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COPING WITH CHAOS:
PROMOTING DEMOCRACY & REGIONAL STABILITY IN THE POST-COUNTERINSURGENCY ERA

"The ruling of distant peoples is not our dish ... there are many things Americans should beware of, and among them is the acceptance of any sort of paternalistic responsibility to anyone."
George Kennan

Joseph N. McBride
April 30, 1993

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Regional crises with a humanitarian twist will become a major focus of national security policy in the post-Cold War era. Many LDCs threaten to become ungovernable, overwhelmed by population growth, economic decline and breakdown of social order. Intervention in one form or another may be forced on a world community unwilling to endure the anguished faces of cyclical tragedies. Neither CNN nor pressure group politics will permit national leaders to claim "we didn't know" to excuse inaction.

For the longer term, the $4-5 billion required increase in international community contributions to family planning services in the LDCs will be "minuscule compared to the benefits."[1] In the medium run, reinforcing regional security organizations to assume greater responsibility is probably our best hope. Regional leaders like Nigeria, India, Brazil and/or Mexico should be encouraged to assume leadership in sub-global security groupings and share the burden of maintaining civilized order among their neighbors that "go critical." Bosnia and Liberia show, however, that this will take time and may not always work.

UN peacekeeping/peacemaking and unilateral U.S. intervention all have serious drawbacks, although each may be suitable from time to time. Cold War-style counterinsurgency is now "dead on arrival" and does not warrant resuscitation: as practiced by the

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[1] Carnegie Endowment National Commission, Changing Our Ways: America and the New World (1993), p. 42.

U.S. it was largely a failure in its time; is clearly out of step with our times; and could bust the budget to no purpose.

The question remains whether U.S. bilateral policy toward the LDCs can be reinvented and our instruments retooled to support a concept of "democratic security" -- one focused on governments that are: 1) willing to be held to international norms, 2) open to rethinking their survival strategies, and 3) able to meet their challenges relying primarily on their own resources. (Any such effort would have to be a sub-theme in an overall U.S. policy to support democracy, human rights and peaceful conflict resolution as our primary thrust within the LDCs.)

Should we embark on such a course, much of the old thinking and most of the old ways of security assistance should be thrown overboard. The entire purpose behind our effort should be to help the host countries do better with what they already have -- and to do so at lower levels of violence. This means focusing assistance primarily on the police and local court systems in a public safety program tightly constrained by overarching U.S. support for democracy and human rights.

Residual U.S. military aid should focus our friends on fixing their strategic shortcomings, and look beyond mere tactical improvements. Above all, we should drum home the need to build political consensus, underwriting the host government's "unity of effort," and maintaining its moral legitimacy at home and abroad.

INTRODUCTION

The Problem

Sendero Luminoso challenges the survival of Peru. The Bush administration defended assistance to Peru completely on anti-narcotics and humanitarian rationales -- anything other than "the c word," counterinsurgency.[2] Put simply, following Vietnam and El Salvador the adage seems: "we don't do mountains, we don't do jungles -- and we don't do counter-insurgency." With the end of the Cold War, this prevailing popular prohibition merits rigorous rethinking.

Instability, domestic disintegration and insurrection within the LDCs,[3] however, threaten to become more pervasive. Many ruling elites, from the ex-Soviet Union to Africa and South America, may well prove incapable of coping with the challenges of a more crowded, competitive and interdependent world. Global population pressures will be immense as the planet struggles to feed 3.1 billion more people -- a 57% increase -- by 2025, almost all of them in the LDCs. "The worst case scenario? Human population could almost quadruple to 20 billion by the year

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[2] Peru references come from my 1988-92 tour as Embassy Lima Political Counselor.

[3] Lesser developed country (LDC) is used throughout to cover all non-first world states -- including the ex-Soviet Union. In the context of this paper, it is more accurate, if less fashionable, than the euphemism "developing countries."

2100."[4] Even under the best assumptions, it will double by the end of the next century.

Somalia is the clearest example of a vicious downward cycle. But similar deterioration is manifest elsewhere. The majority of the population in the ex-Soviet republics of Central Asia is under the age of 20 and in several states it is under 15. In the 1980s Latin America and the Caribbean suffered a 1.1% real annual decline in GNP, a "savage reversal of 20 years of progress" during which annual real growth averaged almost 3%.[5] Trends in Haiti, Peru, Panama, Argentina and Venezuela "bear witness" to the range of problems which threaten to overwhelm the "capacity to govern" in many Latin American countries.[6]

The Questions

The U.S. has been involved in some 60 low-intensity conflicts over the past century. This includes 11 insurgencies, two of them (El Salvador and the Philippines) in the last decade.[7] Will the U.S. be able to stand apart totally from the turmoil and

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[4] Carnegie Endowment National Commission, Changing Our Ways: America and the New World (1993), p. 41.

[5] "Rethinking Security in the Americas," North-South Issues: Democratization, University of Miami (September 1992), p. 3.

[6] William J. Olson, "Low-Intensity Conflict: The Challenge to the National Interest," Terrorism (1989) Vol. 12, No. 2, p.76.

[7] John M. Collins, U.S. Low-Intensity Conflicts 1899-1990, (September 1990) a Congressional Research Service Study for the House Armed Services Committee, pp. 23,43. Collins' definition of low-intensity conflicts (LIC) is a bit different than the four part typology used in standard DoD doctrine, viz. he includes U.S.-stimulated coups d' etat.

internal disruption that is likely to wrack many LDCs in the coming decades? If history is any predictor, the answer is, "probably not." If that is the case, 1) what interests would likely impel our involvement and 2) what form would U.S. intervention best take?

INTERVENTION AND U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS: WHY GET INVOLVED?

The end of the Cold War has completely undercut our traditional "national security" rationale for countering communist insurgencies in the LDCs. Similarly, jeremiads against the "widespread political and economic collapse with potentially grave consequences for the international economy"[8] simply are not convincing. If one LDC collapses, others will gladly step in to absorb its market share in providing most raw materials we need. (Petroleum is arguably the one exception. And Operation "Desert Storm" proved that we were ready to take decisive military action to protect our interests on that score.) Intervention to protect "stable markets" in the LDCs would have little appeal.

If standard national security and economic rationales for intervening in the LDCs fall flat with the demise of the Soviet Union, what would compel us to intervene in these countries? Three other challenges to our interests could trigger us to act:

-- 1) <u>humanitarian revulsion</u> to barbarity visited on our homes daily by CNN: Some would term this an "ideological interest." However characterized, it packs the most potent

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[8] Olson (1989), p. 76.

political punch of the three. It is the most likely scenario and the one national security planners should primarily focus on.

-- 2) mass population migrations triggered by a breakdown in order: Read Mexico in the first instance. The North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) should be our first line of defense[9], but it faces a tough, up hill fight for Congressional ratification. If development falters and violent challenges to the established order break out, we will seek alternatives to turning the Rio Grande into another Maginot Line. The Darien Gap provides some protection against population surges from South America, but it can be hurdled. (In Europe, our NATO allies have no such protection if further disintegration and chaos overwhelm Russia.)

-- 3) risk of regional instability genuinely affecting our security interests: The best example would be a Muslim fundamentalist takeover in Egypt. It would raise questions about access to the Suez canal. More importantly it would rip apart the Middle East Peace process which we have labored on for two decades to bridge the gap between our oil interests and our commitment to Israel. Similarly, a repeat of Operation "Just Cause" in Panama for whatever reason would adversely affect our interests throughout the region and would be better avoided.

TYPES OF INTERVENTION: SWAT TEAM, PEACEKEEPER, PEACEMAKER, TUTOR TO REGIONAL ACTORS, WORLD POLICEMAN, OR ADVOCATE FOR DEMOCRACY?

There are six general approaches for the U.S. in intervention in the LDCs, and they are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In time sequencing, they cover the gamut from indirect intervention

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[9] OMB Director and former Joint Budget Committee Chairman Leon Panetta, Washington Post, p.1, April 27, 1993

before violence breaks out to after-the-fact clean up of a situation that has already gone bad. Similarly, they range from multilateral efforts at the global or regional levels to strictly unilateral undertakings.

SWAT Team Approach: Operation "Just Cause" in Panama might be termed the "SWAT team exception" -- seldom invoked but quick and decisive. A good case has been made that this model incorporates the "four salient lessons of Vietnam"[10] and provides an operational doctrine for intervention against a regime that has not fully consolidated power. For it to work, however, the intervention force must hand over power rapidly to a successor government (which can gain legitimacy) and withdraw promptly.

Peacekeeper, or International Social Worker: Unable to get early consensus to act, it appears that by default our "preferred style" of intervention -- when we can get it -- would be that of "Peacemaker": i.e., operating as part of an ex-post facto, multilateral peacekeeping force invited in to repair the damage after the contending factions have exhausted themselves. Under this scenario, we would join with others under a multilateral banner in seeking to restore a degree of normalcy and governance where chaos had held sway. The closest example might be a

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[10] William S. Lind, "An Operational Doctrine for Intervention," Parameters, (December 1987), pp.30-36 lists the four lessons of Vietnam as: "First, we cannot sustain the long-term commitment counterinsurgency usually requires...Second, we have not been very good at training and equipping foreign armies ... Third, it is not possible to go into another country and change its culture to conform with our ideas of human rights, good government, military efficiency, or anything else ... Fourth, war is not won on the tactical level... but on the operational level." (p.30)

Somalia intervention deferred to 1994, but with the U.N. in on the take off as well as the landing.

The "benefits" of this remedial approach may pall rather fast:

-- whole populations may die in front of CNN before the contestants stagger to a stalemate as the world gears up;

-- reconstruction costs go up exponentially when urban infrastructure has been devastated (e.g., Phnom Penh);

-- above all, leaders at home and abroad who volunteer their forces to participate will pay a growing political bill. Potential "donors" may dry up fast as Fijiians-for-hire run out and the U.S. and Japan tire of "pass the hat."

Peacemaker, or Universal Umpire: Popular sentiment seems to be gradually building for multilaterally sanctioned "conflict suppression" operations or the creation of "protected zones." The Economic Community of West African States' (ECOWAS) deployment to Liberia and Operation "Provide Comfort" for the Kurds in Iraq are cases in point, not to mention the evolving situations in Somalia and Bosnia.

Peacemaking would appear to suffer from most of the liabilities objections of Peacekeeping -- and then some, viz:

-- heightened probability of the "good Samaritans" taking bullets from both sides;

-- Peacemakers' responsibility to dictate political terms, including population resettlements, that may be repugnant;

-- difficulty imposing a settlement that endures beyond the Peacemakers' withdrawal.[11]

Tutor to Regional Security Linchpins: In this alternative, the U.S. would attempt to reinforce regional security arrangements as the first line of response to LDC crises. The U.S. could provide technical support for specific interventions on an ad hoc basis, but rely primarily on regional powers to muster most of the troops, provide most of the funding and accept most of the political responsibility.

This model is very attractive and in the long term may be the paradigm most worthy of our attention and investment. It is, however, far from being realized -- as European inaction in Bosnia demonstrates today. Moreover, even where it is put into effect (e.g., ECOWAS in Liberia) the way it is done and the results it produces may not be entirely to our liking.

On balance, these four approaches show serious shortcomings. At least in the near-to-medium term, they appear to have limited applicability. The potential breakdown in internal order posited for much of Africa, some of Latin America and part of the ex-USSR, requires a different approach. If the U.S. still wants to address these situations (for the reasons earlier identified), we may have to consider the final two approaches: "the world's policeman" and "facilitator/consultants."

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[11] Marshall Hoyler and John Tilson, Conflict Suppression/Peace Zone Operations, Institute for Defense Analysis, Alexandria, Virginia (November 10, 1992).

CAMELOT AND COUNTERINSURGENCY, NATION-BUILDING AND SO/LIC: COLD WAR CONCEPTS OF "WORLD POLICEMAN" DEAD-ON-ARRIVAL

El Salvador Closed Coffin on Cold War-Style Counterinsurgency...

Vietnam permanently prejudiced the policy environment against counterinsurgency -- even if U.S. combat forces are not directly involved. The apparent imminent fall of El Salvador to the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) and President Reagan's he "Great Communicator's" unique obsession brought a one-time rematch that ended in a tie after 12 years. The exception, however, only confirmed the rule: "we can't do that again."

Even without U.S combat forces, the costs were just too high:

- -- 60,000 Salvadoran dead, equal 2.7 million Americans;
- -- 25% of the population becoming refugees, including 1 million illegal immigrants into the U.S.
- -- moral repugnance at U.S. failure to control 40,000 death squad killings by the Salvadoran military;
- -- $6 billion in U.S assistance;
- -- massive repudiation of the Republican interventionist position in the polls; and
- -- heavy opportunity costs to top U.S. policy makers who had to spend scarce political capital with Congress and commit time which would have been better used on more important issues elsewhere.

In the end, only the preemptive collapse of the USSR (and with it the Cold War) averted "our" defeat.

... And Narcoterrorism in the Andes Nailed It Shut

"Counterinsurgency" is a pariah term, hurled to stigmatize U.S. programs (or be hotly denied) in the two countries where it might most logically apply: Peru and Colombia. In both cases the term "narcoterrorist" had to be coined (with considerable analytical justification) to duck the political paralysis invoked by any taint of counterinsurgency. The end results are dual-purpose security assistance programs, which are marginal to both their insurgency problems and our narcotics objectives, certainly in Peru[12] and apparently in Colombia as well.

The objectives of both the U.S. and Peru would have been better served if we could have differentiated between the narcotics and insurgency problems and focused on the highest pay-off response to each. The quid pro quo for our helping hurt Sendero Luminoso, say with helicopters for the high sierra, would be cutting off narcotics trafficking from airfields in the Upper Huallaga Valley (UHV) already under government control. The U.S. sina qua non for continuing this kind of cooperation to maximum mutual advantage could be tangible reduction in Peruvian human

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[12] To illustrate with some Peruvian examples:
-- The aborted proposal for a U.S.- provided training base for three Peruvian infantry battalions in the Upper Huallaga Valley (UHV) and the substituted support for A-37 attack aircraft in Peru in FY-1991 are cases in point. The training of conventional infantry battalions (made up of draftees who rotate out after two years) would have had little impact on either Sendero Luminoso or the narcos. In the end, it proved too hard to sell in Congress.
-- With regard to the A-37s, Peruvian fighter aircraft have downed narcotics traffickers. The traffickers, however, soon shifted to night flights, against which Peru had no intercept capability. Nor are these A-37s likely to be much good against Sendero Luminoso terrorists, who are either hidden in jungle bases or intermixed with urban populations.

rights abuses -- the Achilles Heel of our bilateral cooperation.

But it was not to be. Cold War-style counterinsurgency remains too tainted for policy makers to touch -- even as a vehicle to verified improvements in human rights.[13]

SO/LIC Web Spinning Catches Few Flies

DoD doctrine for "low-intensity conflict" (LIC) is a bewildering potpourri covering: 1) insurgency, 2) counterinsurgency, 3) counterterrorism, 4) peacetime contingency operations 5) and peacekeeping. The Harvard Symposium on Small Wars in 1988 concluded that:

> The National Security Decision Directive on low intensity conflict signed by President Reagan has all but dropped out of sight.....There appears to be limited interest in creating functional experts in LIC with experience in many different small wars.[14]

An experienced observer concurred:

> People problems at the top predominate....State should be a primary player, but....top State officials, with rare exceptions, couldn't care less....The problems would

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[13] The potential for achieving real synergy through tacit quid pro quo bargaining was demonstrated in the summer of 1991 when Congress forced the suspension of all non-humanitarian aid disbursements to Peru -- primarily over human rights, although the narcotics lobby tried for its pound of flesh as well. Through tacit bargaining, we got major human rights breakthroughs:
-- 1) total access for unannounced and private International Red Cross (ICRC) inspection visits with prisoners in all military and police facilities throughout the country;
-- 2) ICRC access to a new national registry of all prisoners which was updated daily; and,
-- 3) a 40% drop in the rate of human rights fatalities attributable to the government over the following 10 months.
In return for this (and some marginal narcotics improvements) we released AID Economic Support Fund (ESF) disbursements to keep Peru's rehabilitation program with the IMF and World Bank on track toward reintegration in the international financial system.

[14] JFK School National Security Program, Harvard University, Small Wars Symposium: The Case of El Salvador, a conference report (March 29, 1988), p. 18.

> quickly disappear...if the President, his Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense assigned SO/LIC a high priority. [But they don't.] Meanwhile marginal improvements are the best we can expect.[15]

An NSC-chaired "Deputies Meeting" in June 1990 refused to institute an interagency LIC backstop mechanism. And DoD's 1990 Doctrine for Joint Operations in Low-Intensity Conflict remains in limbo, a "test publication" lacking official imprirmatur.

Most recent SO/LIC brainstorming, however, is a quantum step forward in sophistication. Peacetime Engagement: A Policy for the Environment Short of War [16]is an impressive new framework for approaching post-Cold War regional security. This draft policy proposal does not, however, pin down "the devil in the details." How the new administration treats this legacy remains to be seen.

Security Assistance Programs: Outdated, Irrelevant and Broke

Foreign Military Assistance in the Cold War essentially paid for base rights to maintain the structure of containment and the tempo of operations. Reforming host country capabilities to deal with domestic instability was an ancillary benefit, but far from essential. What was important was to keep the aid flowing. And for that we relied on big ticket hardware transfers and basic skill training in soldiering -- things we could readily take off the shelf and plug in anywhere.

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[15] John M. Collins, Senior Specialist in National Defence, Congressional Research Service, unpublished test of remarks at unspecified SO/LIC symposium, (December 11, 1990)

[16] DoD/OASD(SO/LIC), Peacetime Engagement: A Policy for the Environment for the Environment Short of War, (Working Paper draft 5) April 14, 1993.

This "cookie cutter"[17] approach to stamping out security assistance packages applicable anytime, anywhere, by all accounts produced "not very impressive"[18] results. Former Ambassador to El Salvador, Thomas Pickering, summed it up:

> We had neither the doctrine, nor the support nor the coordination in the United States government that would really be required to deal effectively with that kind of operation. I don't think we ever developed it; we are still kind of ad hoc in our way of viewing the problems. That is really quite a critical comment.[19]

Finally, we just won't have the funding to support security assistance programs that can pay for high priced equipment and training as in the old days. Former SOUTHCOM commander, General Wallace Nutting lamented several years ago:

> For the cost of steaming a carrier group up and down the coast (of Central America) for a week, we could fund most of the training programs and most of the material assistance needed (for all of Latin America) for a year. [20]

And security assistance funding cuts are only getting worse. Security assistance for Latin America dropped by more than 60% between FY-1985 and FY-1993. (Less than half of the $630 million cut came out of the phase down of El Salvador.) Security

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[17] Col.John D. Waghlestein, "Post-Vietnam Counterinsurgency Doctrine" Military Review (May 1985) P. 44.

[18] Douglas S. Blaufarb, "Security/Economic Assistance and Special Operations" in Barnett, Tovar and Shulz (eds.) Special Operations in U.S. Strategy, NDU Press (1984), p. 217. Also see Lind, p. 30.

[19] Max G. Manwaring and Court Prisk, A Strategic View of Insurgencies: Insight from El Salvador (May 1990) McNair Papers No. 8, institute for Strategic studies, p. 13

[20] Manwaring and Prisk, p. 22.

assistance has been "zeroed out" for thirty countries in the past two years and further deep reductions are expected for FY-94.[21]

In sum, attempts to rehabilitate Vietnam-style counterinsurgency -- minus U.S. combat troops -- failed in El Salvador and never had a chance to get off the ground in the Andes. As a paradigm, it is dead-on-arrival: costing more blood, dollars and domestic political turmoil than are willing to commit against foreseeable threats. The lack of strategic vision, coherent doctrine, effective coordination mechanisms and appropriate personnel policies that plagued us in El Salvador should not be repeated. Were they to be tried again on a country more difficult than 5 million people right on our doorstep, their failings would be more obvious and more costly.

ADVOCATES for "DEMOCRATIC SECURITY": FREE CONSULTANT/FACILITATOR for THOSE WILLING to PLAY BY THE RULES

Multilateral humanitarian intervention is gaining new cachet[22], but often comes "too little, too late" as in both Somalia and Bosnia. The U.S. may find that multilateral handholders are often unavailable. But we may have another option -- aggressive advocacy of "democratic security" to prevent a breakdown of civilized governance before it occurs.

A proactive policy of supporting "democratic security" should entail a three-tiered approach:

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[21] Susan B. Clark, The U.S. Army in a Civil-Military Support Role in Latin America, Institute for Defense Analysis Paper P-2703 (June 1992), p. A-3 and State Department data/contacts.

[22] Carnegie Endowment National Commission, p. 51

-- low cost/high value support for democratic programs and human rights before trouble strikes;

-- conciliation services should violent breakdowns begin; and

-- finally, in limited circumstances, indirect intervention through the provision of security assistance cast from a brand new mold (i.e., geared to the recipient's "center of gravity" rather than U.S. surplus capabilities) when a reasonably democratic, human rights-abiding, and reform-oriented regime is imperiled with ominous implications for important U.S. interests.

The elements of this three-tiered approach are not mutually exclusive (e.g., the final phases of El Salvador.) As a general matter, however: (1) democratization and human rights assistance should be available largely for the asking; (2) conflict resolution assistance might be extended where both sides were ready for it; and (3) "reinvented security assistance" should be extended only in special cases. A few observations on each:

Democracy and Human Rights as Rallying Points

Democracy and human rights must be pillars of U.S. policy in strife-torn LDCs for three reasons: (1) they are intrinsically "good" in American eyes; (2) they should contribute to conflict resolution through politics instead of violent upheaval; and (3) a reasonable track record of adherence to democracy and human rights is a sina qua non condition for extending U.S. security assistance to LDCs threatened by internal turmoil.

Support for democracy and human rights must replace containment as the central, unifying theme in American foreign policy. "Only by uniting our national interests with Americans' basic values can we mobilize and sustain broad, bipartisan

support for U.S. global leadership in the new era."[23] Wherever we have diplomatic relations we should be prepared to offer a range of "democratization services," including:

> programs which develop political parties; assist in administration and monitoring of fair elections; train parliamentarians, lawyers and judges; enhance the rule of law; build free trade unions; support independent media: cultivate open markets: aid private sector institutions supporting human rights; and encourage political participation by all groups in society.[24]

In Latin America at least, our policy should include a number of specific elements to support democracy and human rights, some of which have already proven reasonably effective, such as:

-- 1) public fair warning that we will freeze all government-to-government assistance and vote "No" on international financial institution (IFI) loans wherever democratic regimes are toppled;

-- 2) renewed efforts to get the OAS to amend its charter to "suspend" participation by any state that has had a coup;

-- 3) conversion of all international military training and education (IMET) to the IMET-E(expanded) format which includes civilians for management of military establishments, budgets and codes of justice, including human rights;

-- 4) requiring that all U.S military assistance and sales agreements be signed by host country presidents, to reinforce civilian control over the military; and

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[23] Will Marshall and Martin Schram (eds) Mandate for Change (1993) The Progressive Policy Institute, Berkeley Books, p. 297.

[24] Carnegie Report, p. 83.

-- 5) making human rights enhancement programs central pillars of the "annual country plans," in fact instead of lip service. [25]

Facilitating a Negotiated Settlement Right from Round One

Now that the menacing tide of Communist-controlled insurgencies has receded, we should prefer peace negotiations over military victory as the way to end the "uncomfortable wars" in the LDCs. At least three mechanisms commend themselves for consideration, and others may be possible:

-- 1) Restructure significant aid programs, around Presidential certifications designed to reward (or punish) both the government and the insurgents, depending on their behavior. (The insurgents get "punished" if their abuses or recalcitrance to negotiate in good faith etc. trigger a legally mandated Presidential certification providing an automatic increase in U.S. assistance to the government.) We have a real world

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25 This should include:
-- a) establishing unofficial human rights performance baselines (drawn from the local human rights groups' data) to monitor trends for "extrajudicial killings"/assassinations or "disappearances."
-- b) making it clear to all concerned that specific elements of our bilateral/multilateral assistance would be adversely affected by any deterioration in human rights performance;
-- c) coordinating with the ICRC and other transactional HR players use of U.S. funding leverage to reinforce their access to prisons and lists of detainees etc.; and
-- d) presenting specific military human rights improvement programs for funding as part of the annual budget cycle, including such things as: [1] Judge Advocate General (JAG-to-JAG) and Inspector General (IG-to-IG) exchanges on human rights; [2] support to military human rights training, and monitoring systems; [3] human rights sensitization exposure on the Hill for key commanders prior to deployment; and [4] doctrinal assistance at armed forces Staff and War Colleges in developing internal defense strategies consistent with human rights.

On JAG human rights aid, see:
Major Jeffery F. Addicott, and Major Andrew M. Warner, "JAG Corps Poised for New Defense Missions: Human Rights Training in Peru," The Army Lawyer, February 1993, pp. 78-82.

precedent: the Dodd-Leahy amendment on El Salvador which infuriated the Administration, but had the effect of pushing all sides toward a negotiated solution;[26]

-- 2) The same approach could be adopted as a matter of declared administration policy with regard to our generally decisive vote on IFI loans;

-- 3) Finally, the U.S. could provide facilitative encouragement for negotiations to be mediated by third parties, as in the case of Guatemala.[27]

Indirect Intervention: Necessary Conditions for New "Security Assistance" Programs that Work

After perusing the above efforts to enhance democracy, human rights, and peaceful conflict resolution, we come to the issue of developing a new approach to security assistance -- to help stave off the "breakdown of governance" in those LDCs where local conditions and U.S. interests permit. Perhaps a radical redesign

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26 The Dodd-Leahy amendment to the El Salvador appropriation in October, 1990 "halved" the already appropriated funding for FY-90 unless the FMLN: a) refused good faith negotiations, b) committed excessive human rights violations, c) militarily threatened the survival of the government, or d) accepted external assistance -- in which case full funding would be restored. Conversely, Dodd-Leahy would have totally eliminated aid to the government if the President could not certify that it was in compliance with the established conditions -- particularly prosecuting the murderers of the six Jesuits. The administration bitterly opposed the amendment at the time, but in the words of one legislative liaison, "somewhat unconsciously in this building [State] we adopted the structure of his amendment -- as long as we could keep the certification trigger under presidential control." Mark Kirk, Director of Legislative Affairs, ARA, State Department. Personal interview. December 13, 1992.

27 After decades of killing and 300,000 deaths in Guatemala, both the government and the insurgents have publicly welcomed U.S. behind the scenes pressure to reach closure in the current negotiations.Washington Post, "Progress Reported in Guatemala Talks" (March 17, 1993).

of counterinsurgency assistance could restore its policy utility certain limited conditions. If so, what would those conditions be, and what would this new approach look like?

The U.S. should consider giving reconfigured counter-insurgency assistance only when the following criteria are met:

-- the U.S. national interest is sufficiently compelling to outweigh allegations of getting our hands dirty by association;

-- the host government's popular support can be solidified;

-- the host government is truly capable of implementing wrenching internal reforms that address relevant grievances;

-- U.S. global "credibility" will not become hostage to "victory" and we will be able to walk away if things go sour; and

-- U.S. combat forces will not be required.[28]

If any of the first three criteria can not be met, indirect intervention via security assistance won't work, and we should keep our hands off. If the last two criteria can not be met, let's not fool ourselves: Once we are involved it will soon become a matter of U.S. direct, unilateral intervention. Still, in selective cases, it ought to be possible to "do security assistance right" -- if we pick our clients as well as our fights and greatly revise how we go about it.

Making Security Assistance Work: A Concept-Intensive Approach

The U.S. generally approaches client states very gingerly, lest we appear colonialistic -- and properly so. But as a consequence field advisors in Vietnam and El Salvador soon

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[28] Even U.S. advisors or trainers are to be avoided as generally more of a domestic liability than they're worth in the field.

learned the lament: "a house leaks from the roof" -- and it doesn't get fixed by working at the rice roots.

A successful strategy begins at the top, but U.S. policy makers seldom embrace the responsibility that implies. It is futile to beef up marginal operational capabilities (simply because we know how to do so) and ignore the strategic vulnerabilities of the country we presume to help. But this has been generally our pattern in the past. Once launched into the swamp, we tend to rely on "more bailers with deeper hip boots and bigger buckets" -- instead of calling for hydraulic engineers to attack the source instead of the symptoms.

But this takes a few hard-eyed policy analysts with seats at the tables of power, not a plethora of hard-charging field men from the "can do" school of counterinsurgency. Above all, this takes leadership in the country team (and backstopping in Washington) -- people who are focused on systemic issues and openly determined to walk away if our efforts are marginalized and our resources are squandered.

Six Keys to THEIR Victory, One Key to OUR Success

Reflecting on frustrating years in El Salvador, one American observer concluded that "the ultimate outcome of any counterinsurgency effort is not primarily determined by the skillful manipulation of violence"[29] in battle. Instead victory goes to the side that achieves more: 1) legitimacy; 2) unity of

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[29] Max Manwaring, "Toward an Understanding of Insurgency Wars: the Paradigm" (1991) Manwaring (ed.) Uncomfortable Wars: Toward a New Paradigm of Low Intensity Conflict, Westview, p. 20.

effort; 3) intelligence; 4) effective external support; 5) discipline and military capability; and 6) impact in reducing the opposition's external support. To the extent that the government has the upper hand in all six factors, it has a decided advantage. If, however, the government fails completely in any one of these six factors, or is weak in most of them, its prospects are poor.[30]

Legitimacy[31], unity of effort and intelligence[32] are the three most important factors for success -- but U.S. programs focused most heavily on issues of external support (e.g., the Ho Chi Minh Trail and "passing the supplemental appropriations bill") and military capability. And for good, but self-defeating reasons: these were issues we could easily attack with what we had on hand -- money, weaponry and military expertise.

Legitimacy, unity of effort, and intelligence were key to our clients success -- but all depended primarily on the host government's reforms. Getting these reforms required the

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[30] Manwaring refers to an unpublished study which found an 88% correlation between these factors and the outcome of "a sample of insurgencies that have taken place over the past 40 to 45 years." (pp. 19, 20) There is an alternative typology, however, for getting at these issues from vantage point of the insurgent instead of the counterinsurgent: see Bard O'Neill, Insurgency and Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare (Washington: Brassey's, 1990)

[31] Legitimacy is the accepted "moral right" to govern. It largely conditions a government's ability to attract voluntary support. International legitimacy may be harder to earn than domestic support, due to different minimum acceptable standards re democracy and human rights as in the cases of Argentina and Peru.

[32] The two most important elements of which are: ferreting out the insurgent leadership and incentive structures to develop local cadre committed to contest for control of their homes.

creation and exercise of U.S. leverage with the host government. However, while we had plenty of resources to bestow on our clients during the Cold War, the more aid we gave, the more leverage we surrendered. Recipients from Saigon to San Salvador "knew" that we were inextricably bound to their survival. Only when it became clear that we were pulling out (after Tet 1968 and the November 1989 Jesuits murder) did calls for internal reform and political settlement acquire compelling force.

In the "new world," the U.S. does not have to defeat any global rival, nor contend with Soviet "war by proxy" in the LDCs. Our interests do not require the survival of any client regime in as key to a global mosaic. This new-found ability to "walk away" provides us with potentially decisive leverage in dealing with client states -- if we dare use it and do so wisely.

REINVENTING U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE: FACILITATOR/CONSULTANTS

Our military assistance in Peru is tied to an "anti-narcotic" rationale; at the same time, it had to address the Peruvians' top security priority: Sendero Luminoso. Neither the A-37s we ultimately supported, nor the originally proposed battalion training center in the Upper Huallaga Valley were very relevant to either drugs or Sendero -- but they were something that we were institutionally comfortable doing. And ultimately that determined what we did. But it could have been different.

In Peru and elsewhere, the U.S. should adopt a new style of providing security assistance consistent with the new circumstances in which we find ourselves. That new "style" should:

-- Help the host government identify and correct its key strategic shortcomings and deemphasize our traditional assistance focused around "the pointy end of the gun";

-- Accept that the U.S. does not have "the answers" to mainline into other political systems. But we do have a variety of mechanisms[33] which could help the host country expand its political dialogue in search for a broad consensus on an appropriate strategy which would permit true "unity of effort:"[34]

-- Key on helping the government reinforce its all-important "legitimacy" at home and abroad.[35]

-- Emphasize good police work and intelligence based on motivated local cadre with something to fight for.

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[33] For instance, military Subject Matter Expert Exchanges (SMEEs), USIS, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), IMET-Extended, Anti-Terrorism Training (ATT) funded by State etc.

[34] The introduction of a specially tailored U.S. counterterrorism seminar conducted by ex-Rand analysts, Brian Jenkins and Cesar Sereseres, for top Colombian leaders in the late 1980s is supposed to have greatly helped Bogota rationalize its strategy. The first of two similar efforts in Lima flopped, but the second in 1991 provoked the beginning of some real interest. These are the kinds of high level, "concept-related" consulting services we should focus on -- instead of Detachments for Training (DFTs) and Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) to teach the troops how to bail water among the alligators.

[35] By relatively inexpensive steps such as:
-- instituting proactive HR programs with the military;
-- beefing up our anemic Administration of Justice (AOJ) and International Criminal Investigation Technical Assistance Program (ICITAP) under AID and the Department of Justice, rescuing them from the backwaters of U.S. security assistance and making an effective criminal justice system a central focus of our bilateral country strategy;
-- increasing host country tax collection capability;
-- introducing IGs to help control corruption;
-- and assistance through third party intermediaries (e.g., the OAS) to the mechanics of local elections where needed and appropriate.

In short, we should begin to act more like international consultants, helping our LDC clients rationalize what they do with what they have -- rather than playing the aging Santa Claus rapidly running out toys for resentful pre-teens with guns. This new role as a "facilitator" rather than as a fireman would require several changes in how we organize ourselves to do business, namely:

-- replace U.S. operationally-oriented officers with more Foreign Area Officer (FAO)-type diagnosticians to design and manage security assistance programs;

-- shift to more country-specific tailoring of assistance and away from vertical "stove pipe" programs pumping out primarily what Washington/SOUTHCOM backstop offices are geared to provide on short notice. Such horizontal integration between various agency programs can only take place at the country team level and would require full Ambassadorial backing;

-- renew the executive-legislative understanding on the purpose of security assistance by completely updating the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) which has become "barnacle encrusted"[36] since it was first passed in 1961. Such an effort should clearly specify the standards the U.S. requires with regard to human rights and democracy for cooperative assistance.

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[36] The International Cooperation Act of 1991, H.R. 25605, was a House Foreign Affairs Committee-inspired effort to do just that. It passed conference but fell short of administration desires on three counts and was vetoed. With a Democratic Administration and a Democratic Congress the time may be ripe to try again, this time hopefully leaving the executive with some more room for policy flexibility. Conversation with State Department Assistant Legal Advisor for Politico-military Affairs Edward Cummings, March 19, 1993.

-- we should repeal Section 660 of the FAA, the twenty year old legal prohibition against most U.S. aid to the police. This prohibition no longer is appropriate an era when democracy and human rights have replaced an earlier obsession with anti-communist stability as the lodestars of U.S. policy. Such an effort should be located in the reconstituted Narcotics and Crime bureau directly under the new Undersecretary of State for Global Issues primarily responsible for human rights and democracy.

Along with improving LDC criminal justice systems, smarter police work should replace military aid as the cutting edge of U.S. operational assistance to threatened governments. British counterinsurgency expert Sir Robert Thompson had the right emphasis when he said that the government's defense generally should rely primarily on the police and not the military. This should be reflected in U.S. assistance programs as well.

-- Military assistance should adopt a leaf out of AID's book and "sub-projectize" some of its programs, each with its own "conditions precedent" attached. The purpose would be to allow us to hold host country officials responsible to a reasonable level of effort in meeting agreed on targets -- without threats of across-the-board assistance cancellation for non-performance;

-- Lastly, but most important, we should prioritize our objectives and not attribute to a given level of assistance more leverage than it is intrinsically worth.

FORGING CONSENSUS AND BREAKING RICE BOWLS: BUREAUCRATIC POLITICS DRIVES THE PROCESS

The Clinton administration is carving out a new approach to change in the LDCs. The population explosion is coming anyway;

we can either cope with it or get bowled over. At the State Department, DoD and the NSC new structures are being created to grapple with its implications: the Undersecretary for Global Affairs at State, the Assistant Secretary for Democracy and Human Rights at DoD and the Global Issues unit at the NSC.

The existence of this interconnected bureaucratic architecture will help all three agencies synchronize on a new concept of "democratic security" -- one that focuses more on what the U.S. is for than on what we are against. Proactive programs supporting democratic institution building, human rights, and constructive political dialogue must come to the fore in our assistance efforts. We should rapidly phase out most LDC conventional military assistance programs -- which we can no longer adequately fund in any case. Advocates for democracy and human rights must help redesign a new U.S. strategy for LDCs -- and become central to the domestic constituency supporting it.

If the administration has a proactive program of democracy, human rights, and support for political consensus building already in place, it will be more feasible politically to reinvent a security assistance program that works -- one focused on programs that: 1) reinforce host government legitimacy at home and abroad; 2) stimulate the local political class -- including but not limited to the officer corps -- to confront the shortcomings of its strategy and create a community-based support structure; 3) give primacy to police and criminal justice issues over tactical military operations; and 4) provide more "concept-driven" assistance, in place of irrelevant hardware transfers and technical training.

The U.S. can be neither the world's policeman nor its universal social worker. With concentrated effort, however, we might become be a good "diagnostic consultant" and "facilitator" to countries that dare to profit from our principles and seek help in putting them into practice.

By innovative redesign of security assistance programs, the key action agencies (particularly DoD and the intelligence community) are in a position to drive policy -- or be left behind by it. To ride the wave, however, they must revise radically how they do business. On the military side, this means the Defense Security Assistance Agency (DSAA), Embassy-based Military Assistance Groups (MAAGs) and Defense Attache Offices (DAOs) should be rethought from the ground up. Ditto for State where the yawning gap between security assistance and "global issues" needs to bridged.

The policy planners need to wicker all of this into a new strategy for "democratic security." Congress too must be drawn into a compact for constructive engagement. But above all, DoD's program operators have to come up with a new vintage, rather than rebottling aged stocks already gone bad. Perhaps LIC policy never got a fair testing; but by now it has gone sour in the cask and can not be rehabilitated. That holds true in spades for Cold War-style counterinsurgency assistance.

One can not be too sanguine about early results, despite the best of intentions. The mindsets of too many players are deeply scarred by previous ideological battles, and overcoming institutional resistance will be formidable. Moreover, the "bad neighborhoods" of the LDCs will limit the success of even the

best policy. Many situations just are not resolvable, and we need the wisdom and courage to let them pass us by. In the end, tough cases where U.S. policy equities contend (like Peru) may well be decided by the power of clashing advocacy groups rather than by the merits of the issues.

Coming to grips with instability and disorder in the LDCs will be an uncomfortable process. U.S. Cold War strategy had its false starts (Alliance for Progress) and failures (Vietnam) -- and required a number of mid-course corrections (the Nixon doctrine replacing SEATO and CENTO) before proving ultimately successful. Constructing a consensus to cope with chaos in the LDCs will be even more confusing and conflict-ridden. But eventually we will have to do so, one way or the other. We might as well begin now, and set about it with our eyes open.

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