offers a forty-week course patterned after the Command and General Staff Course taken by prospective U.S. Army generals at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Courses taught by the Technical Operations and Support Operations departments, on the other hand, are intended primarily for specialists and enlisted men. Technical Operations provides training in communications, engineer, and maintenance specialties, while Support Operations involves training in military intelligence, military police, and medical and supply activities.

The Department of Combat Operations offers instruction to officers, cadets, and enlisted men. Students from military academies in eleven nations attend courses here in order to complete their training as candidate officers. Cadets and junior officers "are taught leadership roles for units assigned to irregular warfare, jungle operations, and combat engineer missions." The cadets also receive marksmanship training with assorted light weapons and participate in tactical field exercises. "Assaults, ambushes and patrols are carried out both day and night in the thick, insect-infested, obstacle-ridden rain forests bordering the Panama Canal." Cadets who study at the school for nineteen weeks or longer, according to a USARSA bro-

chure, "complete a week-long maneuver known as the Balboa Crossing in which they trek across the isthmus from Pacific to Atlantic shores on a simulated search-and-destroy mission, putting into practice what they have learned about guerrilla warfare and jungle living."<sup>65</sup>

Fort Gulick boasts that alumni of the School "have risen to such key positions as Minister of Defense and Chief of Staff in Bolivia, Director of Mexico's War College, Minister of War and Chief of Staff in Colombia, Chief of Staff for Intelligence in Argentina and Under-Secretary of War in Chile." The Pentagon hopes, of course, that alumni of the School will endorse U.S. military policies for Latin America: according to *Army Digest*, "Training Latin Americans in U.S. military technical skills, leadership techniques and doctrine also paves the way for cooperation and support of U.S. Army missions, attachés, military assistance advisory groups and commissions operating in Latin America."<sup>66</sup>

### Inter-American

#### Air Forces Academy

The Air Force equivalent of the Army School of the Americas is the Inter-American Air Forces Academy (IAAFA) at Albrook Air Base in the Canal Zone. IAAFA offers courses in aircraft maintenance, electronics, radio, instrument training and repair, engine and weapons mechanics, and other technical subjects. All courses are taught in Spanish by bilingual U.S. Air Force instructors and guest lecturers. During fiscal 1970, some 560 students from fourteen Latin American countries were graduated from IAAFA, bringing to nearly 10,000 the number graduated since classes began in 1943.

Unlike USARSA, most of the Academy's students are enlisted men. According to a Congressional study mission, "the greatest part of the Academy's efforts have been toward training fledgling airmen in the technical skills

necessary to keep aircraft mechanically fit." Upon graduation, the student is essentially still an apprentice, although because of the scarcity of men with such skills in most of Latin America he will probably have to work on his own immediately upon graduation.<sup>67</sup>

Beginning in 1965, the Academy offered a course in Special Air Operations (i.e., counterinsurgency) jointly with the School of the Americas, the 605th Air Commandos, and the 24th Special Operations Wing. The course includes study of such activities as close air support on the battlefield, airlift supply operations for counterguerrilla forces, and airborne operations.<sup>68</sup>

### Inter-American Defense College

The Inter-American Defense College (IADC) was established in 1962 as a senior service school similar to America's National War College, Great Britain's Imperial Defense College, and the NATO Defense College. In its founding statement, IADC was described as a "military institution of high-level studies, devoted to conducting courses in the Inter-American system and the political, social, economic, and military factors that constitute essential components of inter-American defense, in order to enhance the education of selected armed forces personnel and civilian government officials of the American republics for carrying out undertakings requiring international cooperation."<sup>69</sup> The College, located at Fort Lesley McNair in Washington, D.C., is a creation of the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB), which is composed of high-ranking military representatives of the twenty-two member nations of the Organization of American States.

The emphasis at IADC is on the quality, not quantity, of its students, who number about forty each year (each member nation of the IADB may send up to five students