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U.S. Training of Foreign Military Personnel

Volume I - Executive Summary

By:

Harry O. Amos
George R. Bieber
John R. Johnson, Jr.
Charles S. T. Mallet

March 1979

Contract Number: MDA 903-79-C-0166

OPERATIONS ANALYSIS GROUP

GENERAL RESEARCH



CORPORATION

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training; expenditures for travel and living allowances.

The study then sets forth the conceptual basis, or rationale, for the IMET program, and lays out steps that should be taken to assure that individual country IMET programs are designed and prioritized within the conceptual framework.

Volume I is the executive summary; Volume II contains the main report and appendixes. ←

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE TASK

The purpose of this study is to evaluate current policies and procedures for planning, budgeting, and programming U.S. training of foreign military students in order to ensure that budget requests for International Military Education and Training (IMET) programs are based on a coherent rationale, reflect changing needs abroad, and take into account Foreign Military Sales (FMS) training alternatives, and that IMET funds are allocated to achieve the priority military and political objectives of U.S. foreign military training. A copy of the Work Statement, which includes specific areas and questions to be addressed, is appended to the report (Appendix A of Volume II).

The Director, Defense Security Assistance Agency (DSAA), requested that the study effort focus, to the extent practical in the limited time available, on the following aspects:

- Over the years, the rationale for IMET appears not to have been uniform, vacillating from one concept to another. There is a need to look at both the historical experience of some 30 years and at the situation today. From this review there needs to be developed a single, clear-cut rationale. In devising it, however, the study must not lose sight of reality; it must work in the world today while it points to the future.
- The rationale must be accompanied by a correlated concept for allocating funds. As with the rationale itself, this concept must be realistic, taking into account the way things are done today. The study should examine the feasibility of a transition in a year or more in order to implement the concept in a smooth and reasonable manner.

THE PROGRAM

IMET provides, on a grant basis, instruction and training in military skills and U.S. military doctrine to military and the related civilian personnel of the Ministry of Defense and Military Departments of friendly countries. This training, which is authorized under Section 541 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, supports the foreign policy objectives of the United States by providing an effective and relatively inexpensive contribution to the military strength of the free world. To date, the U.S. has trained approximately 500,000 foreign personnel under IMET since the inception of grant military assistance in 1950. Currently, the program is in the range of \$32 million annually, which accommodates about 4000 foreign trainees.

Most of the training is conducted in English in the United States, where the foreign trainee also has an opportunity to observe and become personally familiar with American institutions and customs. The prerequisite English language capability for training in the U.S. prepares students to attend subsequent training. English often becomes their second language, opening the door to Western literature well beyond military subjects. With few exceptions, the foreign trainees receive the same training as their U.S. counterparts, and are judged against the same professional and technical standards. All IMET serves some specific and legitimate military purpose within the armed forces of the trainee's country. IMET is not a cultural exchange program, although the exchange of cultural values inherent in bringing foreign and U.S. trainees together may be an additional benefit.

In addition to training installations in CONUS, DoD operates schools in the Panama Canal Zone and conducts training at certain other foreign locations. In the Canal Zone, instruction is conducted in Spanish and is designed to meet the unique training needs of Latin American countries. These schools also serve as multinational centers of learning and foster friendly relations with and among Latin American nations. Use is also made of mobile training teams, which conduct training in the foreign

country in those instances where the number of trainees is large, the period of training is relatively brief, the training requires the extensive use of interpreters, or the training necessarily involves equipment or facilities in the foreign country.

VALUE TO THE UNITED STATES

As with other aspects of military assistance, the value of IMET to the U.S. derives from the contribution it makes to international military cooperation between the U.S. and friendly foreign countries. In this role, the training of foreign military personnel plays a unique and continuing part. It is by attendance at U.S. military training institutions that foreign military personnel acquire the information and insight into U.S. military institutions and forces on which to base a decision as to the practicality of cooperation with the U.S. on military matters. It is in the training environment that military-to-military relationships of enduring value to the U.S. are made. There are many ways to establish such relations, but when U.S. and foreign military personnel sit down to plan and undergo training together, the mutual insight and rapport that result are of a different and higher order than relationships based on most other types of contact.

When a foreign country agrees to send its military personnel to be trained by the U.S., it casts a vote of confidence in the U.S. and its military institutions. When the U.S. offers training to foreign military personnel on a grant basis, it demonstrates a continuing real and active interest on the part of the U.S. in the national security of the foreign country. At the same time, the recipient country may perceive the training as serving its political as well as military interests.

For more than 30 years, U.S. programs to train foreign military personnel have made important contributions to U.S. national security. While the majority of U.S. training of foreign military personnel is now acquired by purchase under FMS procedures, IMET, even in its reduced form, continues to make those contributions unique to a grant program:

for example, a country of military importance to the U.S., such as Portugal, may not have the money to pay for the training; a country with little or no previous contact with U.S. military institutions, such as Finland, might be inclined to accept grant training, but would not consider purchase; a country with limited means might be persuaded, on the basis of experience with IMET, to seek additional essential training under FMS. Furthermore, IMET, as a grant program, gives the U.S. an important role in choosing individuals to receive the training.

There is a continuing need—with each generation—for the special benefits that flow from being able to train selected foreign military personnel in U.S. military facilities. These benefits are such as to justify a U.S. policy of providing training on a grant basis in those cases where purchase under FMS is not to be expected.

SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAM

The large number of students that friendly foreign governments have been willing to commit to the armed forces of the U.S. for training, and the number of countries willing to adopt, in large measure, the tactics, techniques, and weaponry of the U.S. are indicative of the success of IMET and prior grant programs. One writer has observed that never before in history have so many governments entrusted so many personnel, in such sensitive positions, to the training of another government. The success of IMET is also to be seen in the number of countries that, after experiencing grant training, purchase training under foreign military sales.

In the long run, however, there is perhaps nothing to compare with the success of IMET programs in directing U.S. military training to foreign officers who would occupy positions of influence and importance in their countries and armed forces. In April 1978, DoD asked U.S. MAAGs and diplomatic missions for names of foreign officers who had achieved flag rank, and or held positions of prominence and importance in their countries during the period FY 1974-1978. The responses from 47 MAAGs identified over 1000 persons holding prominent positions, and almost 1200 who have achieved flag rank.

OBJECTIVES AND EMPHASIS

Currently stated objectives of the IMET program are:

- To create skills needed for effective operation and maintenance of equipment acquired from the U.S.
- To assist the foreign country in developing expertise and systems needed for effective management of its defense establishment.
- To foster development by the foreign country of its own indigenous training capability.
- To promote U.S. military rapport with the armed forces of the foreign country.
- To promote better understanding of the United States, including its people, political system, and other institutions.

Initially, all of the objectives stated above should be pursued simultaneously, with emphasis shifting progressively from operations and maintenance to management of in-country capabilities, and finally to the preservation of military rapport. The ultimate objective is to limit programs to the latter and should be pursued as rapidly as possible, consistent with the achievement of overall objectives. Within this context, emphasis is placed on the training of individuals likely to occupy positions of responsibility in the foreign country's armed forces, on instruction that encourages military professionalism and the effective management of defense resources.

When U.S. missions were queried as to the relative importance of these objectives in the particular foreign country, "assisting the foreign country in developing expertise and systems needed for effective management of its defense establishment" was ranked first in the greatest number of cases. Ranking next in number of votes for first place was the objective "to promote better understanding of the U.S., including its people, political systems, and other institutions." A few missions responded

with objectives other than those stated but, with the exception of one that called for displacing Soviet influence, these were subsumed by the objectives now in effect.

CONCLUSIONS

From the data studied, the conclusions that follow appear warranted. Those of a general nature relate to the conceptual basis, or rationale.

General

IMET has been and continues to be an important, effective, and relatively inexpensive instrument for the achievement of U.S. security and foreign policy objectives. It provides a means through which the U.S. tangibly demonstrates its concern for the security interests of friendly foreign countries. It enables the U.S. to influence the selection of training perceived by the U.S. as being of the highest priority, and which the foreign government may, for various reasons, be unable to purchase. It contributes substantially to the objective of establishing communications and influence with foreign military and civil leaders.

There is a continuing need for the unique advantages inherent in a program to train foreign military personnel on a grant basis: a means through which the U.S. tangibly demonstrates its concern for the security interests of friendly foreign countries; an opportunity to influence the selection of training perceived by the U.S. as being of highest priority; a contribution to the establishment of communications and influence with foreign military and civilian leaders.

In the selection of IMET programs, program levels, training, and trainees, many diverse considerations, such as foreign policy imperatives, military requirements, and economic capabilities, must be taken into account. No generalization can be made as to which outweighs the other, and a determination necessarily demands a case-by-case evaluation in the context of the then existing situation.

Regardless of the dominant factor, however, the training must fulfill a military need of the foreign country.

Objectives

Currently stated objectives and emphases for IMET are basically sound. Consideration should be given, however, to amending current guidance to include the objective of tangibly demonstrating U.S. concern for the security interests of friendly foreign governments as a general objective.

Objectives and their relative priorities vary country by country and, with respect to each country, and must be stated clearly in order for those concerned to know what is to be accomplished and to judge what should be done. Because situations change, these aspects should be reviewed at least annually and, as appropriate, revised.

Program Development

The current zero-base budgeting (ZBB) concept for developing programs is fundamentally effective. It needs, however, to be strengthened. More detailed data are needed at the outset of the process. Program increments should be tied more precisely to a single objective—recognizing, however, that other objectives also will be served. And with respect to each program or increment thereof, better insights are needed as to how its objectives are best served by IMET rather than some other form of U.S. involvement. These changes can and should be introduced into the FY1981 budget cycle.

Consideration might be given to limiting the first increment to the minimum program required to meet the objective of establishing and maintaining military-to-military linkage between U.S. and foreign armed forces, with emphasis on reaching potential future leaders and disseminating U.S. military concepts and doctrine, thus furthering the perception of tangible U.S. interest in the armed forces of the foreign country.

Additional Data for ZBB Process

In preparing the May message, the Chief of Mission should state:

- The objectives, in order of importance, that the proposed training is designed to accomplish. These objectives are set forth in the MASM, Chapter E, Part 2. Any other objectives that might be applicable should also be noted.
- When, on a case-by-case basis, the training should be provided on a grant basis rather than sold under FMS.
- When considered appropriate, how the country program contributes to U.S. goals for observance of human rights.
- Why IMET funding levels proposed for English language training and Travel and Living Allowances are considered appropriate.

Professional Military Education

The utility of attempting to categorize certain courses as "professional military education" is in doubt. Certain courses, such as war collage and command and staff college, appear to warrant the distinction. Others, such as those concerned solely with operation and maintenance of equipment do not. In between lies a large body of courses that are difficult to so differentiate, and their arbitrary classification appears to serve no really useful purpose. It might be more meaningful to simply define professional military education as that training designed to provide or enhance leadership and the recipient force's capability to conduct military planning, programming, management, budgeting, and force development to the level of sophistication appropriate to that force.

MAAG Staffing and IMET Program Management

Because of manpower reductions over the past few years, DoD and MAAGs themselves have sought and found organizational and procedural innovations for carrying out, in the field, functions relating to

planning, developing, and implementing IMET programs. As a result, these reductions have not yet seriously jeopardized the program's management. When queried, a group of smaller MAAGs stated that further reductions would seriously affect their ability to manage IMET programs. To date, however, the principal effect has been a reduced capability on the part of MAAGs to follow up on utilization of trainees.

Nation Building

There is ample reason to consider nation-building effects in assessing the accomplishments of an actual or proposed IMET program. For IMET, however, nation building is not an end in itself; the essential purpose of IMET is to fulfill some actual or potential need in the country's defense establishment.

English Language Training

Consistent with their capabilities, foreign countries should be urged and encouraged to provide English language training from their own resources. Their ability to do so will, however, vary and only a relatively few countries can be expected to provide language training to the level required for successful completion of the more sophisticated and more specialized courses of instruction.

Travel and Living Allowances

It is not practical to establish arbitrary and generally applicable rules limiting the payment of travel and living allowances (TLA) by IMET, the situation being quite different from country to country. In some cases, payment of these costs by the IMET program is essential to continue a program. Wherever practical, however, foreign governments should be pressed to assume some or all of these costs.

Canal Zone Schools

The Canal Zone Military Schools (CZMS) are unique in that they offer instruction geared specifically to Latin American needs, are taught in Spanish, include foreign guest instructors, and promote

professional and cultural relationships among personnel from the participating American Republics. Much of the instruction offered is not available to other U.S. military schools. Total costs are comparable to those that would be incurred by attendance at schools in the U.S. but, unlike the latter, the CZMS currently are dependent on IMET support. The Canal Zone treaties and related arrangements should be taken into account in considering the future of these schools.

Mobile Training Teams

Mobile training teams are sometimes the most efficient, and possibly the only practical way to provide certain training. Where these conditions prevail and accomplishment of the particular training is of a sufficiently high priority, there should be no hesitancy to employ the mobile team method.