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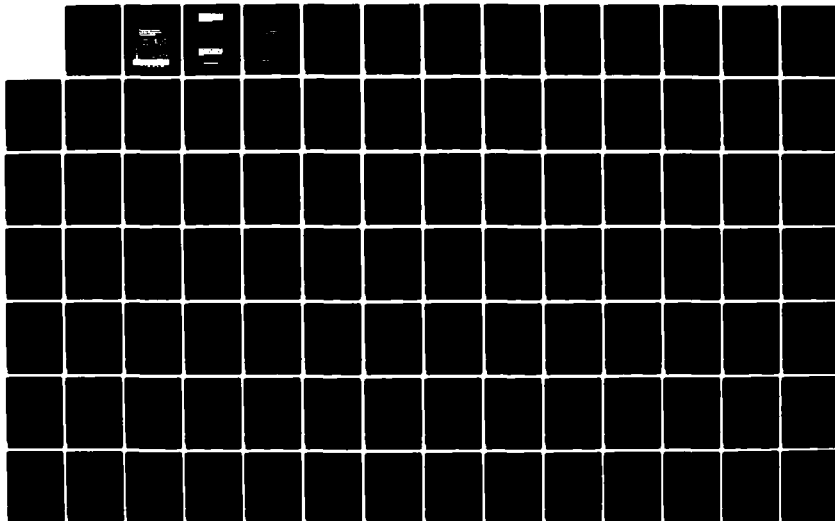
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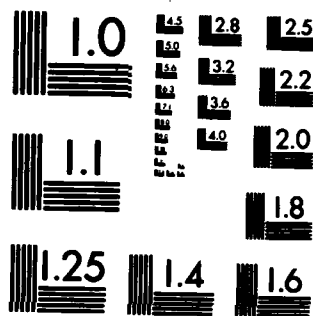
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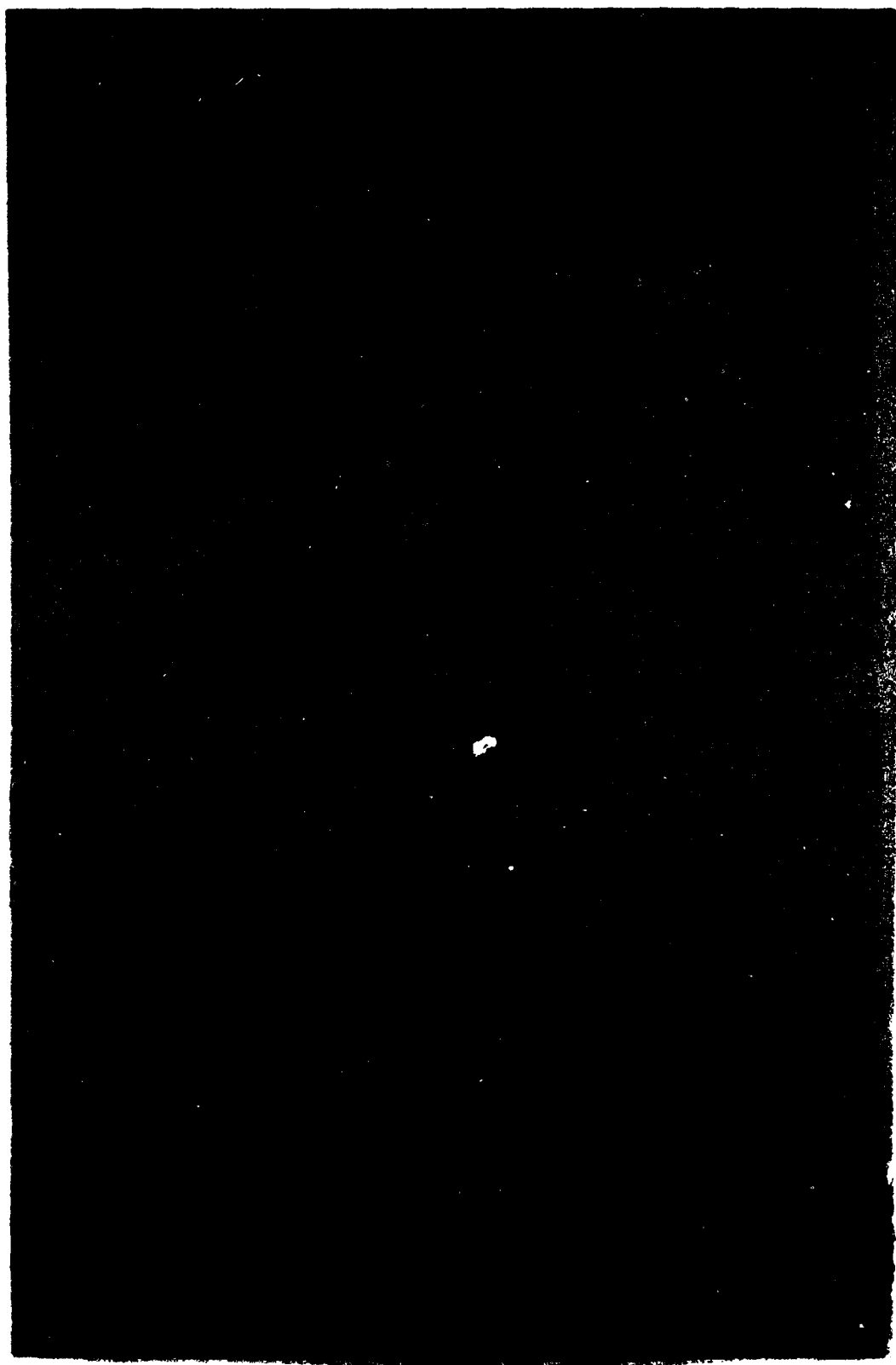
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Geopolitics, Security, and U.S. Strategy in the Caribbean Basin

David Ronfeldt

November 1983

A Project AIR FORCE report
prepared for the
United States Air Force

35th
Year



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PREFACE

The research leading to this report was initiated as one of several Project AIR FORCE studies of U.S. national security interests and future U.S. Air Force requirements in the Caribbean Basin. The report benefited from a Department of State Conference, held April 14 and 15, 1983, which focused on Caribbean Basin security issues. The report was completed with additional support from The Rand Corporation.

The study examines some operational military issues involving the Caribbean Basin. It reflects the broader concern that answers to operational military questions should depend heavily on answers to more fundamental questions about why and how the United States should be interested in this complex, unstable region. Based on an examination of current trends as well as historical experience since promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine in 1823, the study advances a conceptual framework that identifies underlying geostrategic principles for guiding U.S. policy in the Basin. The study then proposes specific measures for developing an integrated political, economic, and military strategy that would further U.S. interests and meet the interests of our Basin neighbors. The report is thus expected to be useful to a broad audience of defense strategists, policy planners, and specialists on Central America, the Caribbean, and U.S.-Latin American relations.

The other Caribbean Basin studies are:

Edward Gonzalez, *A Strategy for Dealing with Cuba in the 1980s*, R-2954-DOS/AF, September 1982.

David J. Myers, *Venezuela's Pursuit of Caribbean Basin Interests: Implications for U.S. National Security*, R-2994-AF, November 1983.

Joseph H. Stodder and Kevin F. McCarthy, "Profiles of the Caribbean Basin 1960/1980: Changing Geopolitical and Geostrategic Dimensions," N-2058-AF, December 1983.

Caesar D. Sereseres, *Military Politics, Internal Warfare, and U.S. Policy in Guatemala*, R-2996-AF, April 1984.

Adriana Bosch, "Nicaragua: The Internationalization of Conflict and Politics in Central America," N-2119-AF, June 1984.

This study was completed before the U.S. intervention in Grenada. The references to Grenada have not been changed, nor has the study

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been brought up to date. The possibility of a "hostile triangle" including Grenada is no longer an issue. Were it to become an issue again, perhaps because of events elsewhere in the Eastern Caribbean, the study's warnings would still hold.



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SUMMARY

Consensus on the nature and importance of U.S. security interests in the Caribbean Basin is sorely lacking. We need to improve upon the standard episodic and reactive approach to U.S. policy in the region if we are to achieve public consensus and sustain a U.S. strategy to arrest growing threats and extra-hemispheric intrusions.

A FRAMEWORK FOR U.S. STRATEGY

This study proposes a conceptual framework that implicitly modernizes positive elements of the Monroe Doctrine—retaining the requirement for U.S. primacy, yet transforming it so as to engage the interests and cooperation of our Basin neighbors. The study identifies four “principles” that have been the traditional underpinning of U.S. policy in the Basin. Although the ideal situation they describe has rarely been attained in full, they pose valid objectives that:

1. The Caribbean Basin be secure for U.S. presence, power, and passage;
2. Hostile foreign powers be prevented from acquiring military bases and facilities there;
3. Foreign balance-of-power struggles be excluded and prevented from destabilizing the region;
4. Few U.S. military resources be dedicated to protecting interests and assets there.

In combination, these principles match a strategic “imperative” that fits the Basin into the broader context of U.S. global strategy:

The ability of the United States to act as a world power in a global balance-of-power system is greatly enhanced by the exclusion of that system and its related threats and struggles from the Basin.

Otherwise, instability and insecurity in the Basin may so divert the United States as to constrain its global performance.

In extreme situations, this imperative provides a rationale for using military force against threats. But this is not its main purpose. Its thrust is *preventive* and *anticipatory*. It warns us to preclude new threats from arising in the Basin, and to contain them where they are already established, so that the United States can “protect itself by preventing a condition of affairs in which it will be too late to protect

itself."¹ Systemic global changes, including the expansion of Soviet power and the proliferation of European and other international actors in the Basin, now require the United States to devote energetic new attention to the region. Otherwise, competitive extra-hemispheric intrusions into the Basin will expand, potentially Balkanizing the Basin to the detriment of U.S. interests.

This conceptual framework illuminates the unique dimensions of Caribbean Basin security and focuses our attention on urgent policy issues.

- The imperative and four principles go beyond a narrow focus on the potential Soviet threat, and they run deeper than a complacent trust in global interdependence and the reputed obsolescence of traditional geopolitics.
- They allow equal weight to external and internal causes of insecurity and make clear that these are dynamically and inseparably linked.
- Although they do not rule out military action to eliminate potential threats, they explain why the militarization of the Basin cannot be the solution to local security problems.

PAST APPLICATION AND RECENT DISREGARD OF THE PRINCIPLES

The U.S. position in the Caribbean Basin and the application of the key principles have fluctuated historically from a low point in the early and mid 1800s, when the United States was too weak to impose them, to an almost commanding primacy during the first six decades of the 20th century. The major violation of the principles in this century began in the early 1960s when the Soviet Union acquired a military foothold in Cuba. The United States initially responded with a burst of alarm and activity. However, we agreed to tolerate this limited Soviet outpost after the Soviets removed their missiles in 1962: At the time, we were clearly the paramount superpower, the Soviet threat seemed marginal, and the Caribbean still resembled an "American lake."

The 1970s witnessed a continuing and cumulatively sharp diminution in U.S. presence and capabilities in the area. As the Vietnam syndrome took root, the United States gradually discarded its traditional

¹From Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes, as quoted in the *Memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine*, prepared by J. Reuben Clark, Under Secretary of State, in Senate Doc. 114, 71st Cong., 1930, p. xv and p. 179, citing an article by Hughes in the *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. XVII, 1923, p. 611.

presumption of hegemony, and the emerging power vacuum wrought major changes in the area's geopolitical dynamics.

- It motivated local elites and counter-elites to seek new allies outside their countries.
- It beckoned the regional powers—Cuba, Mexico, and Venezuela—to become assertive.
- It attracted the Socialist International from Europe and introduced into the Basin a new political rivalry between European-based Social Democracy and Christian Democracy.
- It encouraged the Soviet Union to further strengthen its Cuban ties.

The U.S. decline went largely unnoticed in the United States until the late 1970s. It took a series of events—the Panama Canal treaty negotiations, the Nicaraguan revolution, the resurgence of Cuban subversion, leftist and rightist violence in El Salvador and Guatemala, Cuba's attainment of considerable military capabilities, and the flight of refugees from Cuba, Haiti, and Central America—to dramatize that the gap between U.S. retrenchment and loss of control had created opportunities for the growth of local conflicts and for entrenchment by hostile regional and extra-hemispheric powers. These changes in the regional balance have finally stimulated renewed attention to Basin affairs.

EMERGING THREATS

The United States now confronts a massive challenge, unparalleled in this century, to traditional U.S. interests in the Caribbean Basin. Furthermore, although U.S. stakes in the region—sea lanes, strategic resources, competition with the USSR at a time of unfavorable trends in the global balance of powers—are increasing, our tangible and sustained commitment to protect those stakes has been gravely weakened. Threats to U.S. interests are emerging in two ways:

Hostile Force Expansion. An extension of a Soviet-Cuban military presence beyond fortress Cuba in a hostile axis straddling Central America (Nicaragua) and the Eastern Caribbean (Grenada) could transform the Basin into an important air and naval theater for Soviet force projection. Only a modest Soviet investment could require a costly U.S. counterinvestment, especially for air defense and sea/air surveillance. It could divert or tie down large U.S. resources in case of conflict. And it could drastically raise the military and political importance of U.S. bases in Panama, Puerto Rico, and even Guantanamo.

Low-Intensity Conflict and Its Internationalization. Taking advantage of U.S. retrenchment, Marxist revolutionaries have developed a new strategy, whereby they have turned Central America into the world's most internationalized laboratory for revolutionary (and counterrevolutionary) conflict. A spread of low-intensity conflict northward or southward in Central America or through the Caribbean islands could create opportunities for hostile force expansion and induce instability in Mexico, Panama, or Puerto Rico. Should local institutions prove incapable of containing the instability, the results could provoke a costly, prolonged U.S. military intervention.

These threats cannot be viewed in isolation from the East-West conflict. That conflict cannot provide the sole basis for U.S. strategy, but it does impose limits: U.S. strategy must prevent the Soviets from gaining military positions outside Cuba; yet U.S. strategy must also assure that U.S. military forces are not trapped in a sizable military intervention. Either extreme, should it develop, would seriously damage U.S. national security interests.

BUILDING COLLECTIVE SECURITY

The key principles suggest that U.S. strategy emphasize the long-term objectives of:

- Reducing the revolutionary conflicts and restoring stability;
- Arresting Soviet and Cuban military expansion;
- Ending the divisive intrusion of all external rivalries, including European ones;
- Accomplishing the above without major reliance on military instruments.

The United States, having retrenched too far in the 1970s, needs to expand its presence and participation in the Basin's political, economic, and military affairs in order to clearly restore and maintain U.S. primacy. Hegemony in the traditional imperialist sense would be unwise and infeasible, however. The key principles would be best served by the forging of a collective security approach (perhaps "collective hegemony") whereby other Basin governments would work in concert with the U.S. government, as sovereign equals, to advance the shared national interests of *all* participating states in seeing that the key principles are upheld.

The United States needs to develop a primarily nonmilitary strategy that integrates political, economic, and military instruments. Drawing partly on earlier experiences with the Good Neighbor Policy in the

1930s and the Alliance for Progress in the 1960s, such a strategy should deal successfully with four enduring challenges:

- Latin American nationalism seeks political sovereignty and economic independence by diversifying foreign relations away from the United States.
- The United States should become a better regional economic partner through trade, investment, technology transfer, aid, education, and immigration programs.
- Moderate political forces and institutions that can compete successfully with left- and right-wing forces should be fostered.
- The United States should construct coalitional security arrangements and military-to-military relationships that respond to U.S. and local defense needs and to shared political objectives.

Substantial progress with each of these would create building blocks for a long-term partnership based on mutual respect, responsibility, and reciprocity.

Application of the traditional strategic principles would have to take account of contemporary global, regional, and U.S. domestic constraints:

- Growing Soviet military power and enduring Soviet-Cuban ties make it unlikely that the Soviets can be dislodged from Cuba in the near future.
- Western Europe's economic activism is compatible with the interests of many Basin nations, including the United States, even though European governments and political parties sometimes oppose U.S. policies in the area.
- Latin American nationalism, stronger than ever, raises serious obstacles to any new U.S. pretensions to hegemony; governments in the Basin commonly perceive high costs in being closely identified with the United States.
- Within the Basin, growing differences between the Spanish-speaking and English-speaking nations may obstruct opportunities for regional cooperation.
- The U.S. government currently lacks the political will to greatly expand its assistance programs, and protectionism in the U.S. economy inhibits the adoption of special trade and investment preferences.
- Public disapproval of U.S. involvement in third-world conflicts has spread since Vietnam, and massive immigration from the Basin has aroused public concerns about the fate of people in Central America and the Caribbean.

To design effective building blocks in light of these constraints, U.S. policy may benefit from the following recommendations:

Nationalism and inter-American policy dialogue: Building regional trust depends on embracing the core nationalist concepts of political sovereignty, economic independence, and national dignity, which may in turn provide a powerful barrier against extra-hemispheric intrusion.

- In demonstrating greater respect for local concepts of sovereignty, U.S. strategy should recognize that developing the state (including the military) often takes priority over the private sector.
- A U.S. dialogue with Basin nations should emphasize our concept of popular sovereignty; it lies behind issues of political democracy, human rights, and refugee and immigration flows.
- U.S. policy should make clear (and Basin leaders should recognize) that the United States can live and cooperate with radical reformist regimes in the Basin insofar as they help preclude extra-hemispheric intrusions.
- U.S. policy should encourage political leaders in the Basin to examine whether their interests are served by internationalizing local conflicts, introducing balance-of-power games, and ultimately risking Balkanization.

Economic partnership and production sharing: Striving for collective security would require preferential trade, investment, technology transfer, training, education, and immigration relations that rely primarily on bilateral and regional instruments.

- All portions of the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) should be carried out. Without it, U.S. security strategy will lack a necessary economic instrument.
- The Simpson-Mazzoli immigration bill offers a sensible, measured approach to protecting U.S. national interests while accepting our new realities as a Caribbean Basin nation.
- In consultation with Basin governments, the United States should consider establishing a Marshall-like plan for regional economic development that is tailored to local absorptive capacities.
- The United States should gradually encourage a North American economic community among the United States, Canada, Mexico, and possibly other Basin nations.

Moderate, centrist political forces: Collective security cannot be based simply on opposition to extremists; it must rest on moderate centrist forces (including the militaries) as natural U.S. allies. The United States is the only power that can foster and shield a strong political center in the area. However, the center is now partly defined by Social Democratic and Christian Democratic forces that look to Western Europe. A major U.S. effort is needed to cultivate these political elites.

- Human rights policy can be an effective instrument for enhancing the survival and success of local moderates only if it is backed by an expansion of U.S. power and presence in the Basin.
- U.S. strategy needs political instruments, including the nascent Project Democracy and American Political Foundation, for fostering moderate political elites, parties, and organizations in the Basin.
- Exiles, refugees, and immigrants may constitute an untapped resource. Leftist and rightist exiles have exploited their presence on U.S. soil. The U.S. government might develop mechanisms for promoting contacts and information exchange with moderate pro-U.S. elements who plan to return to their homelands. And it might consider creating an instrument for absentee balloting where a large proportion of a nation's voting population resides here.

Inter-American security and military relations: Meeting the military challenge will depend largely on the effectiveness of U.S. political and economic measures. But the extent to which threats to U.S. interests expand (or contract) will also depend on local security and military cooperation with the United States. Preserving and strengthening our present military position is essential to U.S. interests, including the maintenance of our "economy of force" and "hemispheric defense" doctrines in an uncertain future.

(1) Two *strategic optics* exist competitively. Viewing the Basin as "the maritime backyard of NATO" engages the responsibilities of U.S. Atlantic Command (LANTCOM, based at Norfolk, Virginia) against potential threats from Cuba. Viewing the Basin as "the continental backyard of the United States" justifies the interests of U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM, based at Quarry Heights, Panama), especially in promoting military-to-military relations. So long as a hostile axis is prevented, this *command structure* should be retained; a strong SOUTHCOM is needed for political and military reasons. An

expansion of hostile force presence, however, would play havoc with this split structure and might require the design of a new U.S. command structure and force posture for the Basin, perhaps under a "North American Security Zone" including the continental United States and Canada.

(2) The triangular *U.S. military basing configuration* in the Basin—Panama, Puerto Rico, and Guantanamo—provides a daily reminder of our interests in Basin security, and a needed infrastructure for contingencies. The potential for instability in Panama and Puerto Rico argues for keeping bases in both (there are no better alternative locations). Besides reducing our capacity for independent action, loss of such bases would constrain cooperation with locals and put the onus on them to provide us with in-country facilities.

(3) Our *security assistance and military-to-military relations* must take into account the political centrality of military institutions in many Basin nations, where governments are normally based on civil-military coalitions and where local security doctrines embrace economic and political development objectives. U.S. strategy should balance responsiveness with restraint in arms transfer, advisory, and training programs, competing with alternative sources of supply but inhibiting the introduction of advanced weapons. U.S. assistance should emphasize military leadership training and organizational development.

(4) The relative weakening of U.S. power and presence in Latin America, the demise of earlier shared threat perceptions, and the Falkland/Malvinas conflict weakened the inter-American security system and its institutions (e.g., the Inter-American Defense Board). There are no easy answers to reforming and strengthening them. Within the Basin, however, there is an urgent need for the United States to promote new *coalitional (or collective) security approaches* that engage the common interests of the larger and smaller nations in resolving potential border conflicts, containing hostile force expansion, and limiting internal wars. The ultimate expression might be a regional peacekeeping mechanism that, perhaps even in the event of a disintegrating El Salvador, could conduct a politico-military interposition to halt both left- and right-wing violence against the population, while protecting governmental negotiations to oblige a peaceful, moderate settlement to the conflict.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In writing a study this expansive, I have been fortunate in drawing on inspiration, support, and criticism from many sources. My colleagues in the Rand project on Caribbean Basin security issues—Edward Gonzalez, Caesar Sereseres, and Yoav Ben Horin—generously assisted and encouraged me in completing earlier drafts of this study. The formal reviewers—Robert Komer (who was Under Secretary of Defense for Policy during the Carter Administration) and William Luers (who was recently Ambassador to Venezuela)—proved to be excellent choices. These constructive individuals all helped me to clarify potentially provocative points, reformulate evident overstatements, and avoid excessive rhetoric. And they each contributed substantive information that has strengthened the treatment of specific issues.

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I. INTRODUCTION

By geopolitical fact, the Caribbean Basin lies within the North American security zone.¹ It has been an axiom of U.S. foreign policy for more than a century that the security of the Basin is of special strategic interest to the United States, but the prominence and implications of that axiom have varied with changes in the global and regional contexts. In periods of stability, as in the mid 1930s and the early 1970s, the United States was able to treat Basin security as a routine concern. But in other periods, the threat to regional security has appeared so pressing that concerted U.S. attention and effort were required, as during the early and mid 1960s. The 1980s are again such years.

Strategy is not the only problem for U.S. policy. Daily developments in Central America have transfixed the Congress, the media, and the public with the horrors of civil war and with the moral ambiguities of supporting repressive regimes in order to prevent victory by revolutionaries who may impose totalitarian orders and align themselves with the Soviet bloc. In the face of these political and moral dilemmas, the U.S. government cannot afford to abstain from strong involvement in Central America and the Caribbean: To do so would result in seriously detrimental consequences, not only for peoples of the region but also for U.S. interests inside and outside the Basin.

It has long been recognized, for example, that conflicts in the Persian Gulf could jeopardize overall U.S. security and strategy. Less evident is that conditions in the Persian Gulf and in the lower priority Caribbean Basin are strategically interdependent.

- The growing potential for Soviet aggression and subversion in the Persian Gulf, which could damage Western access to vital oil supplies, enhances the importance of the Basin as a strategic petroleum reserve.
- Within the Basin, the Soviets and their Cuban allies have growing military capabilities to patrol and interdict U.S., Caribbean, and Atlantic sea lanes for supplying military logistics to the Persian Gulf and Western Europe.

¹The term "Caribbean Basin" is used here to include all the countries of Central America and the insular Caribbean plus Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Guyana, and Suriname.

- The availability of U.S. military power for Persian Gulf and European contingencies, which is already quite constrained, would be seriously encumbered if it becomes necessary to re-deploy U.S. forces to prevent Soviet and Cuban threats in the Basin, or to cope with other conflicts there.
- Washington's credibility with vulnerable allied governments like those in Saudi Arabia and Oman may be damaged by repeated failure to prevent Cuban-backed insurgencies from installing Marxist-Leninist regimes in our natural sphere of influence.

Thus, the stability and security of the Basin is an increasingly sensitive element in America's geostrategic standing and its capacity to project its power and influence globally.

Formulating a new, publicly accepted strategy toward the Basin is a formidable task, in some ways less tractable than doing so for other regions. There is widespread consensus on the stakes in the Persian Gulf and their geopolitical relevance to U.S. security, but consensus in the case of the Caribbean Basin is lacking even on such fundamentals. Analysts of all stripes generally agree that political instability in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan bear on major U.S. interests. In contrast, both our interests in Central America and the threats to them often seem obscure, peripheral, even immaterial, and hence subject to contradictory interpretations. In addition, the fact that we can rush overwhelming military force into the Basin if necessary may relieve us from planning anticipatory and deterrent strategies well in advance.

Ever since the sudden Sandinista victory in Nicaragua in 1979, public policy debates have raged over the implications of leftist revolutions in the tiny neighboring nations of Central America and the Caribbean. Visions of "another Cuba" in Nicaragua and Grenada, of "another Vietnam" in El Salvador and Guatemala, and possibly of "another Iran" in Mexico haunt the speculations of many analysts and strategists. Conservative elements in particular have argued that instability and insecurity in the area can prove dangerously detrimental to the U.S. geostrategic position in the East-West struggle. Another school of thought has contended that leftist-nationalist revolutions in such poor, tiny, out of the way nations as Nicaragua and El Salvador have no important bearing on U.S. security and should even be treated as welcome changes for the betterment of the local populations and North-South relations.

The debates over this volatile mix of strategic, developmental, and human-rights issues have extended deep inside the U.S. government. During the Carter administration, inter-agency controversies over basic

U.S. interests and objectives hindered proposals to expand U.S. military assistance to nations in Central America and the Caribbean where there were human rights violations. Following the Sandinista victory in Nicaragua, officials in the Carter administration pursued a strategy of accommodation in order to co-opt radical change in Central America, but such a strategy could not be adequately tested because of Congressional opposition and the deteriorating situation in El Salvador. The policy debates became the most divisive during the U.S. presidential campaign and transition period.

The Reagan administration has installed a new sense of direction, and elements of an overall strategy have emerged. The Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) is a particularly promising sign. Nonetheless, the long-range geopolitical and strategic importance of the area, the priority and feasibility of particular objectives, and the design of specific political, economic, and military instruments have yet to be enunciated clearly. Outside as well as inside the government, the Reagan administration faces a mighty task of shaping an adequate national consensus about U.S. interests and objectives in the region. Unless a consensus is developed to ameliorate the present widespread divisiveness, it will be difficult if not impossible to sustain any U.S. security strategy in the Basin.

Thus even at this late date it is still necessary to find prudent and effective answers to the most fundamental questions for U.S. policy and strategy in the Basin (indeed, the same ones posed earlier in debates about Vietnam):

- Why should the United States be interested in the area?
- What specifically should be of interest?
- How should the United States pursue its interests?

The crucial importance of these questions is evident from President Reagan's beleaguered efforts to promote even modest economic initiatives for bolstering Basin security: "As I have talked these problems over with friends and fellow citizens here in the United States, I'm often asked: 'Why bother? Why should the problems of Central America and the Caribbean concern us? Why should we try to help?'"² The answers remain so elusive that the President has been obliged to establish a National Bipartisan Commission on Central America, headed by Henry Kissinger.

From the standpoint of U.S. security, standard declarations of U.S. interests (e.g., sea lanes, strategic resources) and objectives (e.g., opposition to Soviet-Cuban roles) no longer seem to provide adequate

²From the address by President Ronald Reagan, 1982, p. 6.

rationales for developing specific options and instruments. So much has changed so quickly throughout the Basin, and both the causes and consequences are so poorly understood, that we need better answers to first-order questions to help us determine what roles U.S. military power and presence might play in the region. U.S. Army commanders, smarting from the lessons of Vietnam, have raised their voices to deny that the Central American strife has a military solution; a clear public consensus on U.S. interests and aims and public awareness of the potential costs and risks is necessary before they will let the Army get involved in new U.S. military intervention.³ The rationales for U.S. security assistance in Central America, the use of military bases in Panama and Puerto Rico, the establishment of a regional coast guard in the Eastern Caribbean—these and other specific military issues—have thus come to depend largely on broader public arguments about why and how the United States should care about the instability afflicting the Basin.

This study offers a broad geopolitical assessment of U.S. security interests and objectives in the Caribbean Basin. It identifies a set of principles on which to base U.S. security and military strategies in the region for the remainder of the 1980s. The geopolitical assessment and the related principles are used to propose political, economic, and military guidelines that may best protect and promote the long-run security interests of the United States in the Basin and elsewhere.

³Their views reflect recent U.S. Army appraisals of the Vietnam conflict, especially that by Summers, 1982. For a brief overview, see Summers, 1983, pp. 40-46.

II. A FRAMEWORK FOR MODERNIZING TRADITIONAL PRINCIPLES

For decades it has been difficult to make a case for sustained U.S. attention to Latin America. High-level decisionmakers normally emphasize major global problems, while the bureaucracies resist initiatives that would take resources away from established commitments and priorities in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. As a result, Washington's standard approach to our Latin American interests has been quite episodic and reactive: It has taken actual crises, brushfires, foreign meddling, and potential threats to help make the case for special U.S. attention. For example, in the early 1960s the Cuban Revolution motivated the United States to promote the Alliance for Progress and the Military Assistance Program—until Cuba's export of revolution diminished in the late 1960s.

Nicaragua's revolution, El Salvador's civil war, Cuba's military expansion, and other problems in the Caribbean Basin have driven Washington to rely again on this standard approach for setting key objectives and rallying public consensus. But it is not working well this time. The policy environment has changed: The constraints on U.S. global power are greater than in the past, the bureaucratic competition for scarce resources is stiff, and U.S. domestic interest groups are divided politically. Furthermore, the standard approach is intellectually flawed.

FLAWS IN THE STANDARD APPROACH

Standard declarations of U.S. interests and objectives normally contain two elements. One identifies the crucial value of sea lines of communication (SLOCs) and strategic resources (especially Mexican and Venezuelan petroleum) to U.S. security and commerce; the other identifies the threats and risks posed by enemies (specifically the Soviet Union and Cuba). Together, these elements show that security in this adjacent region is vital to U.S. interest; hence U.S. policy and strategy must arrest the threats and deny access to hostile powers.

That is of course a realistic and sensible position, but the approach is inherently incomplete for dealing with today's complexities. Critics have reason to assail it for sounding like a return to an allegedly obsolete Monroe Doctrine, for treating local conflicts as East-West

challenges, and for overplaying the strategic dimensions of problems that are largely socioeconomic and even ethical in nature. Moreover, the approach is flawed even for those who would accept and use it as a basis for designing U.S. policy and strategy in the Basin. Although it does identify critical U.S. interests and objectives, it provides little more than a direction of intent that might rationalize almost any policy measures. It does little to relate Basin security to U.S. global priorities and strategies, except for possible specific threats to SLOCs and oil supplies. And it contains no clear strategic principles beyond that of denying local military access to hostile powers—a principle already violated. Such standard declarations of U.S. interests and objectives, as found in government documents and statements over the years, sound like an archaic and unconvincing litany in today's world, even though they contain much truth.

To help overcome these deficiencies and build a new strategic consensus, this report proposes a conceptual framework for clarifying U.S. interests and identifying guidelines for U.S. strategy. Far from denying the validity of time-honored U.S. interests, the proposed framework ultimately implies modernizing positive elements of the Monroe Doctrine—retaining its essential requirement for U.S. primacy in the Caribbean Basin, yet transforming it into a constructive appeal for “collective hegemony” that would engage the cooperation of our Basin neighbors.

The term “Monroe Doctrine” is loaded with historical and ideological symbolism. It arouses mixed feelings among many Americans but is sure to excite profoundly negative emotions among most Latin Americans. I introduce the notion of “modernizing the Monroe Doctrine” with caution—but without hesitation. We have been too long and too easily persuaded by critics here and abroad that the Monroe Doctrine epitomizes the imperialist, interventionist, and militarist tendencies in U.S. policy toward Latin America. This study sees that the Doctrine has expressed positive geopolitical (and philosophical) principles and is rooted in valuable historical traditions. Far from being obsolete or dead, the strategic principles remain relevant to the U.S. ability to deal with the exigencies of an increasingly interdependent and multipolar world, preferably through a constructive collective approach that emphasizes political and economic over military dimensions. Recognition of this conceptual lineage, however, should not give way to an insensitivity to practical political realities. *Hence this study does not recommend that the United States actually proclaim a policy to modernize the Monroe Doctrine. Other language and symbols need to be developed.*

The proposed framework is intended to have some distinctive conceptual strengths because it does not emphasize a static definition of "interests" and "objectives" per se. Instead, it relies on formulating principles for regional behavior and an overarching imperative for strategic behavior. These distill lessons from more than a century of U.S. involvement in the Basin and are relevant to present and prospective trends in the global, domestic, and regional environments for U.S. policy. The principles show that the stakes extend beyond just preventing gains by hostile powers. They imply that U.S. strategy should be anticipatory and preventive rather than reactive. And they help build a strong case for sustaining special U.S. attention to the Basin as an area of unique importance to overall U.S. strategy.

FOUR KEY PRINCIPLES AND ONE STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE

Security in the Caribbean Basin has traditionally served two crucial strategic functions: preventing extra-hemispheric powers from posing threats to the U.S. mainland and enhancing U.S. capabilities as a global power (especially through secure use of sea lanes and resources in the Basin). To serve these functions, U.S. strategy has traditionally depended on the application of the following principles:

1. The Caribbean Basin should be secure for U.S. presence, power, and passage;
2. Potentially hostile foreign powers should be prevented from acquiring military bases and facilities in the area;
3. Foreign balance-of-power struggles should be excluded and prevented from destabilizing the region;
4. Few U.S. military resources should be dedicated to protecting interests and assets there.

These principles are interconnected. The first one may hold only if the second and third are accomplished. Upholding the second and third may not assure the first (e.g., if chronic underdevelopment and violent instability within the region create indigenous threats to U.S. interests). The fourth principle may be sustained only if the preceding three are accomplished.¹

Together, the four principles describe an ideal situation that U.S. strategy should strive to approximate. The principles serve a strategic

¹A fifth principle might also be included: that spillover from Basin instabilities into the U.S. domestic scene be minimized.

"imperative" (or axiom) rarely noted anymore, which fits the Basin into the broader context of U.S. global strategy:

The ability of the United States to act as a world power in a global balance-of-power system is greatly enhanced by the exclusion of that system and its related threats and struggles from the Basin.

Otherwise, instability and insecurity in the Basin may divert the United States to an extent that constrains its ability to play its global role from a position of strength, especially if the restoration of Basin security should require large U.S. military measures that contradict the fourth principle above.

The logic of these principles and imperative has been most understandable in periods of global systemic change, including the rise of new power contenders, when an intrusion into the Basin by one foreign power has prompted competitive, divisive intrusions by others. In combination, these principles have been unique to the Caribbean Basin. They have not all applied to South America, where it has been much more difficult and less important to exclude extra-hemispheric powers and their struggles. They have applied even less to the Persian Gulf and the Middle East, where security has normally depended on maintaining a balance among outside powers, and on the dedication of considerable U.S. military resources to regional defense.

The ideal of fully implementing all the principles has rarely been attained. U.S. position and power in the Basin have fluctuated historically, ranging from an early low point in the 19th century to an almost commanding primacy in the mid-20th century. Present-day application of the principles would have to take into account several contemporary constraints, including:

- The global expansion of Soviet military power and the enduring strength of Soviet-Cuban ties make it unlikely that the Soviets can be dislodged from Cuba in the near future.
- Western Europe's economic activism has resumed global proportions that meet the interests of many Basin nations, including the United States, even though European governments and political parties sometimes oppose U.S. policies in the area.
- Latin American nationalism, stronger than ever, raises serious obstacles to any new U.S. pretensions to hegemony; few governments in the Basin want to be closely identified with the United States.
- Growing differences between the Spanish-speaking and the newly independent English-speaking states of the Caribbean may impede the prospects for inter-American cooperation.

- The U.S. government currently lacks the political will to greatly expand its programs in the Basin, and protectionism in the U.S. economy inhibits the extension of special trade and investment preferences.
- Within the United States, public disapproval of U.S. military involvement in third-world conflicts has risen greatly since Vietnam, while massive immigration from the Basin has aroused public concerns about the fate of people in Central America and the Caribbean.

Such considerations would have to modify a translation of the traditional principles into a realistic U.S. strategy.

Thus adjusted, the four key principles and the related strategic imperative constitute a strong, unique case for devoting special U.S. attention to Basin security and for designing a strategy to uphold U.S. primacy there. They amount to a framework for modernizing positive elements of the Monroe Doctrine that "rests 'upon the right of every sovereign state to protect itself by preventing a condition of affairs in which it will be too late to protect itself.'"²

COMPETING PERSPECTIVES ON U.S. GLOBAL STRATEGY

For this framework to amount to more than just another case of special pleading for U.S. attention to a neglected region, it should improve upon influential global perspectives on U.S. strategy. A full analysis of alternative global perspectives is not possible here; but two are so important that they should be noted, even briefly. Although each proceeds from quite different assumptions and concerns, each has been inclined to resist a large upgrading of Basin security as a high priority requirement for U.S. global strategy.

Interdependence: The Obsolescence of Traditional Security Concerns

Many U.S. and foreign analysts became persuaded in the 1970s that wide-ranging economic and technical developments have transformed the international system to the point where global "interdependence"

²From Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes, as quoted in *Memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine*, prepared by Clark, 1930, pp. 178-179.

rather than regional "geopolitics" is the central issue of the day.³ In their view, the era of territorial security for the United States (and others) is irrevocably gone. "Strategic backyards" no longer matter, natural "spheres of influence" are obsolete, and "hegemony" cannot be exercised or maintained. It would be archaic, if not utterly futile, for the United States to revive anything like the Monroe Doctrine. Instead, greater political and ideological diversity should be tolerated within the Basin.

According to these beliefs, the emergence of radical Marxist regimes in such small, weak countries as Nicaragua and potentially El Salvador is unimportant to U.S. security needs. A wise U.S. policy would renounce interventionism and paternalism, accept as inevitable the growing involvement of non-hemispheric actors in the Basin, and welcome international negotiations to settle local disputes. U.S. strategy should turn deliberately either to accommodate radical regimes or to disengage from the Basin.

This general line of reasoning, which has heavily influenced the editorial and opinion pages of our leading newspapers, continues to prevail among U.S. liberal intellectuals and Western European Social Democrats who deal with Latin America.⁴ Its partial acceptance within the Carter administration's policymaking circles may have contributed to the power vacuum that developed in the Basin during the 1970s because of a U.S. disengagement from the region.⁵ At present this perspective underlies many intellectual criticisms of the Reagan administration's policies in the Basin.

The strength of the interdependence perspective lies in its capacity to illuminate many of the new structural constraints on the exercise of U.S. power in the Caribbean Basin. Thus its arguments against a simplistic, interventionist invocation of traditional strategic principles cannot be ignored. And in a positive sense, its proponents have

³Nye, 1982, pp. 391-411, analyzes the apparent decline of U.S. power from the perspective of one of the originators of interdependence analysis. My sketch, however, draws on a broad array of writing, including analysts who are also concerned about dependency in U.S.-Latin American relations. Some powerful proponents of global economic interdependence, such as the Trilateral Commission, will thus not find their views fully reflected here.

⁴Influential early representations of this position include: Commission on United States-Latin American Relations, *The Americas in a Changing World*, 1975, especially the main report and the papers on the changing international conditions by Hoffman and Roett; and Lowenthal, 1976, pp. 199-213. Recent examples include Feinberg, 1981, pp. 1121-1146; and Grabendorff, 1982c. Their views partly reflect the nationalist anti-dependency views of Latin American intellectuals.

⁵During the Carter administration, national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski reportedly considered making a formal policy declaration that the Monroe Doctrine was dead.

advocated enlarging U.S. economic assistance in the Basin. Nevertheless, this perspective tends to assume that interdependence will surely strengthen global security, when in fact it is just as likely to create unwelcome vulnerabilities. Moreover, it has so far not helped much to analyze (much less, predict) the increasing importance of traditional geopolitical factors for U.S. security.

The Globe as a Single Strategic Stage with Linked Theaters

Leading U.S. global defense strategists, recognizing the growth of global interdependencies and regional diffusions of power, have come to view the world as a single strategic stage whose separate military theaters are interconnected.⁶ This view helps illuminate the fact that defending the Persian Gulf is essential for U.S. and NATO security; indeed, this has been the view's main purpose and utility. In addition, it helps examine prospects for lateral competition and escalation across theaters. And it argues for strengthening our global maritime presence and conventional warfighting capabilities.

As a mode of analysis, however, the perspective of a single strategic stage has not yet been developed sufficiently to establish clear, worldwide priorities among U.S. third-area interests, and it has not yet been applied seriously to the Caribbean Basin.⁷ In principle, it should help to link the Basin to our global security interests. And its proponents would surely agree that the Basin is an important theater that now deserves higher attention. Nonetheless, this strategic perspective seems inherently biased against thinking in terms of separate spheres of influence; it would treat the Basin not as a singularly important theater but as only one among several. In a time of growing constraints on U.S. global power and bureaucratic infighting to protect institutionalized priorities, this perspective thus seems more likely to justify the traditional, higher priority claims exerted by other, more clearly threatened theaters than to encourage new initiatives for allocating scarce resources to Caribbean Basin security. To date, most thinkers in this school have viewed the Basin mainly in terms of the SLOCs essential to NATO, as a minor source of military threats in peacetime that can be handled readily in wartime, and as otherwise

⁶Influential formulations include Schlesinger, 1980, pp. 274-281; Wohlstetter, 1980, pp. 109-188; and Komer, 1981, pp. 64ff.

⁷So as not to oversimplify this synthesis, it should be pointed out that this global perspective includes two overlapping schools of thought: One gives traditional priority to coalition defense of NATO and the Persian Gulf; see Komer, 1982, pp. 1124-1144. The other, although not denying the importance of NATO, aims to develop a more independent and globally distributable U.S. force posture that would be better tailored to dealing with non-NATO threats wherever they may occur; see Lehman, 1981, pp. 9-15.

presenting security issues that require political and economic responses.

ADVANTAGES AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

What are the strengths and implications of the proposed framework for U.S. strategy toward the Basin? How do they compare with the two globalist perspectives?

First, by way of its strategic imperative, the framework explains that Basin security deserves to be a special long-range concern of U.S. strategy, in peacetime as well as wartime. More specifically, *its principal objective is to "disentangle" Basin security from the global East-West conflict:*

- The framework would thus treat the Basin as the continental backyard of the United States, striving thereby to eliminate (ideally) or at least minimize Soviet military use of Cuba and otherwise reduce the internationalization of low-level conflicts within the region.
- In contrast, the interdependence perspective has treated the growth and management of interdependence *per se* as a primary concern, while downplaying U.S. needs for preventing the further intrusion of the Soviets and other adversaries in the Basin.
- The global-stage perspective has treated the Basin primarily as the maritime backyard of NATO, thus responding narrowly and secondarily to the Soviet use of Cuba as a forward military base, and to potential related threats in wartime. This perspective has rarely concerned itself with the growth of low-level conflicts in Central America during peacetime.

Second, the framework goes beyond a narrow focus on the Soviet threat as the external cause of Basin insecurity. It does not assume that the removal of the Soviet threat alone would end U.S. security problems there. Instead, *it views Basin insecurity not only in terms of the presence of a single hostile military power, but also in terms of the general political involvement of extra-hemispheric actors in the political struggles occurring in the Basin:*

- The proposed framework assumes that the movement toward a more multipolar international system in the decades ahead could introduce new and more complex security problems in the

Basin, even through the actions of some of our allies and friends.

- In contrast, the interdependence perspective not only has downplayed the Soviet threat, but also has welcomed ever-expanding involvements by our West European allies in Basin affairs on the assumption that such roles will benefit U.S. interests.
- The global-stage perspective has concentrated on the Soviet threat and ignored the implications of allied political involvement in Basin affairs.

Third, the framework matches a model of political conflict in the Basin that gives equal weight to internal and external political factors. *It thus assumes that internal and external forces are inseparable as causal factors behind Basin conflict and instability:*

- As a consequence, the framework would require that the United States reassert a strong political, economic, and military presence in the development and security of the Basin.
- In contrast, the interdependence perspective has emphasized the internal causes of conflicts. Moreover, it has tended to treat the United States itself as the primary provider of an international dimension to the otherwise local conflicts of the Caribbean Basin.
- The global-stage perspective has involved a similarly reductionist approach that emphasizes the external causes of conflict and locates these in Moscow and Havana.

Fourth, the framework does not presume that modernizing the Monroe Doctrine in the 1980s would require the assertion of military force throughout the region. On the contrary, for sound strategic reasons, *the framework argues against the militarization of the Basin as a solution to the region's security problems:*

- The framework reflects a broader U.S. concern that scarce military assets not be diverted to or tied down in the Basin. It is also sensitive to U.S. as well as local desires that the Basin's problems should be addressed through political and economic responses. However, it does not exclude the selective use of military instruments, whether direct or indirect, to cope with security problems, such as local revolutionary insurgencies or Soviet-Cuban expansionism in the Basin.
- In contrast, the interdependence approach has not only opposed a general military solution but is also biased against the use of security assistance or other military instruments in all

situations save those involving a "clear and direct" threat to the physical security of the United States. The interdependence approach apparently assumes that reviving the Monroe Doctrine would surely amount to a militarization of U.S. strategy.

- The global-stage perspective has opposed any large-scale diversion of U.S. military resources to the Basin and is only now becoming aware of the need to resolve potential threats in the region.

Fifth, the proposed framework explicitly recognizes the need for the United States to reestablish its primacy in the Basin. Rather than seeking unilateral hegemony, however, *the framework is consistent with striving to achieve and maintain U.S. primacy through the development of "collective hegemony" in association with other Basin states:*⁸

- While recognizing that the United States requires regional primacy in order to uphold its security interests, the framework implies that the security interests of other Basin states may also be accommodated through their participation in devising and implementing collective security policies. To promote collective hegemony, the key principles would have to be congruent with the security interests of most Basin states.
- In contrast, the interdependence perspective has repudiated a U.S. predisposition to enjoy hegemony in the Basin. Rather than seek to base collective arrangements on security interests, it has instead proposed multilateral economic accords that would favor the Basin states, notwithstanding the sometimes conflicting or asymmetrical economic interests involved.
- Although it may find hegemony desirable, the global-stage perspective has not pushed for such hegemony because of global priorities elsewhere, and possibly because of disdain for reliance on regional hegemony in the modern age. In its view, even a Nicaraguan military alliance with Cuba and the USSR could be readily neutralized by the use of U.S. military force at the moment of "real" crisis.

In sum, the proposed framework offers considerable improvements over the standard reactive approach to defining U.S. interests and objectives in the Basin. At the same time, it suggests that proponents of modern globalist perspectives on U.S. strategy have suffered from strategic myopia when they examine the Basin. By clarifying anew the

⁸The concept of "collective hegemony" is elaborated in Sec. V.

unique link between Basin security and U.S. global security concerns, this proposed framework strengthens the traditional case for special U.S. attention to Basin security in the 1980s.

III. THE HISTORY OF TRADITION (1810-1980)

The four key principles have deep roots in American history, traditionally symbolized by the Monroe Doctrine and the Panama Canal. Their development is sketched below in order to identify continuities between our current conflict environment and past contexts in which the principles were nurtured and applied.¹ Present and prospective global trends, new regional dynamics, and the changing power position of the United States all suggest that these principles, although in somewhat modified form, will remain relevant throughout the 1980s and therefore deserve renewed attention. It is important to review our historical experiences with these principles because "Any new grand strategy that emerges must be based on the study of history and of classical principles that teach *economy of effort* and that seek to maximize *freedom of action* and flexibility."¹

Because U.S. policy has not always abided by the principles, historical perspective also helps illuminate conditions that may lead to costly violations. In the 19th century, for example, violations usually occurred when the United States was too preoccupied with continental consolidation or was militarily too weak to take action, such as during the Civil War. In contrast, the major violation of the 20th century, Soviet lodgement in Castro's Cuba, began when the United States, as the paramount superpower in a bipolar system, enjoyed such strategic and conventional superiority that strategic "backyards" were thought not to matter much any longer.

In the discussion below, U.S. experience is organized into the following historical phases:

- Consolidation and protection of the U.S. mainland (1810s-1890s);
- Emergence and projection as a major world power (1890s-1930s);
- Development of a hemispheric approach to security (1930s-1950s);

¹Sources consulted include: Bemis, 1953; Berle, 1962; Blasier, 1976; Child, 1980; Clark, 1930; Dulles, 1954; Kane, 1972; Langley, 1976; Matthews, 1963; May, 1975; Meehan, 1965a and b; Parkinson, 1974; Perkins, 1961; and Wood, 1962 and 1966.

²Quoted from Abshire, 1982, p. 104, who concludes that the formulation and public acceptance of a new grand strategy for America will depend on the analytic and catalytic roles of our national security research centers. Emphasis added.

- Balancing globalism and regionalism (1950s-1960s);
- Global interdependence superseding traditional geopolitics (the 1970s).

PROTECTION OF THE U.S. MAINLAND (1810s-1890s)

In the early and mid 1800s, the United States moved westward, consolidated the continental republic, and fixed its frontiers with Canada and Mexico. Along the "third frontier" with the Caribbean, U.S. opposition to further European colonial encroachment became a substitute for territorial takeover by the United States. Our nation's early leaders (especially John Quincy Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, and George Washington) foresaw that our nation's potential would be compromised if the European powers succeeded in replicating an Old World balance-of-power system in the New World, or otherwise fragmenting it.

The key principles for protecting U.S. interests were thus posited in the No-Transfer principle and the Monroe Doctrine. Together they form the foundation of all subsequent U.S. strategy in the Basin.

In the No-Transfer Resolution of 1811, Congress declared that the United States "cannot without serious inquietude, see any part of the said territory pass into the hands of any foreign power." Initially confined to Florida, where Spain's control was weakening, it was extended to Cuba in 1823. Although it did not appear in the text of the Monroe Doctrine that same year, it was integrated with the Doctrine in 1870 and applied to the entire Western Hemisphere. The main objective was to keep France and Britain at bay.

In the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, the president declared to Congress that, in dealing with the European powers, "We should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." Responding to Russian encroachment in the Pacific Northwest and to incursions by other European monarchies in Latin America, the text opposed "further colonization by any European power." The Doctrine conformed to emergent American views that the New and Old Worlds should be separate: The United States should not entangle itself in European conflicts nor permit the European monarchies to further colonize the New World or meddle in its emerging republics.

The record of implementing these principles proved quite erratic. At first, nonapplications and violations were more frequent than successful applications. In practice, the effect of U.S. policy depended largely on cooperation by Great Britain and its powerful navy. Britain proved

supportive because it wanted to keep the continental European powers out of the hemisphere and to retain Canada and the United States as overseas sources of supply.³ But the United States did not actively oppose various British incursions into Central America in the 1830s and 1840s.

The first specific application of the Doctrine occurred in 1845, when President Polk announced to Congress that its anti-colonization principle "will apply with greatly increased force should any European power attempt to establish any colony in North America." The immediate purpose was to counter European powers who were opposing the union of Texas with the United States, "because it might disturb the 'balance of power' which they may desire to maintain upon this continent." A second application in 1848 helped prevent European interference to promote a separatist movement in Yucatan, Mexico.

During the 1860s the United States was simply too weak and preoccupied with its Civil War to enforce the Monroe Doctrine. Spain temporarily reannexed Santo Domingo and France extended its empire to Mexico by intervening militarily and installing Emperor Maximilian—thereby producing the most serious violation in the Doctrine's history before the 1960s. Following the Union victory, however, the United States turned against the Spanish and French interventions, and the Monroe Doctrine finally became enshrined in the public imagination as national policy. From then on, the U.S. government and the public remained keenly sensitive to any possible violation, especially in the Caribbean area.⁴

Nearing the end of the century, and having successfully opposed Spain and France in the region, the United States finally confronted Britain, the world's greatest naval power, over a smoldering boundary dispute involving British encroachments into Venezuela through British Guiana. In 1895 the administration of President Cleveland invoked the Monroe Doctrine to demand arbitration and went so far as to argue, "Today the United States is practically sovereign on this continent. . . . All the advantages of this superiority are at once imperiled if the principle be admitted that European powers may convert American states into colonies or provinces of their own." Britain eventually

³For its part, the United States looked on Canada as "hostage" to assure good British behavior.

⁴The No-Transfer principle and the Monroe Doctrine were formally merged in 1870 by the administration of President Grant, when he declared, "The doctrine promulgated by President Monroe has been adhered to by all political parties, and I now deem it proper to assert the equally important principle that hereafter no territory on this continent shall be regarded as subject of transfer to a European power." At the time he was unsuccessfully urging ratification of an annexation treaty with Santo Domingo, but the policy position was directed at islands and territories throughout the Caribbean area.

agreed to arbitration, thereby providing the Monroe Doctrine with a great triumph. Like Spain and France before, Britain subsequently relinquished its colonial ambitions in the Caribbean and turned to deal with worse challenges to its declining empire in other parts of the world.

Thus the United States entered the 20th century, confident that the Caribbean Basin was secure enough from extra-hemispheric threats and struggles to protect the continental mainland. It was now poised to become the hegemonic power in the region.

EMERGENCE AS A MAJOR WORLD POWER (1890s-1930s)

In the next historical phase, the United States converted the Caribbean Basin into a geopolitical and strategic asset for the projection of American power in the Atlantic and Pacific, as well as for transportation between our East and West coasts. The key to this conversion was the construction and operation of the Panama Canal under exclusive U.S. control. The principles established in the first phase were observed, but corollaries were added to promote and justify "protective intervention" in the Basin. The original Monroe Doctrine concept of "hands off" to Europe was stretched to allow "hands on" for the United States. Security became identified with hegemony.

The Caribbean Basin was the cradle from which the United States arose to become a world power. The geopoliticians of naval seapower (especially Admiral Alfred Mahan) supplied the conceptual impetus, and steamships the technological impetus, for America's expansionist ambitions. But it was victory in the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the concurrent annexation of Hawaii that first thrust the United States into the global game and gave it commanding military positions in the Caribbean (Cuba and Puerto Rico) and in the Pacific (the Philippines as well as Hawaii).

From there, the United States became concerned with the rise of two other new naval powers, Germany and Japan. Earlier aspirations to construct a canal across the Central American isthmus, supported by periodic presidential assertions that European control of any canal would violate the Monroe Doctrine, quickly became a strategic necessity. In 1903 the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt intervened to establish a protectorate over an independent Panama and secured sole rights to construct, operate, and defend a canal. The Panama Canal was completed for passage in 1914 in time to support U.S. power projection in World War I.

Meanwhile, the United States resorted to highly interventionist policies elsewhere in the Basin to protect the approaches to the canal and to keep external powers from gaining any strategic footholds. In 1903 the United States established another protectorate over Cuba, underpinned by the Platt Amendment. Then in 1904, when various European powers blockaded Venezuela's coast to recover debts, President Roosevelt opposed any attempted European occupation of American soils by proclaiming a U.S. right to intervene. According to his Roosevelt Corollary,

Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power.

Roosevelt was particularly concerned that Germany might exploit local instability to obtain a military outpost in the Basin.

In 1912 the Senate adopted the so-called Magdalena Bay Resolution (sometimes known as the Lodge Corollary) because of reports that a Japanese corporation was seeking strategic landsites in the Gulf of California. It prescribed:

[W]hen any harbor or other place in the American continents is so situated that the occupation thereof for naval or military purposes might threaten the communications or the safety of the United States, the government of the United States could not see without grave concern the possession of such harbor or other place by any corporation or association which has such a relation to another government, not American, as to give that government practical power of control for national purposes.

In effect, this meant that the No-Transfer principle was extended even to a foreign enterprise that might be fronting for a foreign government.

Both corollaries were designed to keep external powers from using economic penetration as a device for securing political and military advantages. The United States did not object to legitimate European investments and even helped make certain that local debts to European creditors were repaid. At the same time, the U.S. government encouraged reluctant U.S. bankers and businessmen to invest in the Basin—hence “dollar diplomacy”—so as to preempt deeper European involvement.

For almost three decades before and after World War I, these corollaries were used to justify U.S. military policing interventions in the Dominican Republic (1905, 1912, 1916–1924), Nicaragua (1909,

1912-1925, 1926-1933), Haiti (1915-1934), and elsewhere, usually because local financial disarray appeared to render them vulnerable to European penetration or because local political turmoil might jeopardize stability elsewhere in the Basin. The security of the Panama Canal and its approaches was the principal stake in all these interventions. The later ones in Nicaragua also reflected potential interest in building a new canal there. In addition, the United States was motivated to reoccupy Nicaragua during its civil war in 1926-1927 because Mexico was supplying weapons and finances to the revolutionary side and maneuvering to extend its influence into Central America contrary to U.S. interests. Broader strategic concerns also affected the U.S. military incursions into revolutionary Mexico (1914, 1916), which President Wilson limited partly because he was concerned about tying up forces that might be needed in Europe against Germany.

This brief policy of "protective imperialism" persisted for a decade and a half after the dangers of European intervention diminished following World War I. Despite later grievances against U.S. interventionism in this period, the Latin American nations largely supported the United States during World War I, although they entered the war without concrete plans for cooperating against aggression.

A HEMISPHERIC APPROACH TO SECURITY (1930s-1950s)

The outcome of World War I, the Treaty of Versailles in Europe (1918), and the Washington treaties in the Far East (1922) eliminated any immediate major threats to the United States. The demise of extra-hemispheric rivals also led to disenchantment with other rationalizations for a big-stick policy in the Basin: Intervention now seemed too expensive a way to protect U.S. citizens and property, ineffective as a way to instill democracy, and contrary to evolving U.S. interests for trade, investment, and other forms of cooperation with nationalistic neighbors.

The United States therefore gradually whittled down its interventionist approach, instituted the Good Neighbor Policy, and established a multilateral approach to Western Hemisphere security. In the process, it laid the basis for successful Latin American cooperation against Nazi Germany in World War II. These developments were all consistent with the key strategic principles identified above.

As the search for a new strategy progressed under Presidents Herbert Hoover and Franklin Roosevelt, the United States returned to the original concept of the Monroe Doctrine and designed the Good

Neighbor Policy. In 1928, a high-level State Department "Memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine" (the Clark Memorandum) provided a crucial early step toward doctrinal revision. The memorandum argued persuasively that the Doctrine should be restored to its original concept of self-defense and self-preservation, which applied to the United States versus Europe, not versus Latin America. The Monroe Doctrine was thus to be divorced from the Roosevelt Corollary. In conjunction with the development of the Good Neighbor Policy, formal renunciations of U.S. interventionism occurred (with slight reservations) in 1933. In 1936 the United States subscribed to an inter-American doctrine of absolute nonintervention in the internal affairs of American states. Meanwhile, the United States ended the military occupations of Haiti (1933) and Nicaragua (1934), and rescinded the Platt Amendment on Cuba (1934).

From 1933 onward the United States and the 19 Latin American republics held a series of inter-American conferences that transformed the unilateral Monroe Doctrine into a continental defense doctrine. These Pan American conferences progressed from proclaiming collective solidarity and consultation in case of an extra-hemispheric threat (the Declaration of Lima, 1938), to concluding a binding treaty to act together against aggression from any source inside or outside the hemisphere (the Rio Pact, 1948). In addition, the Latin Americans accepted the No-Transfer principle by agreeing (Havana, 1940) to prohibit European powers from winning and occupying each other's possessions in the hemisphere during the course of the war in Europe. Meanwhile, multilateral and bilateral plans for defense cooperation were put in place, thereby enabling the United States and the majority of Latin American states to collaborate effectively in World War II—unlike the case in World War I.

BALANCING GLOBALISM AND REGIONALISM (1950s–1960s)

The United States emerged from World War II as a far-flung superpower whose priorities soon emphasized reconstructing Western Europe and creating a global security system against the spread of communism. This system included the United Nations Security Council and several regional alliance structures (especially NATO, CENTO, SEATO) in addition to the OAS. The leading strategic objectives became deterrence and containment of the Soviet Union.

As the Cold War developed during the 1950s, the overall strategic imperative linking Basin security to U.S. global power remained

implicit in U.S. policy and strategy. Preserving hegemonic security in our own backyard was still considered essential to our international force posture. Latin America as a whole received low priority in the U.S. effort to interrelate globalism and regionalism, however, because it seemed quite safe and secure, remote from Soviet threats, and peripheral to the global struggle. U.S. policy attempted to treat Latin America mainly as an instrument to support containment of the Soviet Union abroad (e.g., by means of U.N. peacekeeping measures in Korea).

Bipolarity, the Cold War, and the related ideological struggle led to the blurring of distinction between the second principle, excluding hostile powers, and the third, excluding foreign balance-of-power struggles from the Basin. With the West European powers so exhausted, the Soviet Union and international communism posed the only serious sources of extra-hemispheric threats (cf. the inter-American Declaration of Washington in 1951 and the Declaration of Caracas in 1954). The fourth principle, minimizing U.S. military resources in the area, gained added importance because the new U.S. role in world affairs required the allocation of those resources to meet major active threats in Europe, the Far East, and elsewhere. To supplant direct U.S. military presence, a series of bilateral military assistance agreements were initiated to strengthen local defense capabilities.

Guatemala provided the first Cold War crisis for U.S. policy and strategy in the Basin when the leftist Arbenz regime began to promote revolutionary change at home and elsewhere in Central America. Concerned about the growing roles of Guatemalan communists within the regime, and about potential Guatemalan relations with the Soviet bloc, the Eisenhower administration resorted to covert intervention that induced the collapse of the Arbenz government in 1954. In the short run at least, this enabled the United States to preserve the historic inviolability of the Caribbean Basin and to continue dedicating relatively low priority to Latin America as a whole.

The ease and efficacy of the 1954 intervention in Guatemala provided U.S. policymakers with a model of indirect, covert intervention that they would attempt to replicate against the Castro regime in Cuba during 1960-1961.⁵ As it demonstrated at the Bay of Pigs, however, the Castro regime proved to be much better prepared and more formidable an adversary than the Arbenz regime. As a result, a revolutionary and expansionist anti-American regime survived and consolidated its power.

⁵Immerman, 1980-1981, pp. 629-653, shows that, in trying to apply the Guatemala 1954 model to Castro's Cuba, U.S. strategists not only failed to take account of major differences between the two cases but also did not know that the Cubans had studied the Guatemala case and were prepared to counter it.

More important, the Soviet Union gained a strategic lodgement in the Basin—the first time in nearly a century (since the French intervention in Mexico) that a hostile extra-continental power had expanded its reach into a region contiguous to the U.S. mainland.

This outcome violated the Monroe Doctrine and the related traditions of U.S. strategy. Two general consequences ensued. First, the United States sought to arrest the spread of Cuban and Soviet threats in the 1960s by undertaking the highest level of involvement in the region since the first two decades of this century. In particular, the U.S. government provided economic aid through the Alliance for Progress and extended the Military Assistance Program for counterinsurgency and internal security to various regimes. Overwhelming U.S. military intervention was authorized in the Dominican Republic in 1965, when a revolutionary seizure of power seemed imminent. As it turned out, revolutionary conditions were not present either there or elsewhere in Latin America, and the Cubans were pursuing a deficient strategy for fomenting revolution.

Second, despite prolonged efforts to isolate, combat, and overthrow the Castro regime, the United States gradually came to tolerate Cuba in its new role as a limited Soviet military outpost. This was the price we had to pay for the Soviet removal of their missiles in 1962. Such tolerance was predicated on the belief that the potential Soviet military threat in Cuba seemed very low and that the Caribbean still resembled an "American lake." Perhaps most important, during the 1960s the United States was still the paramount superpower all over the world except for the USSR's immediate vicinity. The Soviet failure to emplace medium-range nuclear missiles in Cuba in 1962 only underscored U.S. strategic superiority. The 1962 agreements between Kennedy and Khrushchev provided pledges from the Soviet Union not to reintroduce offensive weapons into Cuba and from the United States not to use military force against the Castro regime. Another confrontation during the Nixon administration in 1970 led to Soviet assurances that Cienfuegos would not become a major operational base for Soviet destroyers and submarines operating in the Atlantic. Meanwhile, throughout the 1960s and until the late 1970s, U.S. planners assumed that any military threat from Cuba could be eliminated easily in case of a general war, conventional or nuclear, between the superpowers.

By the early 1970s, therefore, both the Caribbean Basin and the rest of the Americas appeared stabilized. To be sure, Castro was still in power, and the Soviets remained in Cuba. However, following Che Guevara's death in Bolivia in 1967, Castro became increasingly preoccupied with the island's deteriorating economic situation, and neither

the Cuban military nor the waning Latin American revolutionary movement appeared to pose a threat to the region. The USSR had an economic liability on its hands, and its attempts to develop Cuba into a staging base for strategic weapons had been turned back twice, in 1962 and 1970. The United States thus remained the undisputed paramount power in the Basin, and its southern perimeter appeared secure as the 1970s unfolded.

GLOBAL INTERDEPENDENCE SUPERSEDING GEOPOLITICS (1970s)

In the next historical phase, which began during the Nixon and Ford administrations and culminated with the Carter administration, the United States lost sight of the long-range historical importance of Basin security for U.S. interests and neglected the traditional principles of U.S. strategy. The history of this phase is too recent to permit definitive judgment. Yet, in essence, it was a period of global decline and retreat for U.S. power, during which U.S. primacy in the Basin, and U.S. interests in maintaining that primacy, receded to an extent unparalleled since the late 1800s.⁶

For most of the decade there were good reasons for not being alarmed about Basin security. Soviet and Cuban threats had dwindled within the region; and Cuba moved to normalize relations with other Latin American nations and, at least initially, with the United States. In 1975, the United States even voted with the majority of Organization of American States (OAS) members to free them from enforcing the 1964 OAS sanctions against Cuba. In 1977 the U.S. and Cuban governments established Interest Sections in each other's capitals. Until 1979, most Caribbean and Central American countries seemed quite stable, the major cases of Latin American instability occurring to the south (e.g., Chile).

As a consequence, the U.S. government assigned lower priority to guarding Basin security and, in keeping with broader reductions in the availability of U.S. resources to make and meet global commitments, diminished its military and economic assistance programs in the area. Indeed, the major international problems all lay beyond the hemisphere: Detente with Moscow, the opening to Peking, economic competition from Western Europe and Japan, the debacle in Vietnam, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the rising power of OPEC, the Arab oil embargo,

⁶The effects of the continuing British withdrawal from its former colonial responsibilities compounded the decline of U.S. capabilities for maintaining its commitments in the Basin and elsewhere.

the fall of the Shah of Iran, and other events all kept Washington preoccupied and on the run. In the meantime, the "Vietnam syndrome" took root; this and complexities of other issues undermined U.S. public confidence and resolve to support our global involvements.

Beyond specific trends and events, a new concept—"global interdependence"—came into vogue in U.S. political and strategic thinking. Mainly because of economic developments, the belief spread that national interests were becoming so interconnected as to require transformations in how governments dealt with international problems. In principle, globalist frameworks and multilateral solutions were to be preferred to special bilateral and regional ones. Insofar as the Caribbean and Central America fit into this analytical trend, the presumption spread not only that U.S. hegemony was declining in the Basin for good, natural reasons, but also that U.S. primacy there for security reasons was simply unnecessary. Traditional U.S. geopolitical thinking about the Basin was increasingly regarded as inappropriate and obsolete. Besides, in any case, there appeared to be no immediate threats to U.S. interests.⁷

Of the four strategic principles, Washington adhered to the fourth (minimal allocation of U.S. military resources), and emphasized the second (exclusion of hostile powers) as though preventing Soviet expansion was the only real requirement for assuring Basin security. But Washington disregarded, indeed forgot, the separate historical importance of the third principle (exclusion of foreign struggles) during the mid and late 1970s. Meanwhile, the Caribbean and Central America became as open to outside ideological, political, and economic influences as any other area of the world.

As Washington cut economic and military assistance programs and agreed to accommodate "ideological pluralism" in Latin America,⁸ effective U.S. influence declined and a kind of political power vacuum developed within the Basin. It is not necessary to analyze every aspect of this policy to recognize that, in retrospect, this situation facilitated major changes in the region's geopolitical dynamics:

- It opened the way for local elites and counter-elites to seek new supporters outside their countries.

⁷Influential representations of this position may be found in Commission on United States-Latin American Relations, *The Americas in a Changing World*, Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Co., 1975; and Lowenthal, 1976, pp. 199-213.

⁸During July 16-26, 1975, at San Jose, Costa Rica, the OAS Conference of Plenipotentiaries approved a Protocol of an Amendment to the Rio Treaty whose preamble put forth the principle of "ideological pluralism," stating that one of its purposes was "to reaffirm and strengthen the principle of nonintervention as well as the right of all states to choose freely their political, economic and social organization."

- It beckoned the regional powers, Cuba, Mexico, and Venezuela, to become more assertive.
- It helped introduce into the region a strong rivalry between European-based Social Democracy and Christian Democracy.
- It encouraged the Soviet Union to further strengthen its Cuban ties.

As a result, during the mid and late 1970s the Basin was fraught with a variety of nationalistic struggles linked to outside players (especially the Panama Canal negotiations), and local conflicts were subjected to an unprecedented level of internationalization (especially Nicaragua). The third principle was thus violated to an extent that would soon raise problems for all the others.

Two historical benchmarks--the agreement in 1978 to cede sovereignty (immediately) and control (gradually) over the Panama Canal and the fall of Somoza in Nicaragua in 1979--symbolize the weakening of U.S. strategic interest and influence in the Basin and the concomitant internationalization of its political issues and processes. During the course of the U.S.-Panama negotiations, beginning in 1976, the argument spread publicly that the globalization of the world economy and its resource supplies made the Canal and related sea lanes of the Caribbean Basin less vital to U.S. strategic interests. Combined with the diminished importance of those sea lanes in case of a major U.S.-Soviet conflict, this argument helped justify eventual concessions to Panama in the treaty negotiations.⁹ The long-term preservation of U.S. military bases and facilities in the Canal Zone also appeared questionable. While this conceptual shift was going on in the United States, a diplomatic transformation was also developing in the Basin. Panamanian President Torrijos conducted a worldwide campaign garnering broad international support for Panamanian sovereignty over the Canal, and thereby internationalized the negotiations to his advantage.

There is no direct link between Torrijos's success and Somoza's fall a few years later. Nonetheless, the decline of U.S. influence, the intrusion of extra-hemispheric players, and the internationalization of

⁹U.S. policymakers were wisely seeking to eliminate the traditional potential for direct U.S.-Panamanian confrontations over the Canal: (1) by showing, through trade in particular, that the Canal had become a vital interest and asset for many other nations in the region besides Panama and the United States; and (2) by trying to get those other nations' interests involved in affecting the future operation and security of the Canal. Today, although Panama has gained sovereignty over the Canal, these other nations' views and their use of the Canal do help constrain transit fees. This aspect of U.S. policy strategy fits with ideas for "collective hegemony," but during the mid 1970s U.S. public opinion was more attuned to the arguments that emphasized U.S. interests alone.

conflict proceeded from one case to the next. Nicaragua became a military as well as diplomatic battleground involving actors from all around the world. Cuba covertly renewed its export of revolution, beginning in 1977. In the end, the Sandinista victory in Nicaragua represented a watershed in Basin geopolitics as significant as Castro's triumph in Cuba 20 years earlier: Nicaragua was transformed overnight from the linchpin in U.S. policy toward Central America into an ally of Cuba and the socialist bloc and a proponent of radical revolution abroad.¹⁰

Of course, this is not to argue that either eventual Panamanian control of the Panama Canal or the fall of Somoza was inherently inimical to U.S. interests or attributable to U.S. policy "mistakes." In light of broader developments within and around these countries, such changes may have been inevitable. The important consideration for this analysis is that these changes, especially the ways in which they were achieved and perceived in the United States and abroad, amounted to a major transformation in regional geopolitical conditions.¹¹

In sum, during the 1970s, and especially from 1976 through 1979, the traditional reasons for treating the Caribbean Basin as a special geopolitical preserve for U.S. security sounded more and more anachronistic, to the point that Basin security no longer seemed imperative for U.S. global security. The Caribbean and Central America seemed irrelevant to wartime priorities in the nuclear age and sufficiently secure and stable to be managed case by case in peacetime conditions.

¹⁰In another move from this period that would be consistent with the concept of "collective hegemony," the State Department proposed (unsuccessfully) that the OAS install a peacekeeping force in Nicaragua to support a peaceful devolution of power from Somoza to the Sandinistas.

¹¹Another important event in the Basin in the 1970s was the discovery and development of large oil resources in Mexico. However, this did not *initially* affect geopolitical views of the Caribbean Basin, because Mexico seemed so close, stable, and even unconnected to its Central American neighbors.

IV. THE FUTURE CONFLICT ENVIRONMENT

We are entering a new historical phase of the Basin's importance to U.S. interests. For the 1980s there are good reasons—global, domestic, and regional—to revive and modernize traditional concepts that treat the Caribbean Basin as a geopolitical zone of unique importance to the United States. As in the past, this rising importance derives as much from fundamental changes in the global and domestic conditions of U.S. power as from changes and conflicts within the region itself.

UNSETTLING GLOBAL AND DOMESTIC U.S. TRENDS

The following global and domestic developments are once again creating the classic preconditions for both heightened insecurity and U.S. interest in the Basin:

Global balance of power patterns are in flux: The international system is becoming more multipolar, with the Western alliance system seeming especially loose. Patterns of conflict, competition, and cooperation are in flux in Europe, the Middle East, and around the Indian Ocean. Not only the Soviet Union, but also resurgent European powers, notably France and Germany, are expanding their involvement in Caribbean and Central American conflicts.¹

A new naval power is on the rise: The growing blue-water capabilities of the Soviet Navy are enabling the USSR to challenge the U.S. presence around the globe. In the Caribbean, Soviet naval flotillas have steamed into Cuba at a rate of nearly two visits per year since 1969. Left unchecked, the Soviets may seek to acquire military facilities elsewhere in the Caribbean Basin, notably Nicaragua and Grenada.

Competition is mounting for scarce resources: Secure access to distant natural resources, especially petroleum and minerals, is a continuing strategic concern of the major industrialized powers. The vulnerability of Middle Eastern oil supplies to potential disruption and the critical importance of such supplies for the West magnify the value of Basin petroleum resources and production capabilities.

New technologies enhance the efficacy of overseas bases: For both the United States and the Soviet Union, the development of ever more

¹In reviewing how global systemic change may affect the behavior of France and other states, Lyons (1982, p. 144) observes "that the choices actually made will largely be the result of the interplay of domestic political forces in the different countries."

sophisticated weapon, transportation, and electronic communications systems is increasing the geopolitical and military value of having overseas bases and other facilities in regions contiguous to their adversary. Such facilities enhance medium-range power projection, reconnaissance, and intelligence gathering.

The growing likelihood of confrontations in third-world regions: A NATO-Warsaw Pact war in Europe and a U.S.-Soviet confrontation over the Persian Gulf will remain the most dangerous threats. But they will also remain less likely ones. The combination of geopolitical trends and technological developments suggests that the Soviet Union and the United States are likely to test each other in far-flung locations where geographic positions, raw materials, or power perceptions are at stake. Both governments are having to face and are working to create "threats from the South," formerly their flanks of greatest security.

Extra-hemispheric actors are intruding into Basin affairs: Nonhemispheric governments and subnational actors—ranging from European Christian Democratic and Social Democratic movements to Arab and European terrorist groups—are seeking to extend their influence within the Basin. In general, they are contributing as much to destabilizing as to restabilizing its politics. Simultaneously, local governments and anti-government actors in the region are also soliciting support from outside the hemisphere, independent of the United States. Although West European involvement can contribute to the region's economic and political development, this general push-pull process is fostering the internationalization of local conflicts and eroding U.S. leverage.

Potential for domestic spillovers from regional unrest: Caribbean Basin politics intrude on domestic U.S. politics more than ever before and more so than for any other third-world area. Law, order, and security concerns within the United States and along its borders cannot be isolated from major events and trends in the Basin. The primary linkage is through massive immigration, refugee, and exile flows: The United States receives more immigrants and refugees than all the rest of the world combined, and most of these come from within the Basin. The extension of Central American conflicts into Mexico or Puerto Rico would thus have dangerous, uncontrollable, and unpredictable domestic consequences. In the meantime, the prognosis is for continued large immigration flows. Terrorism and low-level violence represent another domestic connection. This includes violence conducted within the United States by revolutionaries from the Basin (e.g., Puerto Rican FALN), by local right-wing exiles (e.g., Cubans, Nicaraguans, or El Salvadorans in Miami), by left-wing exiles or sympathizers supporting revolution abroad, and by narcotics smugglers.

In sum, we find ourselves in an evolving conflict environment that once again raises the ultimate concerns of U.S. security in the Basin: the effect on U.S. positions, responsibilities, and priorities around the world; and the exposure of the U.S. mainland to potential threats and domestic spillovers.

VIOLATIONS OF THE KEY PRINCIPLES FOR REGIONAL STRATEGY

Within the Caribbean Basin, the central challenges for U.S. policy-makers and strategists derive largely from neglecting interrelated "violations" of the four traditional principles. Trends within the Basin indicate that if these violations are altogether neglected and not contained, they will have increasingly detrimental consequences for broader U.S. interests and strategies.

Maintenance of the Basin as a stable, secure preserve for U.S. presence, power, and passage has not been as seriously violated as other principles. The United States still enjoys secure access to sea lanes and strategic resources in Venezuela, Mexico, and elsewhere. However, U.S. presence and influence have declined throughout the Basin over the past decade, to the detriment of security interests. Chronic underdevelopment, mounting population pressures, poor export prices, debt-and-devaluation crises, and for the Eastern Caribbean a proliferation of mini-sovereignties all bode ill for future political stability in many states. Regional security also continues to deteriorate through the transmission of political radicalism, guerrilla insurgency, international terrorism, and other forms of low-intensity conflict among the smaller countries. Even Mexico's stability and security are no longer assured. Meanwhile, Cuba, now heavily armed as an ally of the Soviet Union, has improved its ability to export revolution; but it does not pose a direct military threat to the United States and is unlikely to do so except possibly under wartime conditions.

Exclusion of hostile military powers must now be treated more seriously than at any time since the 1962 missile crisis. Soviet and related Cuban military capabilities have grown disturbingly strong on the island in recent years: The Soviets have long operated a large electronic monitoring station near Havana; they have stepped up their use of the island as a turnaround point for Soviet TU-95 Bear long-range reconnaissance and antisubmarine aircraft; they dispatch Soviet naval flotillas and submarines to Cuba; and they retain a specialized 2500-3000 man combat brigade on the island. In addition, the offensive and defensive military capabilities of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed

Forces (FAR) have expanded through the continued acquisition of MiG-23s, Osa and Komar guided-missile patrol boats, a Koni-class frigate, Foxtrot attack submarines, amphibious transport ships, AN-26 short-range military transport planes, and SAM anti-aircraft missiles, all supplied by the Soviet Union.

This may be tolerable in peacetime as long as the Soviet and Cuban military expansion does not greatly exceed present levels and remains contained in Cuba. However, with the strategic and conventional balances shifting away from U.S. superiority, and with Cuba so heavily armed, U.S. policymakers can no longer assume that Soviet-Cuban military actions would be largely irrelevant or easily neutralized in the event of general war, a simultaneous crisis elsewhere, or a U.S.-Cuban confrontation. The possibility of a plausible military threat from Cuba could tie down a considerable number of USN and USAF units.

If Cuba's armed forces continue to modernize and expand at the present pace, the Castro regime will command a veritable "fortress Cuba" by the mid 1980s.² Furthermore, the possible availability of military facilities to the Cubans or Soviets elsewhere in the area, such as in Central America or in the Eastern Caribbean, could exacerbate vulnerabilities in the U.S. and NATO military postures as well as damage political perceptions of U.S. power. Thus the expansion of Soviet-Cuban military capabilities must be halted; otherwise the United States will have to make costly countervailing military investments in the not too distant future.

Exclusion of foreign balance-of-power struggles is inoperative at present. Not just one but three extra-regional struggles are contributing to the internationalization of local political conflicts in the Basin: Alongside the long-standing U.S.-Soviet competition, U.S.-European tensions have risen. European party rivalries between Social Democrats and Christian Democrats have intruded into Central America and served to compound its instability; this was partly the case in El Salvador when the insurgents enjoyed the support of the former, and the regime of former President Duarte was assisted by the latter.³ The Arab-Israeli conflict has also extended to Central America, with Libya and the PLO supporting the Sandinistas and guerrilla groups elsewhere, and with Israel providing weapons and advice to Guatemala,

²Recent press reports reveal that Cuba may next obtain variants of the TU-95 Bear bomber from the Soviets, probably for long-range reconnaissance, but adaptable for antisubmarine warfare and other missions.

³This does not mean, of course, that European party rivalry was the whole story. It was also tangled up with the regionally more important rivalry between Venezuela and Mexico, with Venezuela supporting Duarte and the Christian Democratic line, and Mexico aiding the insurgents and the Socialist International.

Honduras, and earlier to Somoza's Nicaragua. The Basin, once considered an "American lake," is being fractured by more extra-regional struggles than any other third-world area of major strategic interest to the United States.

Analyzing West European political involvement as though it may pose an unwelcome foreign intrusion under a strategic principle that also covers Soviet and other extra-hemispheric forces requires some explanation. Since World War II, the friendly resurgence of West European involvement in the Basin has generally benefited U.S. interests. Britain, France, and the Netherlands still have colonial and post-colonial responsibilities in the Basin; if these are mismanaged or abandoned, the United States may face new risks and have to bear new costs (recently the case in Suriname, potentially the case in Belize). In addition to their usefulness as local trade and investment partners, the West European nations also contribute economic development financing and technical assistance through the international banks and their own bilateral assistance programs. West European political party philosophies and organizational activities, primarily Christian Democracy and Social Democracy, have enjoyed broad appeal in the region and helped strengthen democratic tendencies among moderate and center-left sectors.

The United States needs the Europeans to continue playing such constructive roles. It would be a mistake and a misunderstanding of the third principle to suppose that this broad European involvement is detrimental to Basin security and that U.S. strategy should seek to exclude the West Europeans to the same general extent as the Soviets. Where European activity selectively supports U.S. interests, it is worth encouraging, as we have done in the past.

However, it would be a mistake and a violation of the third principle to give the Europeans *carte blanche* for ever greater political involvement in the Basin. Contrary to U.S. security interests, major elements of their political involvement have served inadvertently to further internationalize local conflicts, link them to competitive global struggles, and disturb U.S.-European relations.

- The Europeans do not have vital security interests directly at stake in the Basin. Their most important stakes, largely ignored by the European publics, are the security of sea lanes for reinforcing NATO or the Persian Gulf, and the general absence of threats to the south of the United States, a crucial requirement for preserving our forward posture abroad.
- In the absence of vital interests, some European governments and political parties have responded to domestic political

interests in placating left-wing sectors and displaying independence from the United States.⁴ This has particularly been the case with Social Democracy in France and Germany.⁵

- Left-wing sectors within Social Democracy and the related Socialist International support revolutionary change in the Basin, argue that the United States could live with more Cubas, justify European involvement as a way to defuse U.S.-Soviet tensions, and advocate international negotiations to settle the conflict(s). This policy approach, exemplified by the Mitterand government and the Olaf Palme/Willy Brandt faction in the Socialist International, has compounded the internationalization of the region's instability.⁶
- The European Economic Community (EEC) has also become a platform for publicly criticizing U.S. policy and expressing support for alternatives.⁷

These elements do not constitute a major case against West European political involvement, but they indicate that it is increasingly undesirable in its present form.⁸ Whereas the old bipolar international system presented the dangerous risk of U.S.-Soviet confrontation in the Basin, Europe's resurgence and the prospective evolution of a competitive multipolar system will not necessarily introduce greater harmony and less conflict there. Instead, this global systemic evolution, to the extent it molds political patterns in the Basin, may produce new

⁴I have argued elsewhere (Ronfeldt and Sereseres, 1977) that politicians and intellectuals in the United States have sometimes used Latin America as a dumping ground for idealistic liberal principles (usually about democracy, arms transfers, or human rights) that are more seriously violated in other third-world regions but too difficult to apply there because of Soviet threats or other security interests. Perhaps a similar syndrome affects some European political behavior toward the Caribbean Basin.

⁵The mainstream of Social Democracy in Germany is quite moderate and much more interested in matters other than Central America and the Caribbean, but it must contend with a left wing in the party that opposes U.S. policy in this region.

⁶Some mainstream Social Democratic leaders in Germany have now recognized that their party should have coordinated and consulted better with Washington before becoming so outspokenly involved in Central America in the 1970s. They (like most Europeans) did not understand American sensitivities about the area and now see they erred in trusting the Sandinistas to remain democratic.

⁷Recent meetings of its members' foreign ministers (responding to German and Dutch initiatives in particular) have thus approved the efforts of the Contadora group (Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Venezuela) to bring about political negotiations among all parties to the Central American conflict. For years the EEC has steadfastly supported Grenada's economy under the provisions of the Lome Convention, and ignored Washington's warnings about Grenada's potential alignment with the Soviet Union and Cuba.

⁸A useful German statement of the case for European involvement is by Grabendorff, 1983, which further develops the ideas he presents in Grabendorff, 1982b, pp. 201-212.

difficulties for U.S. policy because European interests and objectives increasingly differ from those of the United States.⁹

There would be a powerful case for inviting expanded European political involvement if it could help accomplish the de-Sovietization of Cuba and elsewhere assure the denial of military access to the Soviet Union and other hostile powers, in keeping with the second key principle. To date, however, there is no clear evidence for this in Cuba, Nicaragua, or Grenada.¹⁰ Instead, it appears that the more internationalized the Basin becomes, the more likely are opportunities to arise for Soviet and Cuban exploitation and expansion.

There is another potentially reasonable argument for desiring a European politico-military presence: If faced with the necessity of choosing, U.S. interests should prefer to have nonaligned radical nationalist regimes in the Basin that look to European socialists for support and sustenance, than to have more Soviet-aligned Cuban types of regimes in the area.¹¹ This argument looks sensible in theory, and it may have limited validity for U.S. interests among the small Eastern Caribbean islands that were European colonies. For the Basin as a whole, however, the argument is too hypothetical to meet U.S. interests, least of all in Central America and among the larger Caribbean islands where the West Europeans have neither the vital interests nor the means for sustaining a constructive political, economic, and military presence. Inviting European involvement for the sake of blocking Soviet or Cuban expansion would thus probably give way to a Balkanization of the Basin and a new pattern of U.S.-Latin American and U.S.-European discord.

If European political involvement continues to expand in the Basin, the United States may have to dedicate increasing resources to channeling and constraining its influence (while we simultaneously strive to contain and counter Soviet involvement). European economic and

⁹To cite one handy example: "The Federal Republic of Germany will not be able to pursue any longer an official Latin American policy of 'low profile' by subordinating itself to the hemispheric interests of the U.S. An independent German political, economic, and social interest in Latin America are [sic] a fact and, moreover, the Latin Americans themselves would gladly see European powers, such as the FRG, active in their countries as counterbalance to, and competitor with, the U.S. On the other hand, it would be unrealistic to call for a common U.S.-European or U.S.-West German policy toward Latin America because of highly uneven geopolitical, security-political, and economic interests and uneven hemispheric responsibility." Mols, 1982, pp. 115-116.

¹⁰France's weapon sales to the Sandinista government are unlikely to prevent further Soviet arms transfers and may instead embroil France in possible future U.S.-Nicaraguan hostilities.

¹¹This preference is prominent in the views of U.S., European, and Latin American policy analysts who believe that radical nationalist and socialist regimes are the wave of the future and who have grave doubts about U.S. abilities to respond constructively.

political roles may at times complement and supplement U.S. roles in the Basin, especially if we lead the way as the strongest power. But they cannot substitute for U.S. roles in restoring stability and security, especially not if our policies are inadequate and our programs in decline. The United States cannot use Britain, France, West Germany, or Spain as subordinate instruments in the way that the Soviets use East Germany.

Minimal allocation of U.S. military assets to regional security, the fourth principle, remains in effect but not in a mode that positively enhances U.S. security interests. There is still no clear sense of why and how U.S. military power should play a role in the Basin's security and its political, economic, and military development. Instead, post-Vietnam antipathies have increased public, congressional, and bureaucratic constraints on U.S. military involvement in the area, however modest. The current U.S. force posture is having little effect on the prospects for continued low-level conflicts in the Basin. Planning estimates for potential major contingencies yield such large, costly numbers that hardly anyone wants to prepare for them in peacetime.

For the first time in almost a century, Basin security trends are headed toward a fundamental contradiction of the historical imperative that, despite contemporary global interdependence, still explains the Basin's place in U.S. global strategy and force posture: To greatly enhance U.S. abilities to act in a global balance-of-power system, extra-hemispheric threats and political struggles should be contained, if not altogether excluded from operating in the Basin. If current adverse trends continue unabated, we may find ourselves having to divert excessive U.S. military and other resources to deal with Basin insecurity, to the detriment of our strength and flexibility elsewhere.

SOURCES OF EMERGING THREATS TO U.S. SECURITY

Today's strife is not unusual for the Caribbean and Central American area. We have faced the pattern before; it combines the spread of low-level instability and the threat of involvement by extra-hemispheric powers. To give one historical example:

The Guatemalan coup was the last of a series of governmental turnovers . . . that installed new administrations in all five of the republics, completely changing the political atmosphere in the region. Most of the new governments were unsteady and had a common desire for external support against anticipated counterrevolution.

The situation in Central America worsened, and soon the entire Isthmus seemed on the verge of explosion—revolts threatened the

regimes. . . . Many of the uprisings were launched from neighboring countries. . . . Border raids among Nicaragua, Honduras, and El Salvador brought these nations to the brink of war. . . . Bandits were operating between the states, taking refuge across the frontiers when pursued, keeping all three republics in turmoil. Exiles from each nation were attempting to organize invasions behind the sanctuary of borders.

The cruiser *Tacoma* was dispatched to the Gulf of Fonseca to provide an American "presence."

This reads like today's bad news, but it happened between 1919 and 1923.¹² In other times we were able to surmount such conflicts and help restore stability and security to the area. Nonetheless, the task this time does look more difficult, complex, and risky than ever before. Current and prospective trends raise two types of potential threat sources that may become increasingly serious in the years ahead: (a) the incremental expansion of a hostile force presence, and (b) the domino-like spread of low-intensity conflict.

Hostile Force Expansion: The Threat of a Hostile Axis

The assumption that the United States would not face any serious or time-consuming threat from the south has long been central to the international military posture of the United States. Indeed, the absence of hostile powers on our border has been a major asset for NATO, "since in a real sense it is the non-threatening environment close to home that permits the United States to concentrate so much manpower, equipment, and attention on Europe."¹³

Hostile-force presence in the Basin has for 20 years been limited to Cuba and related Soviet naval and air movements. However, the future may bring a further expansion of Soviet-Cuban military capabilities to where "fortress Cuba" is joined by new pro-Soviet and pro-Cuban military positions in Central America (e.g., Nicaragua) or the Eastern Caribbean (e.g., Grenada). This could lay the foundation for a "hostile axis" that would transform the Basin into an air and naval theater for Soviet power projection.

Few analysts believe the development of a "hostile triangle" is likely, and the public seems to greet such speculations with doubt and lack of interest. Yet we should remind ourselves that in 1959 no one expected the Soviets would attempt to turn Cuba into a nuclear missile site in 1962, they would attempt to build a submarine base there by 1970, and

¹²The quotations are from Grieb, 1976, pp. 42 and 50.

¹³Fascell, 1981, pp. 26-33.

Cuba would be so heavily armed by 1982 as to pose a potentially costly and time-consuming threat to NATO supply lines in wartime. It is not inevitable that Nicaragua or Grenada will become Soviet-Cuban military cohorts, but one lesson from the Cuban experience is that the possibility should not be dismissed.

The Soviet Navy and Air Force have had considerable success in penetrating the Caribbean Basin through an incremental process that has avoided major confrontations with the United States. The Soviets were forced to halt their construction of a base for nuclear submarines in Cienfuegos in the fall of 1970. Within months of that incident, however, a nuclear-powered November-class submarine was serviced at Cienfuegos; another Echo II nuclear submarine visited the port in May 1971; and a diesel-powered ballistic missile submarine put into another Cuban port in 1972. Soviet naval visits to Cuba continued during the remainder of the 1970s, and new naval basing and repair facilities were under construction at Cienfuegos and elsewhere on the island by the end of the decade. Meanwhile in the 1970s, unarmed Soviet TU-95 Bear reconnaissance bombers routinely used Cuba as their refueling and turnaround point, or as a way station into the South Atlantic. In 1983 variants of the Bear armed for antisubmarine warfare stopped at Cuba for the first time. MiG 23/27 fighter bombers were first shipped to Cuba in spring 1978, and some four years later the Cuban Air Force possessed over 40 of these combat planes (including the nonexport version) in its inventory of over 200 MiG aircraft. The Cubans, if not the Soviets, are thus acquiring a potential offensive (and defensive) capability. This arsenal is complemented by the construction of three (and possibly six) Cuban airfields that could handle the Soviet Backfire strategic bomber and that may require an expansion of NORAD's defensive deployment to the south.

In like manner, the creation of a "hostile axis" would probably come about slowly, incrementally, and ambiguously. It could take many forms in the location and manning of military hardware and the type of Soviet military access. For example, the type and number of MiGs in Nicaragua, if any, would make a difference; so would using Grenada (or Suriname) as a site for naval refueling facilities or, visibly more threatening, for stopover and stationing of tactical air and transports. Such developments could provide the Soviets and the Cubans with a routine Basin-wide military presence that could support rapid air, naval, and army movements and be used to pose threats, or at least worrisome problems, within the Basin and reaching into the Atlantic, the Pacific, South America, and to CONUS and its air and sea lanes. At the upper ends of the threat spectrum, the installation of a defensive, Basin-wide military infrastructure could augment potential Soviet

capabilities for conducting a surprise nuclear decapitation strike against U.S. command, control, and communication centers, and for recovering post-attack bombers.

Soviet acquisition of naval and air positions in the Atlantic reaches of the Eastern Caribbean and of a naval base on the Pacific side of Central America would be dramatic gains for Soviet strategists. Cuba already provides a good position from which to pose threats to NATO supply lines leaving the Gulf coast and for monitoring and gathering intelligence on U.S. military operations. But to command key sea and air lanes in the Basin and across the Atlantic, for surveillance and antisubmarine warfare operations, for locating tactical aircraft, and as a stopover site between the Caribbean Basin and Africa or South America, the islands of the Eastern Caribbean (e.g., Grenada) would provide much more useful positions—just as, for the United States, Puerto Rico has always been much more important for basing than Cuba (Guantanamo).¹⁴ Military access to Nicaragua would certainly improve the Soviet position within the Basin but would not contribute much to the Soviet global position unless they developed a naval base on the Pacific side (they are currently building a fishing port) with which to expand and support Soviet operations in the Pacific Basin.¹⁵

Critics and opponents of the Reagan administration assail its warnings that the development of a "hostile axis" would threaten U.S. interests. In their view, only one development might pose a serious threat: the establishment of Soviet military bases, and then perhaps only if Soviet offensive weapons are emplaced. They doubt, however, that this would give the Soviet Union much advantage in the global struggle. They claim that the United States could readily (and immediately should) dispose of such a Soviet threat if it materialized. Thus they suppose that because the Soviet Union is averse to accepting high risks and high costs for marginal gains, it is unlikely to establish military bases in the Basin, especially if the United States tells it absolutely not to do so.¹⁶

This line of reasoning rationalizes tolerating the evolution of a militarized hostile axis in a Balkanized Basin so long as the Soviet Union does not pose an overt offensive threat. It neglects the political and

¹⁴Guantanamo is mainly an excellent location from which to conduct deep-water training.

¹⁵A hostile foreign power has never gained a base on the Pacific side of Central America. The United States patrolled the area during World War II to keep German submarines away from such places as the Bay of Fonseca.

¹⁶For examples, see Ullman, 1983, p. E21, and Maynes, 1983, pp. IV-1. Senator Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.) has voiced similar views, as have many academic specialists on Latin America.

politico-military advantages this would provide to the Soviet Union. It does not heed the ways in which defensive military infrastructures may suddenly be used to augment offensive threat capabilities. It ignores the enduring political and military importance of a secure, un-Balkanized Basin for U.S. global performance. It exaggerates the availability of U.S. military resources for disposing of a material Soviet (or Cuban) threat. If in the critics' view of the future the United States could, would, and should attack to eliminate the establishment of a Soviet base only after it is equipped with defensive and offensive weaponry, we may end up with neither the will nor the ability to do so if conditions deteriorate to the extent that these critics deem tolerable.¹⁷

In sum, the Soviet Union and a related hostile axis would not have to develop as an overt offensive threat in order to jeopardize U.S. security interests and divert U.S. forces. The Soviets and their allies are skilled at incrementally building ambiguous capabilities, first for defending a revolutionary regime, then later for exploiting politico-military vulnerabilities and supporting military operations and power projection in its vicinity. In both political and military respects, tolerating the development of a "hostile axis" would reflect badly on U.S. power, foment political divisiveness at home and with our allies abroad, and require costly countermeasures in terms of air-defense and air and sea patrolling. Because of changes in the East-West military balance and the expansion of Cuba's armaments, neutralizing or defending against "fortress Cuba" alone would nowadays pose a temporarily troublesome task for the U.S. military, particularly if it were preoccupied with a crisis or war elsewhere.

¹⁷Soviet military expansion and the disruptive potential of a hostile axis would be dramatically enhanced if the Sandinista regime were to construct a sea-level trans-isthmian canal with Soviet assistance. Plans and surveys have long existed for a route through Nicaragua; it was originally preferred over Panama. Although Japan showed some interest in assisting the recent Somoza regime to build a sea-level canal, the United States agreed, in the Panama Canal treaties negotiated in 1976 with Gen. Omar Torrijos, that it would not build a sea-level canal anywhere but in Panama. Torrijos, still concerned about Nicaragua, aided the Sandinistas and abetted Somoza's downfall in 1979 partly to keep him from building a competitive canal. To nobody's particular concern, and perhaps only for propaganda purposes, the Soviet Union has now indicated some interest in assisting the Sandinistas to build it by early next century. The Soviet Union may now lack the capital for such a colossal undertaking, but with time and Western acquiescence, they might assemble a package for Nicaragua that includes Western capital and technology. Actual construction might solve the unemployment problems of Cuba and other grateful governments and introduce numerous Soviet bloc personnel into the area. The end result could be a strategic asset under Soviet military protection and the marginalization of the Panama Canal.

- Soviet military advances at new locations in the Basin could require the United States to make a large counter-investment, and in case of a local conflict, to divert or tie down scarce resources.
- As a result, USAF roles in the area would probably need to expand more than U.S. naval and army roles, including for tactical air defense of our ships at sea.
- NORAD and USAF capabilities for southern defense of CONUS, which have been insignificant but are expanding slowly, would be put in a bind.
- The operational importance and use of U.S. bases and facilities in Panama and Puerto Rico would need to be raised drastically, so that any "hostile triangle" may be countered by a U.S. posture that is also traditionally triangular (Panama, Puerto Rico, and Key West/Guantanamo).

Low-Intensity Conflict and Its Internationalization

The other potential source of threat is the domino-like spread of low-intensity conflicts to places where the United States has vital interests at stake: from Central America northward through Guatemala into Mexico or southward into Panama, or by island-hopping in the Caribbean to Puerto Rico.¹⁸ This is a much more subtle and ambiguous source of threat than the Soviet Navy or Cuban Air Force. Nonetheless, such conflicts might create opportunities for the kind of hostile force expansion discussed above, lead to revolutionary instability in Mexico, Panama, or Puerto Rico, diminish the interests of key regional allies (especially Venezuela and Mexico) in cooperating with the United States, or put pressure on U.S. bases in Panama and Puerto Rico. Should local institutions and neighboring governments prove incapable of containing the instability, the results could provoke a costly, prolonged U.S. military intervention.

Revolutionary insurgency and terrorism have posed threatening problems for decades, especially in the mid and late 1960s, following the Cuban Revolution, when the United States supported counterinsurgency programs throughout Latin America. In this earlier period the guerrillas failed in country after country, mainly because they were operating with a deficient strategy and did not have favorable conditions. But with the success of the Sandinistas against the Somoza regime in Nicaragua in 1979 and the recent growth of revolutionary

¹⁸The term "low-intensity conflict" is used in contrast with conventional war and does not suggest that casualties are few. It includes revolutionary insurgency and terrorism, counterrevolutionary violence, forceful seizures of government, and border conflicts.

warfare in El Salvador and Guatemala, it has become clear that the revolutionaries now are more sophisticated and enjoy more favorable conditions.

It would be a mistake to view this latest generation of revolutionary violence as though it were merely a more advanced version of the 1960s generation. The earlier strategies typically relied on the "foco theory" of small isolated units operating in the countryside, looked mainly to Cuba and the Soviet bloc for assistance, and treated the United States as a monolithic enemy where little sympathy could be generated. However, today's revolutionaries are refining orthodox Marxist-Leninist strategies, which emphasize broad-based armed organizations and popular-front coalitions. Moreover, they are seeking allies, resources, and volunteers from around the world (notably Western Europe). And they are building sympathetic support networks within the United States (for example, through some media, universities, and churches). Unable to garner majority domestic support, the revolutionaries (and also the counterrevolutionary extremists) have sought to promote polarization at home and internationalization abroad. Low-intensity conflict has come to depend on diplomatic as well as military expertise.

In many respects, we are witnessing a substantially new pattern of low-intensity conflict, whose main new characteristic is deliberate internationalization. More than ever before, the revolutionaries' strategy is to promote the internationalization of ostensibly local conflicts. They have turned Central America into the world's most internationalized laboratory for revolutionary (and counterrevolutionary) conflict.

This does not mean that the sources of the low-intensity conflict are strictly external to the region. There has been a prolonged and futile argument over whether the sources of violence in Central America are largely *external* to the area (Cuban and Soviet subversion) or essentially *internal* (chronic underdevelopment, indigenous poverty, exploitation, corruption).¹⁹ In this area the internal and external sources of violence are virtually inseparable, and the current internationalization of conflict conforms to an often overlooked historical pattern: For almost two centuries Central American elites have fought their

¹⁹A recent political expression of this argument may be found in *The Americas at a Crossroads: Report of the Inter-American Dialogue*, chaired by Sol M. Linowitz and Galo Plaza, conducted under the auspices of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 1983, which concluded that "the sources of insecurity are mainly internal to each nation; external influences are secondary." Paradoxically, many scholars who now write editorial opinion pieces insisting that the revolutionary unrest in Central America is due primarily to internal causes and not to external Soviet-Cuban support, have earlier subscribed to dependency theories that treat U.S. domination and other external factors as the major sources of economic underdevelopment and political dictatorship in Latin America.

indigenous conflicts by seeking foreign allies and resources. It's the sensible thing for competing elites to do in small countries that have weak (mainly imported) political institutions and poor (mainly export-oriented) economies, where external support can be used to compensate for the absence of domestic majority support, and whose geopolitical position attracts foreign interests.²⁰

In brief, even though Central America's elites respond mainly to local conditions, their struggles normally invite international connections. The weaker U.S. power and presence seem to be in the area, the more likely are local protagonists to entertain extra-hemispheric entanglements.

The relative decline of U.S. power and presence in the Basin during the mid and late 1970s, although sometimes hailed as spelling an end to U.S. hegemonic presumptions, may have spurred the domestic and international destabilization of security conditions in Central America. The perceived U.S. decline seems to have prompted both extreme left- and right-wing elements to become aggressive. It simultaneously weakened and victimized "moderates" who were typically associated with European-oriented Christian Democracy and Social Democracy and not protected by U.S. human-rights advocacy.²¹ The U.S. decline also created openings for foreign entry and incentives for local protagonists to seek foreign support either to compensate for or take advantage of the U.S. decline.

This latest pattern of low-intensity conflict first emerged in Nicaragua in the late 1970s. Within the Sandinista movement, the "tercerista tendency" deliberately sought to involve moderate Latin American and West European governments in supporting the revolutionary struggle to topple Somoza, to gain legitimacy and resources for

²⁰For example, during the 19th century the United States often provided support to leaders and coalitions who campaigned to exclude Spanish, French, or British influence. In the mid and late 1800s, local struggles between Liberals and Conservatives overlaid the U.S.-British rivalry for preeminence in the Isthmus. Since the early 20th century, when the United States established virtual hegemony and occupied several countries, local elite struggles have often depended on who gained most favor within the United States. (However, the last U.S. intervention in Nicaragua, in 1927, was directed against Mexican-backed insurgents and thus at preventing the spread of Mexico's revolutionary influence in Central America.) In recent years, Western Europe's political and economic resurgence and the international activism of its Christian Democratic and Social Democratic parties have offered new sources of outside support for Central American nationalists.

²¹Indeed, it has been in the strategic interests of both the extreme right and the extreme left to use violence to accentuate polarization and to destroy (or force into exile) moderate leaders, parties, and followers, leaving little choice but one extreme or the other.

the Sandinistas, and to isolate the United States.²² The pattern is being repeated, with variations, in El Salvador and Guatemala. The communicability of conflict in Central America, where borders mean little and politico-military networks cut across national lines, increases the relevance of the "domino theory."

"Contagion" may be contained, however, by the increasing complexity of elite and institutional structures north of Nicaragua, which affects how easily revolutionary insurgents may define the "enemy" and seek broad popular support. Nicaragua featured one dictator and one family ruling through a military identified with that family dynasty; El Salvador, however, is ruled by a somewhat broader, elected coalition backed by more than its so-called 14 families, while the military as an institution is breaking its ties with the traditional socioeconomic order. Guatemala's elite consists of numerous families who are not closely interrelated, its military is quite strong and professional for the region, and the recent coups still offer hope for the institutionalization of a politicoeconomic strategy to defeat the guerrillas.²³ Mexico presents no clear oligarchy, has developed institutional and elite complexity to a degree that defies easy description or targeting, and its military is professionally integrated into the political system. The "dominoes" should be more difficult and complicated to topple northward from Nicaragua, and the same may hold true southward.

Further constraints on conflict transmission may extend from the expansion of U.S. military, economic, and diplomatic roles in the area. Unfortunately, the United States has had great difficulty dealing with low-intensity conflict and its multiple political, socioeconomic, and military causes. An important part of the problem in Central America is that terrorism and other forms of violence have had debilitating if not murderous consequences for the two pillars that U.S. policy prefers: the political and economic "moderates" and the professional military forces. Moderate elements are typically killed, forced into exile, or simply flee. Although many end up in the United States, the U.S. government has not developed a broad strategy or even much of an interest in working with exile and refugee groups that might reconstitute a moderate political force for their countries. Meanwhile, if the local armed forces can win the conflict, they normally end up much more politicized and repressive than is desirable for U.S. policy (even though U.S. interests are served by their winning). If the United States should become more resourceful as it becomes more active, moderate elements should stand a better chance of surviving and

²²See Bosch, 1984.

²³See Sereseres, 1984.

remaining in the area, and local military establishments should stand a better chance of conforming to higher standards of professional behavior. But this is far from assured. We are probably in for a prolonged, difficult struggle to understand the political, social, and economic change coursing through the area and to manage it in a way that leads to a mutually more secure and self-reliant region.

Preliminary Implications for U.S. Security

The two threat sources feed on each other. If low-level conflict brings a revolutionary government to power, it may create new opportunities for hostile force expansion. In turn, the establishment of a new revolutionary government may create a new source from which to foment low-level conflict elsewhere. The past and present roles of Castro's Cuba and now the behavior of the Sandinistas' Nicaragua exemplify this synergy.

The structural linkages are not so strong and direct that it makes sense for U.S. strategy to treat them as a unified threat with a common central source. Although it is true that Castro's Cuba lies at the center of both threat sources, each has unique dynamics and raises separate requirements for U.S. response. Containing Cuba and Nicaragua would not necessarily prevent low-level leftist struggles elsewhere; and halting Nicaragua would not necessarily prevent Cuba and other nations from developing a fortified, hostile military axis.

The crucial factor behind hostile force expansion is the Soviet Union. Hence, the decisive requirement for U.S. strategy is to "de-Sovietize" Cuba, or at least to contain and diminish its close military collaboration with the USSR.²⁴ This could also help halt the spread of low-intensity leftist violence elsewhere in the region. At the same time, the broader requirement for U.S. strategy against low-intensity conflict is to "de-internationalize" conflict processes in the Basin—in part by working to diminish West European as well as Soviet involvement in local conflict processes while expanding U.S. influence.

Besides not identifying the threat sources as though they were unified, U.S. strategy must also guard against becoming susceptible to policy tradeoffs that would mean tolerating the advance of one for the sake of limiting the other. In particular, it would be foolhardy to allow "a very strong and continuing Cuban commitment to the defense of revolutionary Nicaragua and Grenada in tacit exchange for the tapering off of Cuban support for revolutionary movements in El Salvador

²⁴See Gonzalez, 1982a and b.

and in other countries."²⁵ As long as Cuba maintains its present leadership and policy directions, this would not bring peace to the Basin or security to the United States but would instead ensure the foundations for enlarging Cuba's military presence and the gradual creation of a hostile axis in the Basin.

Additional boundaries to U.S. strategy are set by the fact that, under general peacetime conditions, there is no easy military formula for eliminating either threat source. Primarily military solutions would require very costly diversions of scarce U.S. military resources, thus violating the strategic principle of minimizing military allocations to the region so as not to degrade our global posture.

Soviet military objectives in this area remain quite unclear. Nevertheless, in addition to disrupting U.S.-hemispheric relations, Soviet strategists would benefit from exploiting revolutionary regimes and conflicts in the Basin if that led to expansion of the Soviet global presence and military power projection capabilities or U.S. political entrapment and military diversion.²⁶ Either of these outcomes would weaken U.S. military capabilities elsewhere, further shake the Western alliance system, and disrupt hemispheric solidarity and cooperation. Because the United States needs to avoid either outcome, events in the Caribbean Basin cannot and should not be assessed in isolation from the global East-West struggle. The nature of that struggle cannot, by itself, provide the sole basis for U.S. strategy in the Basin, but it does impose certain limits:

- U.S. policy and strategy must assure that the Soviets gain no military positions outside Cuba.
- They must also assure that U.S. military forces, already stretched thin, do not get entrapped in a sizable, untenable intervention.

Either extreme would violate at least one of the key strategic principles discussed in Sec. II and seriously jeopardize U.S. national security.

The United States needs to develop a primarily nonmilitary strategy for the Basin, integrating political, economic, and military instruments for addressing threats, their sources, and other security challenges. The outlines of such a strategy are presented in the next section. However, we must still prepare militarily for the possibility that either

²⁵ An idea broached in Jorge I. Domínguez, 1982a, p. 47, as an element in a moderate scenario for deterring the generalization of warfare and the polarization of regional relations by the mid 1980s.

²⁶ As Edward Gonzalez has noted, the former may be preferred by the Soviet Air Force and Navy, and the latter by the Soviet Army and KGB.

threat source may loom larger (and that global security conditions may deteriorate) in the years ahead and thus oblige the United States to take stringent military action.

V. POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS OF COLLECTIVE SECURITY

To recapitulate briefly, this study proposes a conceptual framework for implicitly modernizing positive elements of the Monroe Doctrine.¹ It rests on four key principles that have traditionally guided U.S. policy and strategy in the Caribbean Basin:

1. The Basin should be secure for U.S. presence, power, and passage;
2. Hostile foreign powers should be prevented from establishing military bases and facilities there;
3. Foreign balance-of-power struggles should be excluded and prevented from destabilizing the region;
4. Few U.S. military resources should be dedicated to protecting U.S. interests and assets there.

In combination, these principles constitute a strategic imperative (or axiom) that fits the Basin into the broader context of U.S. global strategy:

The ability of the United States to act as a world power in a global balance-of-power system is greatly enhanced by the exclusion of that system and its related threats and struggles from the Basin.

Otherwise, instability and insecurity in the Basin may so divert the United States as to constrain its global performance.

How can the framework serve as a guide for U.S. policy in the Caribbean Basin? What does it tell us to do? And how does that differ from previous or current policies? This section addresses these questions and proposes building blocks for a new long-term strategy that would engage Caribbean Basin states in new arrangements for promoting "collective hegemony." These arrangements would aim at advancing the framework's key principles in ways that would also serve the interests of Basin allies. To this end, the strategy suggests the

¹As pointed out in Sec. I, this does not mean that the United States should formally enunciate a revival of the Monroe Doctrine. Doing so would certainly excite severe nationalist anger in Latin America. The policy concept this study suggests, "collective hegemony," is considerably different from the interventionist versions of the Monroe Doctrine.

energetic revitalization of political, economic, and military cooperation between the United States and its regional allies.

THE FRAMEWORK AS A GUIDE TO POLICY

The framework provides basic guidelines for U.S. policy in three ways. First, it directs the United States to treat the Caribbean Basin as a geopolitical zone of special importance for U.S. security and strategy.² Latin America is thus seen as containing two distinctive conflict environments (the other being South America), because of the type and intensity of U.S. interests at stake.³ For the Basin in particular, U.S. policy and strategy are advised to return to seek special regional solutions and step back from the contemporary penchant for globalist approaches to local problems.⁴

Second, like the Monroe Doctrine, the framework emphasizes principles that should govern U.S. behavior toward *extra-hemispheric intrusions* in the Basin. The framework assumes that U.S. security interests depend primarily on the region's importance for U.S. global and domestic conditions, and secondarily on the importance of local developments for the region per se. A direct translation of the key principles into long-term objectives would mean that U.S. strategy should emphasize:

- Reducing the violent revolutionary conflicts and restoring stability to Central America and the Caribbean;

²Many U.S. specialists on Latin America resist such a perspective. They regard the "Basin" concept as artificial except possibly for migration flows. See Lowenthal, 1982a, pp. 114-118; and Pastor, 1983. Dominguez (1982b, p. 1) questions the validity of the Basin concept by arguing that the Caribbean islands and Panama are generally more important than the Central American nations for U.S. interests. In contrast, the Soviets and revolutionary groups in the region recognize that the Basin constitutes the "strategic rear" and "Achilles heel" of the United States.

³This differentiation has been sharpened by the British-Argentine conflict over the Falklands/Malvinas Islands.

⁴The U.S. strategic view of the Basin as a geopolitical whole is not shared widely by leaders in other nations around the Basin. They are more sensitive to the differences than to the similarities among the Basin's nations and subregions. And in some cases, notably Venezuela, they may be more interested in promoting Latin American solidarity and strengthening their ties to nations and organizations outside this hemisphere. Resistance of the Basin concept may prove to be a passing phenomenon—depending on how the United States applies the concept and balances regionalism and globalism. Before and during World War II, the Latin American nations were pleased with the evolving regional emphasis to U.S. policy. To their great disappointment, after the war the United States instead emphasized its new global and European responsibilities (Gannon, 1982, pp. 195-221). Were the United States to return to a positive emphasis on regionalism, giving as much importance to development as to security, our Basin neighbors (and other Latin American nations) may prove more receptive to the Basin concept.

- Arresting Soviet military expansion in Cuba and preventing the Soviets and Cubans from gaining military positions outside Cuba;
- Diminishing the intrusion of all external "East-West" struggles—not only U.S.-Soviet, but also European and other foreign rivalries—that contribute to destabilizing political processes in the area;
- Accomplishing the above without engaging in a major, sustained allocation of U.S. military forces to the Basin.

Third, the framework requires U.S. strategy to be *anticipatory* and *preventive* over the long term, not reactive in difficult times and neglectful in easy times. The objectives mentioned above all involve long-term challenges for which no easy short-term answers exist. Regional conditions have deteriorated so badly that the United States faces a prolonged struggle to reestablish its primacy and leadership in managing the process of change.

The framework implies general directions for U.S. strategy, but it does not tell us precisely what steps to take and on what instruments to rely in pursuing those objectives. To a limited extent, these may be inferred. For example, the framework does not specify how to use military power; but the principles do imply that political and economic instruments, and not just military ones, are needed for an effective U.S. strategy in the Basin. The framework also cannot instruct whether to convene negotiations to settle the conflict in El Salvador or with Nicaragua; but should negotiations be desirable, the framework would imply that European participation is inadvisable. Although the framework opposes the intrusion of divisive intra-European and U.S.-European political rivalries into the Basin, in no way does it object to normal commercial competition or the influx of European political ideas.

Because of the overriding concern with extra-hemispheric involvement, the framework also does not specify what principles should govern U.S. policy and strategy within the hemisphere. This resembles the Monroe Doctrine, which dealt with the United States in its relations with Europe but not with Latin America. But again some parameters may be inferred. For example, the framework does not claim whether the United States should prefer democracy, dictatorship, or some other form of local government. Yet it is inherently biased against Marxists because they are likely to establish regimes that would eventually align themselves with the Soviet Union or some other hostile power. The framework is not inherently biased against the establishment of revolutionary regimes that may have socialist

economic tendencies, if those regimes would deny extra-hemispheric entanglements and otherwise observe U.S. security and military interests. The framework does not define just how central a role the United States should play in the Basin, yet its principles can be met in practice only if the United States is the paramount power and has broad political, economic, and military involvement.

In brief, the framework provides a crucial basis from which to derive general guidelines for U.S. policy and strategy in the Basin. The strategic principles instruct that U.S. policy and strategy should aim *at least* to expand U.S. presence and participation in the Basin's political, economic, and military affairs so that the United States is actively committed once again to maintaining primacy. As another Rand study shows through a review of empirical trends for 1960-1980, the U.S. military and security presence in the Basin receded by 1980 to an extent that is out of phase with the recent growth of U.S. interests and potential threats to those interests.⁵ *At most*, the principles imply that U.S. policy and strategy should seek to develop some form of regional "hegemony" in concert with the other Basin nations. How better to prevent extra-hemispheric interference, preserve a secure southern perimeter, and assure U.S. leadership in settling local conflicts? Hegemony in the traditional imperialist sense, however, would be an unwise, infeasible objective for U.S. strategy in the 1980s.

IMPLICATIONS FOR COLLECTIVE HEGEMONY

The key principles would be better served if "collective hegemony" could be forged.⁶ This would be feasible if other Caribbean Basin governments would collaborate with the United States as sovereign equals so that the framework's principles would advance the national interests of *all* partners.⁷ Other Basin governments would recognize

⁵See Stodder and McCarthy, 1984.

⁶"Hegemony" is another term that comes loaded with historical and ideological symbolism. It especially arouses antipathies among Latin American nationalists. I use the word because the alternatives (e.g., partnership, community, solidarity, family, collective security), although less loaded, are analytically less correct for this study. The concept "collective hegemony" is substantially different from simple hegemony and inherently contradicts much of the old symbolism.

⁷How collective hegemony might be organized in practice is a question not answered here. There would, of course, be some tension between the principle of sovereign equality and the asymmetrical reality of U.S. power. This may not be all to the bad, however. The Central American states have traditionally wanted a strong, guiding U.S. hand to counterbalance potential hegemonic behavior by Mexico (not to mention Venezuela). In the Caribbean, constructive U.S. influence is needed to help bridge differences between the Spanish- and English-speaking islands, which might otherwise prefer to go their own ways.

that their own long-range security and development depend on promoting the stability and security of their neighbors, opposing the expansion of foreign (especially Soviet) military forces in the area, preventing the internationalization of local political struggles, and restraining the use of military force by any Basin nation to settle local conflicts.

So conceived, collective hegemony would require not only shared objectives, but also greater cooperation and interdependence in realizing those objectives, including increasingly active participation by Basin states in regional policy planning and implementation. All parties would have to share increased responsibility for security and development in the Basin. Properly configured, the policy concept would not enable the United States to displace responsibility onto its neighbors; it could enable them to engage and better motivate responsible, reciprocal behavior from the United States. Collective hegemony is thus meant to imply a nonimperialist, even anti-imperialist form of constructive collaboration among the Basin's constituents.⁸ The United States would be constrained from behaving like a hegemonic power, yet it could derive benefits as though hegemony existed.⁹

Lessons from the Past

Collective hegemony would need to draw on positive U.S.-Latin American experiences with the Good Neighbor Policy in the 1930s and the Alliance for Progress in the 1960s, although each responded to different conditions and requirements. By embracing the doctrine of nonintervention and ending U.S. military occupations in the Basin at a time when extra-hemispheric threats were negligible, the *Good Neighbor Policy* enabled Latin America to build favorable political and economic relationships with the United States. And it enabled the United States to begin transforming the unilateral Monroe Doctrine into the multilateral Western Hemisphere security system for external defense in time to assure Latin American support in World War II. Politically and economically, however, it was a passive, low-key policy that required only that the United States halt its political

⁸"If the Americans act outside the inter-American system, it becomes an imperialist act," according to Colombia's former President, Julio Cesar Turbay Ayala, as quoted in the *New York Times*, March 18, 1982, p. 4.

⁹A similar concept of "shared hegemony" is formulated by Dominguez (1982b, especially pp. 40-41). Unlike this study, however, Dominguez treats hegemony as a "subjective interest" of the United States that lacks substantial strategic value, and he seems to incorporate our extra-hemispheric allies into his recommendations for future hegemonic sharing. That the United States should welcome the trend toward "further diversification of the economic and political relations" of the Caribbean islands is recommended in Dominguez and Dominguez, 1981, pp. 74-76.

interventionism in order to engage most Latin American governments as hemispheric allies.¹⁰

In comparison, the *Alliance for Progress* was an exceptionally broad, activist campaign to arrest the potential threat of Soviet penetration and Castroite revolution in Latin America. At the time, the United States possessed both enough wealth and renewed missionary zeal to propagate U.S.-style ideals and reforms amongst our neighbors, many of whom longed for a revival of U.S. attention, particularly as they feared the potential effect of the Cuban Revolution on their unstable, inequitable societies. Fired by pretentious U.S. ambitions, the alliance aimed to promulgate economic development, social reform, political democracy, and internal security, with virtually that order of causation in mind, and with mixed results.

Economically, the alliance emphasized large-scale aid and advisory programs, encouraged U.S. private investments, and provided minor trade benefits. In the long run, these programs were marginally productive for national and regional economic development. Politically, the alliance hastened the "twilight of the tyrants" (to use Tad Szulc's phrase), helped democratically elected governments to spread temporarily throughout the region, and encouraged the growth of European-style Christian Democratic parties as an antidote to Castroism. Many democratic, reformist governments and parties unfortunately lacked the institutional strength to stay the course. Militarily, the grant Military Assistance Program and U.S. counterinsurgency efforts helped strengthen local capacities for internal security. In the end, however, paternalistic U.S. disregard of Latin American aspirations for major arms transfers (especially F-5s) for use in traditional defense missions aroused nationalist resentments and motivated a turn to European suppliers.¹¹

Although it was partially successful at encouraging useful reforms, this ambitious U.S. experiment with liberal activism aroused antipathy among many conservative and cautious elites in Latin America and failed to win many adherents among the younger generations of reform-minded nationalists. At times it arrogantly disregarded Latin American inclinations to prefer the integrating functions of civil-military rule over the potentially fragmenting effects of U.S.-style

¹⁰ Although some reformist governments came to power and nationalized U.S. private investments to an unprecedented extent (e.g., Mexico), conservative tyrants also entrenched themselves without fearing further U.S. interference to instill democracy (e.g., Batista, Somoza, Trujillo). Because these were Depression years, the policy entailed little U.S. economic assistance or new U.S. private investment. Some reciprocal trade agreements were negotiated to alleviate Latin American complaints about the protectionist Smoot-Hawley Act.

¹¹ See Einaudi et al., 1973.

democracy. As a result, few mourned the demise of the alliance in the late 1960s.

Neither the Good Neighbor Policy nor the Alliance for Progress could be replicated today because of the current asymmetry between perceived threats and U.S. economic and military resources. The first policy responded to a time (the 1930s) when both extra-hemispheric threats and U.S. resources for Latin American programs were quite low, hence nonintervention was advisable. The second responded to a time (the 1960s) when Cold War threats and U.S. resources for the region were both quite high, hence a liberal interventionist approach was appropriate. The situation today exhibits no such symmetry of circumstances: The perceived and potential threats seem quite high, but available U.S. resources are scarce. Thus the traditional strategic principles will have to be molded into a uniquely contemporary response.

A useful philosophical lesson may be gleaned from both the Good Neighbor Policy and the Alliance for Progress: If the United States should pursue an energetic new policy (especially one that revives traditional principles), the type of "spirit" and "consciousness" behind this policy could matter far more to our neighbors than the quantity of U.S. resources. Of particular importance will be the ways in which U.S. policy tries to meet nationalist aspirations and values.

Obstacles and Incentives in the 1980s

Achieving collective hegemony today would be difficult because the regional and global environments are not conducive for the other nations of the Basin to agree to it. For them, the "Caribbean Basin" is partly a conceptual artifice that does not reflect enormous differences between Central America and the Caribbean, and between the Spanish- and English-speaking Caribbean. The United States does not appear to be so powerful and useful a partner as during the periods of the Good Neighbor Policy or the Alliance for Progress. Political nationalism and cultural antagonism motivate strong resistance to close relations with the United States. Beliefs are widely held that the Monroe Doctrine is defunct, and could not, and should not, be reinstated.¹² And suspicions are common that U.S. overtures for collective security would result in new U.S.-led interventions and a heightened potential for conflict in the area.

¹²See an important analysis by a West German, Grabendorff, 1982a, pp. 625-637, p. 630, which argues, "All efforts to revive the Monroe Doctrine are bound to fail since the basis on which the concept rested—the community of interests between the United States and Latin America (and the ability of the United States to keep other powers out of the region)—cannot be re-established."

Extra-hemispheric ties rather than closer ties with the United States have become the preferred Latin American strategy. Nationalist elites in many governments—including those of Mexico and Venezuela, the most influential regional actors after Cuba—believe that the diversification of foreign relations away from the United States is essential to the exercise of national independence and political bargaining power. Hence they invite broad foreign participation to help resolve regional issues. For many Latin American nations, the growing economic and political prowess of Western Europe—and not the global expansion of Soviet military power—is the more decisive international trend because “the United States and Western Europe might have to compete for Latin America’s cooperation in the near future.”¹³ In addition, many Latin American nations fear and distrust us more than potential competing threats. As a result, “Our continent has become, as in the 16th and 17th centuries, one of the theaters where the great powers struggle for supremacy.”¹⁴

Our neighbors are not the only current obstacles. Within the United States, various special interest groups, Congressional elements, and protectionist sentiments at large pose severe domestic obstacles to the pursuit of a closely interdependent partnership with the Caribbean Basin. Some labor and business sectors have campaigned vigorously against Congressional approval of the Caribbean Basin Initiative’s proposals for one-way free trade to the United States and tax incentives for U.S. investments in the Basin. Also, there has been increasing public resistance to accepting the heavy influx of migrant workers and refugees from Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean.

Among Congress, private interests, and the American public, many may still respond to anti-communist appeals for vigorous U.S. action in the Caribbean and Central America. However, a single-minded emphasis on anti-communism would undermine the national consensus needed to support a U.S. strategy of collective hegemony. It would also diminish the potential appeal of collective hegemony to our Basin neighbors as well as distort the framework and its principles.

Awareness of such difficulties should not lead the United States to abandon the idea of energetically promoting a new sense of regional community and collective security. The idea of collective hegemony should seem less improvident to our Caribbean and Central American neighbors once they assess the long-term implications of regional and global trends, recognize that their security is at stake along with ours, and rediscover that their national interests require the avoidance of

¹³Ibid., pp. 625–637, quotation from p. 637.

¹⁴From Paz, 1982, p. 42.

extra-hemispheric entanglements and foreign balance-of-power games. Indeed, such entanglements should become superfluous once Basin governments understand that the United States has no interest in threatening their national security and is capable of accommodating their solutions to regional and local security problems insofar as those solutions preclude extra-hemispheric intrusion. As in the past, they may in fact see that they can shape regional partnership with the United States to lessen further any concerns about potential U.S. military intervention as well as to increase benefits from the U.S. economy.

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR U.S. POLICY AND STRATEGY

What collective hegemony might look like in practice is unclear. Yet to strive for its development, the United States would have to deal successfully with four classic long-term challenges:

- Accommodate (and in part dispel) the dominant strategy of Latin American nationalism, which has recommended the diversification of foreign relations away from the United States.
- Make the United States more useful as a regional economic partner through trade, investment, technology transfer, education, and immigration programs.
- Encourage the development of local political "models" that are moderate, democratic, and pluralist—in light of the local attraction to European philosophies and the apparently lesser relevance of U.S. institutional models.
- Strengthen the traditional U.S. military presence in the Basin, and construct a collective security system and military-to-military relationships that respond to U.S. and local defense needs and to shared public political values.

For decades, these have been traditional, enduring challenges for U.S.-Latin America relations. A sustained, successful strategy to meet them over the long term would create vital building blocks for a respectful, responsible, and reciprocal partnership.

Engaging Nationalism in the Caribbean Basin

Nationalism could serve as a major motivation for collective security because it remains a powerful evocative force that can unite otherwise divided societies, and perhaps nations as well. In his classic study, Arthur Whitaker noted that Latin American nationalism often impeded U.S. economic and political ties and communications with

Latin America. Yet, Latin American nationalism "has been and still is, despite Cuba, in the cold war an asset to the United States and the free world at large, for it is the most effective of all barriers against penetration by the Sino-Soviet bloc."¹⁵

Nationalism continues to arouse severe inhibitions to firm partnership with the United States, however, partly because Latin American nationalism often looks like the private currency of left-wing critics of U.S. policies. In fact its core concepts lie deep in the hearts and minds of political persuasions on all sides—leftist, rightist, and centrist. For civilian, military, private, and public sectors, those concepts provide the essential language for claiming legitimacy and authority and for expressing the fundamental yearnings of political life in Latin America.

The core concepts behind nationalism in the Caribbean Basin (and South America) are *national dignity*, *political sovereignty*, and *economic independence*. These concepts are not intrinsically antithetical to the United States. However, because they aim at reducing foreign dependency and gaining greater freedom of action, they typically require a government to emphasize strengthening the state's roles in the society and economy, and diversifying foreign (especially economic) relations away from the United States. Thus, by motivating strategies for statism at home and diversification abroad, Latin American nationalism often breeds a sort of "rejectionist tendency"—prominent among leftists, but also found among rightists—that has been antithetical to the "accommodationist tendency" in U.S. policy.¹⁶

These nationalist concepts profoundly affect the nature of inter-American political dialogue. The United States is motivated largely by the language of security and rarely by that of sovereignty, which, along with independence and dignity, it takes for granted for itself. In contrast, Latin American governments are motivated mainly by the language of sovereignty, independence, and dignity—and by suspicions that U.S. security interests may ultimately limit local sovereignty. Thus the more the United States talks security, the more nationalist elites talk sovereignty and independence from hegemony. And when the United States recommends close partnership, the nationalist elite advocates diversification to end dependency. Examples of rhetorical shifts in such directions include Mexico and Venezuela after the U.S.

¹⁵Whitaker, 1962, pp. 76–77. Also see Alba, 1968. Whitaker and Alba both point out that militant outsiders, notably Soviet sympathizers and agents in the 1930s, as well as local demagogues, have manipulated nationalist sensitivities in Latin America for the purposes of creating divisiveness with the United States and the European nations, and among nations in the region.

¹⁶This analysis of nationalism derives from Ronfeldt, Nehring, and Gandara, 1980, Sec. III. A useful overview of the important roles that intellectuals play in Latin American politics is Riding, 1983, pp. 28–40.

"special relationship" with each crumbled in the late 1960s, Jamaica under Michael Manley, and Panama under General Omar Torrijos.

Nationalism has meanwhile driven the quest for economic diversification through deals with Western Europe, Japan, and the Soviet bloc, for trade, investments, arms transfers, and petroleum exports, and through preferences for multilateral lending and economic assistance. Similarly, nationalist tendencies appear behind recent maneuvers regarding Central America to internationalize political negotiations and play European, third-world, and nonaligned sympathies against U.S. policy positions. With regard to Cuba, for example, an interest in normalizing U.S.-Cuban relations may coexist with a lack of interest in de-Sovietizing Cuba (the case in Mexico) because of a belief that the Soviet presence in Cuba increases regional freedom of action and opens opportunities for exercising independence from the United States.

The Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations made some efforts to accommodate rising Latin American nationalism, although there is no evidence of a unified U.S. strategy. One measure was to welcome the expansion of West European and Japanese involvement, partly in the hope that this would defuse nationalist frustrations in the Basin and South America and provide alternatives to possible Soviet advances at a time when U.S. presence and assistance were being reduced. Another measure was to express limited acceptance of hemispheric demands for "ideological pluralism," as symbolized at meetings of the OAS in 1975. The Carter administration pursued the most accommodative postures: It concluded concessionary negotiations with Panama over the Canal, it tolerated and sought to co-opt revolutionary change in Nicaragua, and it generally endeavored to end images of the United States as a hegemonic and reactionary power. Much of this broad U.S. effort was enveloped in arguments about increasing global interdependence, regional complexity and diversity, and the wisdom of relying on broad multilateral frameworks to resolve issues.

A different approach is needed for the 1980s. Enlarged European political involvement has not helped to stabilize the area as we hoped, nor has it provided as great an opportunity for diversification away from the United States as many Basin and South American elites hoped. In principle, ideological pluralism remains acceptable to U.S. interests, but *not a plurality of foreign power roles* within the Basin. In Cuba under Castro and Nicaragua under the Sandinistas, revolutionary nationalists have not yet shown that they can supplant the "old order" without inviting extra-hemispheric entanglements, and they have not enabled the United States to "de-couple" its security interests from the political orientation of a particular regime.

There are no easy formulas on how to accommodate nationalism. Yet the United States and our neighbors would all have to reassess the merits of their past postures if they want to strengthen new interests in collective security:

- Political leaders and nationalist intellectuals in the Basin have to question whether their long-range interests are truly served by their internationalization strategy, which is gradually introducing late 20th century balance-of-power games into the Basin. Rather than strengthening their hand against the United States, such a strategy seems more likely to sharpen conflicts and Balkanize the Basin, in violation of Bolivarian and Pan American ideals to keep conflict resolution a family matter.
- It would be particularly helpful if these leaders would recognize (and the United States would make abundantly clear) that we all have a common interest in preserving the region's independence from extra-hemispheric threats and intrusions. A nation that invites extra-hemispheric intrusions for the sake of exercising its particular brand of national independence may very possibly introduce dynamics harmful to regional independence. A U.S. policy of nonintervention in local affairs is thus attractive insofar as the local nations also subscribe to a policy of nonentanglement with extra-hemispheric forces.
- For its part, the United States needs to develop a positive response to nationalism by respecting local concepts of sovereignty and independence, by understanding that local state-building may take priority over private enterprise, and by demonstrating a long-term commitment to political, economic, and military partnership. The approach should also be capable of tolerating and cooperating with radical domestic reforms so long as the key strategic principles are upheld by the local government's foreign policies.
- The United States may further benefit from voicing nationalist concepts that emerge from our democratic and popular traditions and that may help institutionalize collective cooperation among the Basin nations. Whereas the latter normally emphasize "state sovereignty" (especially when they want to obstruct some U.S. action), our own experience teaches us to emphasize "popular sovereignty." This basic value lies behind many important issues for U.S. interests, including political democracy, human rights, and refugee and immigration flows.

Economic Partnership and Production Sharing

Implementing collective hegemony would probably require a fresh long-term commitment to economic partnership and production sharing among the United States and its Basin neighbors.¹⁷ For its part, the United States needs to combine trade, investment, and assistance initiatives in order to respond to local leaders who want "trade not aid" and to compete effectively with their extra-hemispheric opportunities.¹⁸ A Marshall-like plan that does not overwhelm the area's limited (but growing) absorptive capacity, or a renewed Alliance for Progress approach that does not depend strongly on U.S. aid, may eventually be advised. For the time being, President Reagan's Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI), undertaken in consultation with Canada, Mexico, Venezuela (the so-called Nassau Group) and other Basin nations, represents a modest step in the right direction. Although Congress authorized the meager assistance portion long ago, scaled-down versions of the trade portion and the tax and investment portion have barely survived stiff opposition from protectionist interest groups. The wisdom of the CBI lies in its comprehensive view of regional partnership; all portions must be implemented if it is to contribute constructively to interdependence and security in the Basin.¹⁹

Collective hegemony would further require shifting away from international multilateral organizations toward relying primarily on expanded bilateral and regional instruments—especially for banking, aid, joint ventures, technology transfer and training. Examples of moves in this direction, besides the CBI, include the U.S. private-sector coalition called Caribbean/Central American Action (C/CAA), and the Mexican-Venezuelan oil purchasing facility. The Caribbean Group for Economic Cooperation in Development also deserves strong U.S. support, even though it channels multinational aid to the insular Caribbean under the leadership of the World Bank. So long as strong bilateral and regional instruments are the centerpieces, ancillary roles by international multilateral instruments such as the Caribbean Group may be useful if they help the Basin nations to fulfill the strategic principles discussed above.²⁰

¹⁷ Because this subsection is limited to identifying general policy directions that may help to operationalize the key strategic principles, it does not discuss the inevitable, difficult policy choices about whether economic development should emphasize agriculture or industry, labor-intensive or capital-intensive investments, and export expansion, import substitution, or services (such as tourism).

¹⁸ The view of many Caribbean island leaders that U.S. policy should be "developmentalist" is reiterated in Dominguez and Dominguez, 1981, and Lowenthal, 1982b, pp. 113-141.

¹⁹ Pastor, 1982, pp. 1038-1058, provides a detailed, balanced analysis of the strengths and shortcomings of the CBI.

²⁰ An example of a multinational instrument that might compete with some U.S. security interests is the European Economic Community's Lome II convention, which offers

Over the long run, depending on the evolution of U.S. labor and business interests and U.S.-European-Japanese economic relations, progress toward regional and subregional economic integration in the Basin may become desirable and feasible.²¹ The CBI's proposals for one-way free trade into the United States and tax incentives for U.S. investments offer to lay groundwork for the gradual evolution of a North American/Caribbean Basin economic community. The obstacles are great for all parties, however, and overcoming them would require U.S. leadership, ingenuity, and sacrifices in some areas for gains in others.

Meanwhile, the most important subregional efforts, the Central American Common Market (CACM) and the Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM), have suffered from the troublesome realities of subregional rivalry and protectionism. CACM almost perished from the conflicts in Nicaragua and El Salvador. However, both CACM and CARICOM have achieved some specific successes (e.g., product specialization) and warrant further U.S. support.²² National rigidities and fears that the costs would outweigh the benefits have also obstructed recent proposals (mostly of U.S. origin) to develop an integrated North American economic community among the United States, Canada, and Mexico (and Venezuela if the purpose is energy security).

Immigration is another crucial dimension of regional partnership. Refugee, exile, and migrant labor flows constitute one of the most binding activities in the Basin, not only to and from the United States but also among the smaller nations.²³ Unstable conditions in the Caribbean Basin thus intrude into U.S. domestic politics, economics, society, and culture more deeply than ever before. These domestic connections argue strongly for the United States to promote socioeconomic progress along with security throughout the Basin—even though this would not halt the immigration flows. Violence has enlarged the flow of exiles and refugees, but the restoration of political stability would not greatly

trade and aid benefits to 11 former colonial dependencies in the Caribbean Basin, including Grenada.

²¹Cuba would not have to be excluded if it would rejoin the Basin family in harmony with the key strategic principles.

²²CACM and CARICOM symbolize the gap between Spanish- and English-speaking nations in the Basin. CARICOM has moved to bridge this gap by inviting the Dominican Republic to join. CACM might eventually do likewise with Belize.

²³The United States receives more legal and illegal immigrants than the rest of the world's nations combined; and the most important sending area is the Caribbean Basin, with about half coming from Mexico alone. The prognosis is for continued large flows. McCarthy and Ronfeldt, 1982, suggest that the United States consider the effects of immigration flows on U.S. sovereignty and security much in the way that third-world nations view the effects of foreign capital and technology flows on their sovereignty and security.

diminish the total flow from the Basin because it is mainly due to high population growth rates and chronic socioeconomic conditions.²⁴ The United States needs an immigration policy that will provide substantial, preferential opportunities to migrants from the Basin, while enabling the U.S. government to regain control over its own borders and labor markets.

In sum, strengthening socioeconomic partnership will ultimately involve a wide-ranging list of specific issues, options, and ideas far too lengthy and complex for this study to cover. Several steps, however, require dedicated attention and could contribute substantially to improving our position in the Basin.

- As soon as possible, implement all portions of the CBI and engage the support of Canada, Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela for it. If Congress does not support all portions of this crucial but modest building block, the United States may be left without a necessary economic instrument to address its regional security objective for years to come.
- The Simpson-Mazzoli immigration bill offers a sensible, measured approach to protecting U.S. national interests while accepting our new realities as a Caribbean Basin nation. Beyond this bill, it might be useful to promote a Basin-wide policy framework for treating migratory worker, refugee, and exile flows.
- For the medium term, give impetus to a comprehensive, energetic, preferential plan for regional economic development that builds on the CBI and that is designed in consultation with our Basin neighbors. It may resemble a Marshall-like plan, but it will have to match (and improve) the socioeconomic absorptive capacity in Central America and the Caribbean.
- For the long range, ideas for integrating a North American economic community—including the United States, Canada, Mexico, and possibly other Basin nations—should be kept alive despite the obstacles. Ideas for constructing a sea-level canal may also be worth renewing if that feat would generate vast employment.

²⁴The fall of El Salvador, the continued spread of low-intensity revolutionary conflict, and the gradual consolidation of a hostile axis might greatly enlarge the rush of refugees and exiles to the United States. As seen in the Mariel exodus, Cuba has already used sudden mass migration as a tool for easing domestic discontent at home and creating problems for the United States.

Strengthening Moderate, Centrist Political Forces

A strategy to prevent the intrusion of extra-hemispheric struggles needs to be based on more than simple opposition to left-wing and right-wing extremists who jeopardize U.S. security interests, or just on opposition to Soviet inroads. A strategy for collective hegemony would require broad appeal based on a hopeful vision of a more just, democratic future. It would thus need, in keeping with American ideals, to strengthen and shield moderate, centrist forces (including those within the militaries) who support democracy and may provide the United States with natural allies.

The context for meeting this challenge presents the United States with more difficulties now than at any time since World War II. U.S. efforts to foster democracy abroad have diminished since the end of the Alliance for Progress and its illusory hopes that U.S. economic assistance would foster political democracy. The electoral victory of Prime Minister Seaga in Jamaica in 1980 and the massive support for the elections in El Salvador in 1982 attest to episodic U.S. influence in supporting democratic processes under difficult circumstances. In general, however, the United States lacks a strategy to export political advice, training, and resources for building democratic institutions and systems.²⁵

During the last decade West European powers have become much more attractive to political forces within the Basin and much more active than the United States as sources of political philosophies, "models," and training and advice on local institution building. The political center in Latin America is now defined largely by Christian Democratic and Social Democratic parties that look to France, Germany, and other West European nations for inspiration and support. Germany has developed the most skillful strategies for fostering such parties, especially Social Democracy through the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and more broadly through the Socialist International.²⁶

²⁵ This subsection does not deal with the activities of the AFL-CIO's American Institute for Free Labor Development, which trains unionists. Nor does it deal with past efforts of the Central Intelligence Agency and U.S. corporations to influence political campaigns and election outcomes in some instances (e.g., Chile in the mid 1960s to early 1970s).

²⁶ Although the trend has been toward a Europeanization of the political middle, it is not a solid trend. Christian Democracy and Social Democracy tend to be centrist, but they are not natural allies and often compete for support among the same constituencies. Also, some elements of Social Democracy are quite leftist. Menges, 1981, pp. 32-38, shows that the Socialist International and Friedrich Ebert Foundation have actively supported leftist revolution.

Second, the parties have different origins and European affiliations. Most Christian Democratic parties of Latin America are Cold War descendants of the West European movement. They have a strong regional organization, loosely connected to the European parties (which lack a strong international organization). Hence the ties to Europe are intellectually close but organizationally independent. The Social Democratic parties trace their intellectual origins to an indigenous populist nationalist movement of the

The progressive Europeanization of the political middle in the Basin during the 1970s may have temporarily benefited U.S. interests by offering political alternatives to local leaders other than U.S. and Soviet-Cuban models. By now, however, this trend has become costly for U.S. policy in the Basin in two ways.

The first and foremost cost consists of the mauling of moderate forces by left- and right-wing extremists in the strife-torn countries. European influence has helped foster the growth of some moderate, pluralist forces, but this has not resulted in a strong, secure political center. Instead, polarization and conflict in El Salvador and Guatemala have inflicted either murder or migration on many leaders identified with Social or Christian Democratic parties, especially in provincial areas. Their European progenitors, however, have lacked the power and presence to prevent this systematic assassination.

Second, the influence of Social Democracy has introduced Eurocentric arguments and an international political dynamic into the Basin that is contrary to U.S. interests and objectives.²⁷ Social Democracy maintains that the United States need not fear the presence of minor military threats and revolutionary regimes nearby, that democratic revolutionary change is both necessary and inevitable in the Basin, and that Europe and the Socialist International should endeavor to reduce U.S.-Soviet tensions over local conflicts and to moderate the behavior of local revolutionary leaders. As a result, Social Democracy and the Socialist International have motivated and facilitated European diplomatic posturing in the Basin.²⁸ Simultaneously, they have encouraged U.S. regional allies, particularly Venezuela and Mexico, to pursue foreign policies that, besides diverging from U.S. objectives, further internationalize the conflicts in the area by enhancing the potential legitimacy of European negotiating and assistance roles.²⁹

1930s, *aprimo*. During the 1970s the parties' leaders moved into the orbit of the Socialist International, which was just becoming globally active. Thus their ties to Europe are recent and tactical.

²⁷ In contrast, the objectives of Christian Democracy, especially as manifested through Venezuela's COPEI party, have generally paralleled those of the U.S. government.

²⁸ For example, the Socialist International and Social Democratic leaders in France, Germany, and Spain have opposed U.S. objectives in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Grenada. In particular, the French-Mexican communique of 1981 sought recognition of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) as a legitimate political force in El Salvador.

²⁹ Because Venezuela's political system is built around domestic competition between a Christian Democratic party (COPEI) and a Social Democratic party (Acción Democrática), its foreign policy has shifted according to which is in power. Mexico's ruling party, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), has steadily aligned with Social Democratic tendencies and opposed Christian Democracy. Thus at times the Venezuelan and Mexican governments have cooperated—for example, in promoting the downfall of Somoza; and other times they have worked at odds—for example, in El Salvador when

The absence of strong centrist forces in the violence-ridden nations of Central America and the ascendancy of right- and left-wing forces have meanwhile exposed U.S. policy and society to a growing polarization in our domestic policy processes. The internationalization of local conflicts in Central America is being internalized in the United States. Unless the governments in such places as El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras demonstrate greater respect for human rights and halt right-wing excesses, then solidarity groups, Congressional critics, and sympathetic media and church groups in our country may be increasingly able to paralyze U.S. policy, possibly to the point of preventing U.S. government-to-government assistance.

Already in a muddle, U.S. public policy dialogue has come to revolve destructively around two opposing theses that would not claim center stage if we had a workable strategy to support political moderates.³⁰ One thesis, typically propounded by conservatives, is that U.S. interests are served better by supporting traditional authoritarian dictatorships like the Shah or Somoza than by retracting such support to accommodate rising pressures for democratic changes that may fall prey to totalitarian revolutionaries.³¹ Where this problem has arisen for U.S. policy (e.g., Nicaragua), it is largely because earlier we had failed to nourish and support moderate, democratic elements within the government and among the opposition. Indeed, dictators like the Shah and Somoza have obliged us to cut our contacts with such moderates, thereby strengthening their position but weakening our potential access and influence in case of instability.

The other thesis, which appears mainly in liberal writings, is that the United States should be able to tolerate and even assist a revolutionary socialist regime nearby (especially if radical change is inevitable) so long as its radicalism is restricted to the nation's internal order and does not interfere with U.S. security interests.³² The problem with this thesis is that it ignores the inseparability of internal and external forces during revolutionary changes in these countries. A

Venezuela's government supported President Duarte and Mexico's backed the opposition FDR.

³⁰It seems advisable to emphasize "moderates" rather than "democracy" per se. U.S. policy difficulties have arisen more because of the paucity of moderate forces than because of the lack of democracy in the area. The best possible outcome for U.S. interests would be democracies ruled by moderates, but achieving this may take a generation or more for many countries. Meanwhile, it would be advisable to understand that, in some situations, we would benefit from seeing strong moderate forces helping to rule a regime, even though that regime may be more authoritarian than democratic in nature.

³¹The thesis expressed in Kirkpatrick, 1979, pp. 34-45; and 1981, pp. 29-39.

³²Cuba has been the most discussed case. Regarding Central America, a recent conservative, security-conscious version of this thesis appears in Tucker, 1980-1981, especially pp. 270-273.

revolutionary movement that gains power with external, anti-U.S. support and that is bent upon not sharing power with any opponents, including political moderates, is not likely to forgo such external backing during the consolidation phase of the revolution. The Sandinista regime fit this pattern during 1981-1982 by dismissing Assistant Secretary Thomas Enders's overtures for negotiations to achieve mutual accommodation; the Sandinista leaders have had ample opportunities to test the U.S. government's ability to live with a radical nationalist regime nearby as long as it stays disentangled from the East-West conflict.³³ Unlike elsewhere in the third world, the United States cannot afford to accept a peripheral relationship with revolutionary regimes in the Basin that maintain close political and military ties with extra-hemispheric powers.³⁴

To assure the ascendancy of moderates who may help to advance the strategic principles, therefore, the United States needs to counter objectionable influence from the Socialist International and, more important, to develop its own strategy for strengthening moderate centrist forces and governments in the Basin.

Containing the Socialist International. There may be no need for a vigorous public campaign to counter the Socialist International's (SI) roles in the Caribbean Basin. Instead, quiet diplomacy and information sharing with European and Latin American governments should be adequate in securing policies that are more congruent with U.S. interests. Relations between the European parties and the Latin American affiliates of the Socialist International have probably peaked. Indeed, they are showing signs of disharmony and possibly distancing over Nicaragua, and the Latin American parties have begun to question the Sandinista regime's close ties with Cuba and its anti-pluralist

³³The United States never objected to the Sandinistas' initial dedication to political pluralism, a mixed economy, and a nonaligned foreign policy, their platform when they seized power in 1979. After visiting Nicaragua in August 1981, Enders proposed a five-point basis for a bilateral nonaggression agreement: The United States would moderate Nicaraguan exile behavior and renew economic assistance to Nicaragua, which in turn would stop training and supplying Salvadoran guerrillas, implement pluralist principles at home, and limit their military buildup. During the spring of 1982, the State Department made a second attempt, which also failed. In October, Enders's points found their way into the peace plan proposed at the meeting in Costa Rica of foreign ministers from the area's democratic states. See Enders, 1982, pp. 66-69; and 1983, pp. 76-79.

³⁴This may apply not only to the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, but also to a touted alternative, Eden Pastora (the former Comandante Cero), who, if he were to gain power by overthrowing the Sandinistas, seems likely to adopt a very internationalist and nonaligned posture, although it would lean mainly toward Europe's Socialist International.

tendencies.³⁵ In addition, and in contrast to earlier French and German roles, Spain's new prime minister, Felipe Gonzalez, a socialist and a leader in the Socialist International, has recently played fairly constructive roles in seeking (partly at U.S. behest) to promote regional negotiations.

Fostering a workable political center. The United States is the only power that can foster a strong democratic political center in the Basin, and shield it at least from right-wing assassins. But first the United States needs to identify itself actively with the democratic spectrum. Recognizing this, President Reagan has launched "Project Democracy" as a bipartisan, mixed public-private effort to design and institutionalize a global strategy that will "foster the infrastructure of democracy—the system of free press, unions, political parties, universities—which allows a people to choose their own way."³⁶ This ambitious project and its programs for training foreign leaders, strengthening foreign democratic institutions, and building personal and institutional networks among the recipients sounds like a move in the right direction from this study's standpoint.³⁷

In the Caribbean and Central American area, U.S. strategy needs mechanisms for strengthening moderate forces where they still prevail (e.g., Costa Rica, Jamaica) and for helping to create a political center where it is being demolished or going into exile (e.g., El Salvador, Guatemala). Promotion of private enterprise and economic development through the CBI may indirectly help in the former cases but will accomplish little in the latter where more direct political methods are needed.³⁸

A strategy to promote collective hegemony in as diverse a political environment as the Basin should probably recognize that there is no "best" model for the area and that each nation will, within limits, evolve its own model. Moreover, it should be recognized that moderates and centrists in the area may not resemble U.S.-style middle

³⁵At the SI's meeting in Bonn in April 1982, Germany (notably Willy Brandt) won approval of a declaration supporting Nicaragua's revolution, but the Latin American representatives (notably Venezuela's Carlos Andres Perez) argued for the first time that the Sandinista regime could no longer be considered center-left in line with Social Democracy.

³⁶From President Reagan's address in London, June 8, 1982, *Department of State Bulletin*, July 1982, p. 27. An earlier but related address by Secretary of State Haig, 1982, pp. 1-6, called on the OAS to "play a more active role in strengthening democracy," including the creation of an institute for the study of democracy, and technical services and good offices for the observation of elections.

³⁷Secretary of State Shultz, 1983, pp. 47-49, outlines the project's elements.

³⁸This may need to include, as in El Salvador, using our military assistance and the human rights certification process as leverage to restrain the far right.

of the readers; they may often be "roughly comparable to our most vociferous liberals."³⁹

Some *tentative*, forward-looking measures that might have a useful place in the gradual formulation of a comprehensive strategy are mentioned below. All the ideas embody key American values: human rights, popular sovereignty, political democracy, and freedom of information. And most could fit under Project Democracy.

- A strong stand on human rights can be an effective instrument for enhancing the survival and success of moderates; but to assure its effectiveness, it must be backed by a new expansion of U.S. power and presence.⁴⁰ U.S. policy must obtain the compliance of rightist regimes and forces that endanger the moderates, and whose excesses undermine public support for U.S. policy within the United States.
- The Central American Democratic Community (consisting of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras) has been a valuable instrument for building a regional political strategy. It is now being broadened into the Forum for Peace and Democracy. The Forum and a related organization to provide development assistance and advisory services for elections deserve ample U.S. cooperation through Project Democracy.
- Foster the nascent American Political Foundation, an important initiative of Project Democracy, as a public instrument independent of the U.S. government, to contact, train, assist, and build networks among moderate political elites, parties, and organizations within the host nations as well as those that may be in exile.⁴¹
- In reviving U.S. educational and cultural exchange programs, it may be advisable for the United States to emphasize training

³⁹ A phrase from Milton S. Eisenhower, 1963, p. 319.

⁴⁰ As Samuel Huntington shows from an historical survey of Latin America and other regions, "Any increase in the power or influence of the United States in world affairs generally results—not inevitably, but more often than not—in the promotion of liberty and human rights." From Huntington, 1981, p. 38. For example, the noninterventionist era of the Good Neighbor in the 1930s saw tyrannies established in Central America and the Caribbean, and the activist Alliance for Progress brought the "twilight of the tyrants." Regarding the 1970s, Huntington argues (p. 42) that "the new moralists, without seeing the contradiction, welcomed the end of hegemony in the Western Hemisphere and, at the same time, deplored the intensification of repression in Latin America."

⁴¹ News about the creation of the Foundation is sparse; see "Aid to Democracy Abroad Is Weighed," *New York Times*, May 30, 1982, pp. 1, 11-12. The objectives and strategies it might address seem to be elaborated in the innovative but exceedingly ambitious article by Samuels and Douglas, 1981, pp. 52-65. The Foundation might emulate aspects of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation associated with West Germany's Social Democratic Party, but any U.S. foundation that engaged in similar activism would surely be labeled as interventionist and imperialist by Latin American nationalists.

and technology for public administration.⁴² The United States has more to offer in this area than in the area of political party building (the Europeans may have more to offer in the latter).

- Consider treating exiles, refugees, and other immigrants as a political resource, one untapped by the U.S. government. Left-wing and right-wing exiles have operated effectively from U.S. soil to fight struggles in their home country and to build grassroots support networks in this country. Centrist elements who come here for exile and refuge need contacts with U.S. officials, politicians, and businessmen, partly to exchange information and gain media access that may be of mutual benefit when they eventually return home as leaders.⁴³ The massive volume of all types of temporary migration suggests developing new electoral mechanisms for absentee balloting where a large proportion of a nation's voting population resides here.⁴⁴
- Direct embassy staffs to reach beyond limited formal government circles and build contacts with other political elites inside and outside the government. In the name of respect for the local government's sensitivities about sovereignty, independence, and nonintervention, embassy contacts have been restricted in too many cases by the host (usually right-wing) leadership to such an extent that we lose information about current conditions in the country, constrain our capacity to shield moderate opposition elements from attack, and in extreme cases are left in a weak, ignorant position for dealing with a radical change of government.⁴⁵

THE HUMANIZATION OF GEOPOLITICS

This section has offered tentative examples of political and economic directions for future U.S. strategy in the Caribbean Basin.⁴⁶

⁴² Puerto Rico used to be, but no longer is, a leading source of standard texts in Spanish on public administration.

⁴³ There is a risk, of course, that by assisting exiles and refugees to organize, they may ultimately create lobbies that oppose or interfere with U.S. policies toward their homeland.

⁴⁴ This idea was put into practice in New York by Colombia for its latest presidential election.

⁴⁵ Although Iran and Nicaragua may be the classic contemporary cases, a similar dynamic was noticeable in Guatemala under the former military regime of Gen. Lucas.

⁴⁶ Many of these policy points may be shared by proponents of the "global interdependence" approach discussed in Sec. II. The qualitative difference between this approach and theirs is that modernizing the Monroe Doctrine would mean adopting policy meas-

Some may be on the mark, others may prove unsuitable. Whether these would be the right measures, and what others should be included, are important questions for further inquiry, but they are not central to this study's primarily conceptual concerns.

Pulling into operation the four key principles that have traditionally instructed U.S. geopolitical thinking and strategy in the Basin would require at least a substantial expansion of the U.S. political, economic, and military presence, and at most the pursuit of "collective hegemony" in concert with the Basin's other nations. For historical reasons, the term "hegemony" in any form often arouses negative reactions in our country and around the Basin. As articulated in this study, however, the proposed framework may be possible through an essentially nonmilitary strategy for collective security and development that would positively benefit all partners, and in so doing accomplish the "humanization of geopolitics." The strategy would deal with the inseparable internal and external sources of insecurity and underdevelopment.

Thinking geopolitically has gone out of style. Among the current generation of Latin American specialists and policy analysts, for example, there is a tendency to view geopolitical thinking as militaristic, imperialist, conservative, and interventionist. This tendency is reinforced not only by the academic popularity of "dependency" theories, but also by the fact that in South America the revival of geopolitical doctrines accompanied the rise of repressive military regimes in the 1960s and 1970s. In addition, policy analysts and conservative commentators who have argued in geopolitical terms have typically relied on a narrow litany that ultimately sounds like unconvincing Cold War rhetoric. And their approaches have tended to embrace military solutions to potential threats.

The problem here is that, rather than too much, there has not been enough thinking in geopolitical terms about the Basin, so as to refine traditional approaches into modern ones.⁴⁷ Well-developed modern geopolitical doctrines incorporate a complex array of political, economic, and military factors. They unite security and development concerns and thus often find that the major "threats" to a nation are nonmilitary and need to be met by nonmilitary strategies.

ures that help limit the political influence of extra-hemispheric actors, whereas the interdependence approach would justify measures that expand the political and economic participation of extra-hemispheric actors.

⁴⁷Geopolitical thinking is fundamentally concerned with the importance of geographic positions, including the spatial distribution and control of assets, resources, and lines of communications. Dependency analysis treats class structure as the central cause of economic underdevelopment and political instability, but geopolitical analysis emphasizes the spatial maladjustment of natural resources, economic infrastructure, and population.

The objective is to build nations through socioeconomic projects, and to create appropriate legal-jurisprudence frameworks and use diplomatic initiatives for settling disagreements with neighbors short of war. Geopoliticians exhibit a pronounced preference for negotiation and diplomacy.⁴⁸

From the standpoint of this study, therefore, a strategy to modernize the Monroe Doctrine, which was originally both a philosophical and a geopolitical doctrine, should naturally seek first to create energetic political and economic solutions to regional security problems.

⁴⁸From Ronfeldt and Sereseres, 1977, p. 62, which mainly assesses the revival of geopolitical writing in South America.

VI. MILITARY FOUNDATIONS FOR A COALITION STRATEGY

Modernizing positive elements of the Monroe Doctrine need not imply a militarization of U.S. strategy. Of the four strategic principles identified in Sec. II, two emphasize military requirements:

- Hostile military powers should be prevented from gaining military positions in the Basin;
- Few U.S. military resources and assets should be allocated to the Basin.

Thus the military dimension is high in terms of why the United States should be interested in Basin security but subordinate in terms of how the United States should protect its interests.

Two implications follow from this: First, U.S. military behavior in the Basin must be governed in part by East-West concerns, not only to prevent the Soviets from gaining new military positions, but also to assure that U.S. forces do not engage in a prolonged intervention. Second, because the traditional strategic principles advise against applying U.S. military power, they suggest reliance on a broad concept of security that integrates political, economic, and military dimensions and seeks primarily nonmilitary solutions to security problems.¹ Thus the shaping of U.S. military strategy will depend on the evolution of the emerging threats, hostile force expansion and low-intensity conflict, and U.S. success with the political and economic dimensions of strategy.

Against this uncertain background are outlined some general guidelines and issues to fit the military into a broad strategy for operationalizing the proposed framework. Departing from time-honored doctrines to keep the Basin an "economy of force" region and to build capabilities for collective defense against perceived threats, the argument is made that future U.S. strategy would benefit from:

- Unilaterally strengthening the traditional U.S. military presence and posture in the Basin;

¹The strategic principles thus require us to recognize that security and development are inextricably linked in the Basin, much as formulated in the mid 1960s by Peruvian and Brazilian military intellectuals who were dissatisfied with simplistic security definitions and counterinsurgency doctrines for dealing with their ailing national conditions. See Einaudi and Stepan, 1971.

- Collectively developing better military-to-military relations and new coalitional security arrangements.

U.S. STRATEGIC DOCTRINES FOR MILITARY BEHAVIOR

In keeping with the strategic principles, one U.S. military concern has been to avoid deploying U.S. military forces in the region. Reflecting this, U.S. strategy since World War II has been constructed largely around two doctrines that have constrained the allocation of U.S. military assets and resources to the region: economy of force and hemispheric defense. Were a militarized hostile triangle ever to develop in the Basin, however, both doctrines would be jeopardized.

The Basin as an Economy-of-Force Region

Since World War II, U.S. military strategy has treated the Caribbean Basin, indeed all of Latin America, as a low-profile "economy of force" theater where few U.S. bases and forces are maintained. Unless a major East-West issue is involved, this doctrine implies that political, economic, or possibly paramilitary solutions be found to problems of instability and insecurity in the Basin.²

The doctrine has been useful because it recognizes that the United States has had higher military priorities and responsibilities in Europe, the Persian Gulf, and Asia for allocating scarce resources and distributing its force posture. The doctrine has been feasible because the region is quickly accessible to U.S. forces and because hostile forces have been largely excluded or, in the case of Cuba, contained so that clear threats were not constantly presented in the area.

The doctrine seems to be a function of the scale of the routine U.S. military presence, the "surge capacity" for amassing available U.S. forces to deal with a contingency, and the time that interventionary forces may be tied down in the region—in relation to our global commitments and capabilities. But, in fact, the doctrine has never been clearly elaborated. Strategists and planners operating from a global perspective have acted as though minimizing the U.S. force presence in the Basin was the essence of economy of force. U.S. forces are spread so thin and resources are so scarce that the Pentagon and the military services have routinely behaved as though the less we have in the region, the more we have for elsewhere.

²For officers worried about the recent lack of public political support for military involvement abroad, the doctrine offers a rationale for urging nonmilitary measures in the Basin.

The doctrine makes military and political sense, however, only if the U.S. military maintains in the region a modest basing infrastructure and force posture that it can use and strengthen at will for rapid force projection and that impresses Basin political and military leaders as representing a credible U.S. commitment to defend U.S. interests. The U.S. military presence in the region dwindled so extensively in the 1970s that a further diminution, perhaps by removing SOUTHCOM or closing military bases in the Panama Canal area, might have spelled a "diseconomy of force." A modest strengthening of our current military presence may be consistent with the economy-of-force doctrine and enhance it for the 1980s.

The doctrine does not prohibit temporary military actions, nor does it mean that the United States should respond with minimal force to a threat that would require the United States to dedicate sizable resources to defending CONUS and Basin security. If a Soviet-allied hostile axis establishes itself in the Basin, the United States would surely have to build up a countervailing military posture that discards the doctrine.³ Consequently, the doctrine is workable over the long run only so long as such threats can be prevented or quickly arrested.

Hemispheric Defense and Collective Security

To supplement the economy-of-force doctrine, the United States has promoted related inter-American doctrines for hemispheric defense and coalition warfare. Hemispheric defense has been the most tradition-blessed basis for inter-American security cooperation since the late 1930s. It has resulted in an array of institutions (notably the Rio Treaty and the Pact of Bogota, the Inter-American Defense Board, the Inter-American Defense College, the School of the Americas in Panama) and instruments (e.g., U.S. foreign military sales, security assistance, training and advisory missions, joint military exercises) that aim to instill a sense of collective security and to promote standardized military capabilities.

The doctrine has been useful mainly because the United States, as a global power having worldwide commitments, cannot assume sole responsibility for defending the Western Hemisphere against external

³The Dominican Republic intervention in 1965 was massive and overwhelming so as to assure quick, preemptive success. Sending 20,000 troops to intervene in the Dominican Republic in 1965 represented a minor temporary drawdown of available forces; having to intervene somewhere with even less force today would represent a much more serious drawdown.

aggression and needs to engage the active military cooperation of its neighbors. The doctrine has been feasible largely because, in World War II and the Cold War, hemispheric security relations rested on shared threat perceptions, a limited threat, and a strong community of interests.

The doctrine fell into disarray during the 1960s and 1970s as threat perceptions and security interests diverged and the United States diminished its security assistance and other military-to-military activities in Latin America. In several nations, new geopolitical doctrines and security concepts emerged that embraced economic and political development issues. Military leaders objected to strong dependence on the United States and diversified their sources of technology, training, and doctrine.⁴ In addition, U.S. restrictive arms sales and human rights policies alienated various governments and armed forces.⁵ Thus by the end of the 1970s, even though there was still an institutional framework, hemispheric defense resembled mythology as much as reality. In 1965 the United States barely managed to piece together a temporary inter-American force for the Dominican Republic intervention. But in 1979, as the U.S. government tried to replace Somoza's dictatorship with a moderate reform government, the Organization of American States refused to approve a U.S. proposal to deploy an inter-American peacekeeping force in Nicaragua to help the new government pacify the country and hold elections. In 1982, U.S. behavior supporting Great Britain during the Falklands/Malvinas conflict provided further (probably temporary) grist for Latin American resistance to inter-American defense cooperation.

U.S. strategists currently aim to help repair and strengthen hemispheric defense cooperation by promoting "coalition warfare." Its loftiest expression is a traditional ideal: In case of an East-West conflict, the Latin American armed forces would defend the hemisphere with minimal U.S. assistance while the United States concentrated its forces elsewhere around the world. The more immediate ambition is to build local capabilities for allied external (and internal) defense missions that would augment U.S. security roles in the Caribbean Basin. For example, Venezuela, through its acquisition of F-16s, may become the first country with a coalition-warfare capability in the Basin.

⁴See Einaudi and Stepan, 1971.

⁵See Einaudi et al., 1973; and Ronfeldt and Sereseres, 1977.

UNILATERAL CONCERNS TO STRENGTHEN THE TRADITIONAL U.S. PRESENCE

Preserving and strengthening the traditional U.S. military presence in the Basin is essential to U.S. interests, including the maintenance of the economy-of-force and hemispheric-defense doctrines. Unlike the case with U.S. forces stationed in CONUS, a U.S. military presence in the region amplifies local beliefs in the credibility and reliability of U.S. power, promotes military-to-military relations, and hence lays foundations for coalitional security approaches.

Politico-Military Planning For Future Contingencies

The U.S. armed forces may need to plan not only for involvement in actual conflicts in the Basin, but also for peaceably counterbalancing the possible intrusion of hostile forces. Hence, we may need to consider hostile presence expansion scenarios short of actual conflict whose main implication may be the routine allocation and tie-down of U.S. forces, as well as more traditional conflict scenarios whose main military implications may concern active involvement, ranging from assistance to intervention.⁶

Should hostile-force presence and low-intensity conflict expand severely, the resulting threats and challenges may generate far more problems for U.S. interests and capabilities than are now expected, especially if there is a simultaneous crisis elsewhere.⁷ Efforts to call attention to potential future dangers in the Basin often fail to achieve credibility because some analysts will claim that the projected scenario is too unreasonable, or even if it is reasonable, that it still does not pose a serious or difficult threat to the United States. For example, both such reactions have greeted speculations that Cuba might triple its air and naval forces, or that Nicaragua might become heavily armed with Soviet fighters, tanks, and missiles.

To the best of my knowledge, however, no one has assembled and analyzed a comprehensive "distant conflict warning scenario" for the late 1980s that would derive not merely from projecting current

⁶Not only the Soviets, but also, in some future circumstances, West European powers might play roles that would burden our ability to integrate military and diplomatic responses. For example, recent French behavior and the activities of the Socialist International suggest scenarios in which Nicaragua enters into a border conflict with Honduras or fights with Colombia for sovereignty over the *Islas San Andres* and in which Nicaragua is armed and aided not only by the Cubans and Soviets, but also in part with French weapons.

⁷The discussion of emerging threat sources in Sec. IV identifies some specific operational military implications that may arise if a hostile axis develops and low-intensity conflict spreads.

regional trends and U.S. difficulties into the future, but also from introducing those potentially threatening developments that some analysts have decried. Such a scenario may combine a routine Soviet military presence, a militarized hostile axis, and heightened insurgency and border conflicts in Central America and the Caribbean. The analysis might suggest considerable problems for the U.S. force posture, command structure, and basing structure, and beyond those, for U.S. military diplomacy and inter-American military relations.⁸

Strategic Perspectives and the Military Command Structure

Military thinking is split between two strategic perspectives that govern the U.S. military command structure and force posture for the Basin. One is that the Caribbean Basin is the "maritime backyard of NATO." This view gives primary responsibility to U.S. Atlantic Command (LANTCOM) in Virginia, and emphasizes the potential for war in Europe and the security of sea lanes to reach it. Hence the operational military concern is to be able to use naval and air power to neutralize Cuban-based threats if the need arises but otherwise to avoid diverting military resources to the Basin.

The other strategic model is that the Caribbean Basin is the "continental backyard of the United States." This view dominated until the end of World War II. It has its major proponents in U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) in Panama and results in emphasizing peacetime threats from the spread of low-intensity conflict along with expansion of the Soviet-Cuban presence throughout the Basin. The military concern is to emphasize U.S. military assistance programs and inter-American military cooperation. In conjunction with U.S. air force and army bases in Panama, SOUTHCOM mainly supports the defense of the canal and U.S. force projection to other parts of Latin America.

These two models have coexisted competitively for good reason. The former has dominated because the potential Soviet-Cuban military

⁸Although I do not discuss the U.S. force posture toward the Basin, the proposed analysis might well confirm the words of Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, who is worried about current deficiencies in the structure of our armed forces:

The forces to be created and sustained must be capable of unchallenged military superiority in the Western Hemisphere and its air-sea approaches, continuing to deter the Soviet Union from military attack on the United States and its allies and ensuring uninterrupted communication with our principal allies and overseas markets in peace and war.

From Taylor, 1981, p. 2.

threat "couples" Cuba, hence the Basin, to major East-West and NATO concerns. Cuba is in a class by itself compared with other U.S. military concerns in the area, and operations against it would have to be handled from CONUS. In comparison, SOUTHCOM has served important political as well as military functions in assisting and cooperating with diverse armed forces and governments. Its operational attention to Cuba is limited to Cuba's covert and overt roles in the region.

So long as hostile-force presence does not continue to expand beyond Cuba, retaining the present command structure and location seems reasonable. SOUTHCOM (and the associated school system) provides a good, established position in the heart of the area for engaging in regional military relations. Separating Cuba out as a CONUS problem limits SOUTHCOM's potential exposure to political criticism and thus may facilitate cooperation with local militaries and governments. Not having much of a handle on Cuba and its activities in the Caribbean and Central America may limit SOUTHCOM's credibility and capabilities, but this has not been a major deficiency. Dissolving SOUTHCOM or moving it to CONUS, however, would weaken perceptions of U.S. power and interest in the region. Areas where *strengthening its capabilities* might be useful include theater intelligence and naval operations.

An expansion of hostile-force presence beyond Cuba (to Nicaragua, Grenada, Suriname, or elsewhere) would probably require the design of a new U.S. command structure and force posture for the Basin, perhaps by incorporating it into a broader construct of a *North American Security Zone* including CONUS and Canada.⁹ The alternative of simply enlarging LANTCOM's presence and responsibilities in the Basin (and over SOUTHCOM) may only endow LANTCOM with competing priorities in NATO and the Basin that should be settled at higher decisionmaking levels.

U.S. Military Basing Configuration

The United States must preserve its military bases in Panama and Puerto Rico (and at Guantanamo, which primarily serves training functions). Together with Key West (location of the Navy's Caribbean Command), they provide strategic military positions for a wide range of missions in and beyond the Basin, from surveillance to force

⁹An early move in this direction might strike our European allies as a prelude to neo-isolationism behind the expanded boundaries of a "fortress North America," even though it could bolster our capacity for competitive global engagement without signifying strategic retreat.

projection. Besides an infrastructure for potential contingencies, this presence provides a visible, daily reminder of our political and military interests in Basin security. Forces stationed in CONUS, despite their military capability, have far less effect on the political and psychological perceptions of Basin leaders.¹⁰

Arguments periodically arise that retaining all sites is unnecessary and that most contingencies could be handled from just one point—for example, Puerto Rico if U.S. access is restricted in Panama or SOUTHCOM is removed, or Key West failing the other two. Political vulnerabilities and potential instability in both Panama and Puerto Rico argue for spreading the risk by not closing either one (there are no generally better alternative locations around the Basin). The loss of bases in Panama or Puerto Rico, besides limiting our capacity for independent action, would also constrain cooperation with locals by putting greater onus on them to provide us with in-country facilities.

The prospect that a hostile triangle is developing and must be prevented may provide a strong reason for strengthening our own triangular configuration, emphasizing air rather than naval operations. At present, there is little radar coverage or air defense in Panama and Puerto Rico. Other steps may also be advisable, including reopening Ramey AFB in Puerto Rico (Howard AFB in Panama is currently our only operational air base south of Texas), reopening the Army's Ft. Brooke in Puerto Rico, negotiating with Guatemala for access rights to its modern new airbase at Sta. Elena, and negotiating with Panama for the retention of bases that, according to the Canal treaties, are to be turned over to Panama before the year 2000 (e.g., Ft. Gulick, where U.S. special forces have been stationed and the School of the Americas is located).

MULTILATERAL ISSUES FOR BUILDING COLLECTIVE SECURITY

The U.S. military presence visibly affects perceptions of U.S. power and enhances U.S. capabilities for potential armed actions. But the real effort of settling local conflicts and restoring regional security short of U.S. intervention depends mainly on military-to-military assistance and collective security endeavors. Thus, besides preserving and strengthening its independent military presence and posture in the Basin, the United States also needs to foster professional military-to-military relations and collective security arrangements.

¹⁰Actually, the primary U.S. naval facility, at Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, has no ships or aircraft permanently assigned to it.

Revitalizing U.S. Military Relations and Assistance Programs

Military-to-military cooperation needs to be strengthened and broadened, but without implying militarization of U.S. policy and strategy in the Basin. The four strategic principles proposed above suggest that the purposes may include: (1) assuring stable and secure development in the area; (2) preventing Soviet and Cuban military expansion; (3) competing more effectively with other extra-hemispheric powers (especially France and Israel) for military sales, assistance, and influence; and (4) developing largely self-reliant armed forces. The following points are raised briefly to illustrate some potential implications of the proposed framework.¹¹

Although the principles may imply that the United States should foster military relations in the Basin, they do not necessarily imply an open-ended U.S. commitment to support local armed forces against local threats. In light of the area's history, U.S. policy generally needs to respect the political centrality of local military institutions in many Basin nations, where governments are traditionally based on civil-military coalitions and where local security and geopolitical doctrines increasingly embrace economic and political development objectives.¹² Yet, in keeping with the traditional strategic principles, U.S. policy may also need to balance this respect for a military's political roles against a responsibility to guard against U.S. association with local errors and excesses that may jeopardize a struggle to restore stability and security or that may drag the United States deeper into conflict.¹³

An important U.S. task in the Basin is to balance responsiveness with restraint in arms transfer, advisory, and training programs, competing with alternative sources of supply but inhibiting the introduction of advanced weapons. Many armed forces in the region want better access on better terms to U.S. arms and assistance, although most do not have an interest in weapons standardization with the U.S. military and will retain diversified sources of supply. Since the Reagan

¹¹For general background, see Einaudi and Stepan, 1971; Einaudi et al., 1973; and Ronfeldt and Sereseres, 1977. Stodder, 1982, pp. 70-75, lists many of the specific mechanisms for military cooperation: staff conferences and visits, joint operations, and joint exercises.

¹²For general background, see Einaudi, 1974.

¹³The restrained renewal of arms sales to Guatemala, demonstrating support for its improved counterinsurgency methods, is in keeping with these points. The certification process for U.S. aid to El Salvador, by obliging an open review of local progress with human rights and socioeconomic development, is a useful mechanism for warning and possibly restraining right-wing elements in El Salvador. In the case of Honduras, local forces might precipitate an armed incident with Nicaragua that could entrap the United States into providing higher levels of assistance.

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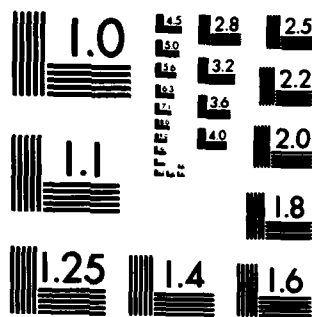
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administration has lifted restraints applied by the Carter administration. U.S. arms sales and assistance in the region have expanded selectively. The United States is far from having a monopoly, and the amounts are still low. Yet responsive U.S. programs may help strengthen U.S. military and political influence, keep local militaries from resorting to extra-hemispheric alternatives, and enhance the legitimacy and acceptability of U.S. efforts to curtail the introduction of advanced weapons. Restraining the introduction of advanced weapons in Central America and among the Caribbean islands may help to prevent arms races, reduce conflict potential, and avoid economic costs. From the standpoint of the strategic principles, however, an equally important purpose is to avoid the extra-hemispheric entanglements that may accompany the sale and acquisition of advanced weapons.

Although arms transfer issues have dominated public policy dialogue and the conduct of military-to-military relations, U.S. interests may be better served by emphasizing military leadership training and organizational development in the future. In El Salvador in particular, these have emerged as major problem areas affecting counterinsurgency operations; U.S. trainers would especially like to foster small unit operations and a continuous presence, including night patrols, in guerrilla areas.¹⁴ Potentially useful ideas for the Eastern Caribbean mini-states (where security issues differ from those of Central America) include the organization of a joint coast guard, possibly headquartered in Barbados, to be trained and assisted by the U.S. Coast Guard, and U.S. support for training local police forces in Barbados and other islands (also Costa Rica) where regular military forces make less sense.¹⁵ For U.S. security interests in the Basin (and Latin America) as a whole, an important military institution for promoting U.S. doctrine and training and cultivating regional contacts, the U.S. Army's School of the Americas at Ft. Gulick, should be kept open through negotiations with Panama, even though the Panama Canal treaties will put the base under Panamanian control in 1984.

¹⁴The commonly reported deficiencies of the El Salvadoran armed forces are systemic, including an unwieldy departmental and brigade command organization; an archaic promotion system that depends on time in grade only; a lack of well-trained middle-level officers; poor logistics, transport, and communications; and a garrison mentality that results in large-scale, frontal maneuvers against suspected guerrilla positions. The Guatemalan army, which is much more professional and strategically sophisticated than the El Salvadoran, has employed small unit operations with considerable success.

¹⁵See Adams, 1982, pp. 61-65.

Overcoming the Disarray in the Inter-American Security System

The approach proposed in this study would imply strengthening the network of inter-governmental arrangements that make up the collective inter-American security system, including the OAS, the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (the Rio Treaty), and the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB). Unfortunately, the system is in disarray, largely because of the globalist biases in U.S. policy since World War II, the recent weakening of U.S. power and presence in Latin America, and the decline of earlier shared external threat perceptions.¹⁶

The repercussions of the Falklands/Malvinas conflict seem likely to further divide the hemisphere. At first sight, that conflict seemed damaging mainly to U.S.-Latin American relations because of U.S. support for Britain against Argentine aggression; Venezuela even called momentarily for its Latin American brethren to create a new OAS type of organization that would exclude the United States. However, the greater long-term damage will probably be to intra-Latin American solidarity—thereby sharpening the differentiation between South America and the Basin as security zones.¹⁷ The South American nations already show less interest in assisting the United States with its problems in the Caribbean Basin, including Cuba and Central America. Although the United States may view Central America and the Caribbean as a "bridge" to South America, the nations there do not see the Basin as a bridge to the United States and regard the Basin's smaller nations as minor partners in Latin America. The one area of mutual concern might be the Panama Canal.

There are no easy answers to reforming the key inter-American institutions (especially the OAS, the Rio Treaty, and the IADB) that

¹⁶According to a speech in Sta. Lucia, December 2, 1981, by OAS Secretary General Alejandro Orfila, 1982, p. 329.

We face, I believe, a challenge which springs from two sources: a weakening of the political will of the governments to sustain the activities of the Organization; and, a disparity between the realities of this moment in history and the present structure and functions of the Organization.

Consultant to the OAS Secretary General, Francis X. Gannon, 1982, pp. 195-221, contends (p. 202) that the United States, by emphasizing a globalist approach, "has, in effect, relegated the OAS to a minor peace keeping role rather than to the role of the forum of the Americas, where the hemisphere's common development future might be charted anew." He concludes (pp. 220-221) that "the universal bias that is the foundation of contemporary U.S. foreign policy needs to be supplemented and complemented by a firmly anchored regional policy."

¹⁷An increasing differentiation into two security zones would compound Venezuela's (and possibly Colombia's) importance as a bridge and swing factor located in both zones.

are supposed to set the standards for defense cooperation and conflict settlement.¹⁸ Meanwhile, the disarray is compounded in the Caribbean Basin by the fact that nine former European colonies (including Jamaica, Suriname, and the mini-states of the Eastern Caribbean) are not signatories to the Rio Treaty, although they joined the OAS after gaining independence.¹⁹ Because many of the newly independent islands are English speaking, their presence in the OAS has added a potential tension between English- and Spanish-speaking nations.

Until improvements can be made in those institutions, U.S. strategy may be better advised to pursue new bilateral and subregional arrangements in Central America and the Caribbean. The Central American Democratic Community (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras) has provided a useful framework that is now evolving into the Forum for Peace and Democracy with much broader membership.²⁰ The "Contadora Group" (Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Venezuela) represents another valuable regional effort to restore peace. For the Caribbean, the potential security roles of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), recently formed by five islands with Barbados at the center, may be enhanced if a joint coast guard were created. Indeed, success with subregional mechanisms may not only fill an existing void but also generate ideas and strengthen the prospects for eventually revitalizing the inter-American security system as a whole.

Promoting New Coalitional Security Approaches

Not just the importance, but the very possibility, of relying on a coalition strategy may depend largely on whether and how the threat of a militarized hostile axis evolves. Were such a threat to develop vigorously with Soviet and Cuban support, this might galvanize other Basin nations to collaborate with the United States, as they did when the Cuban missile crisis suddenly arose in 1962. But it seems much more likely that a hostile axis would evolve rather slowly, incrementally, defensively, and ambiguously, perhaps accompanied by a steady worsening of low-intensity revolutionary conflict in neighboring nations. Rather than motivate the region's political and military

¹⁸Potentially useful ideas for reforming the OAS include: establishing a Security Council like the United Nations', and securing Canadian membership in the OAS. The deeper problem, however, is to strengthen the developmental along with the security roles of the OAS.

¹⁹Of the 25 nations in the Basin, 22 (excluding Cuba, as well as Guyana and Belize because of border disputes) are members of the OAS, whose membership has grown from 21 to 30. Of these 22, 13 are among the original 21 signers of the Rio Treaty.

²⁰With Costa Rica playing the key organizing role, this evolution moved forward at the Meeting of Foreign Ministers in October 1982, at San Jose, Costa Rica. Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Jamaica, and the United States were represented. See "Declaration on Democracy in Central America," *Department of State Bulletin*, December 1982, pp. 69-72.

leadership to engage in a coalition strategy with the United States, this might instead Balkanize the Basin (with some states adopting a neutralist stance, others edging toward Cuba), and lead remaining U.S. allies to revive traditional views that the United States must bear the onus of excluding major external threats.

Thus, it may well be in the interests of other Basin nations (e.g., Venezuela, Mexico) to prevent Soviet-Cuban military expansion, but it would be misguided of the United States to lay back and wait for them to recognize and act on those interests. The sight of a passive U.S. posture would probably compound any tendencies to hesitate (and wait for U.S. leadership) when facing ambiguous external threats.

In light of these considerations, the United States should begin building a coalition against a potential threat in the Basin well before it becomes a clear and present threat. Building a coalition should be motivated not simply by a potential threat but also by a deeper traditional interest in having good working relations with our neighbors. For a coalition strategy to remain workable, however, it should succeed at preventing Soviet-Cuban military expansion to new locations in the Basin.

What is ultimately needed in the Basin is a collective security approach that engages the larger nations—Venezuela, Mexico, and Colombia—to act in concert with the United States and the smaller Basin nations, on the basis of mutually agreed goals and methods. If this elusive ideal could be achieved, it would fulfill the key strategic principles and the concept of collective hegemony. Developments during 1979–1982 generally defied this ideal, however, as Venezuela and especially Mexico pursued independent policies. Lacking unified diplomatic support from the Basin's larger nations, U.S. strategy has more successfully cultivated the smaller nations, notably through Costa Rica and the Central American Democratic Community. Yet some recent signs of hope suggest new and continued movement toward the formulation of a Basin-wide security framework that will embrace the mutual interests of the United States and its larger and smaller neighbors.

During 1979–1982, Venezuela and Mexico played joint roles to enhance regional economic security through their Oil Facility (the 1980 San Jose Accord), but their policies toward Nicaragua and El Salvador generally diverged. While Venezuela backed the Christian Democratic regime of President Duarte in El Salvador and criticized the Sandinistas' leftward moves in Nicaragua, Mexico offered support to both the El Salvadoran rebels and the Sandinistas. In a major initiative in February 1982, following up an earlier joint French-Mexican communique, Mexico's President Jose Lopez Portillo proposed complex

negotiations to settle El Salvador's strife along with U.S.-Nicaraguan and U.S.-Cuban tensions. The Mexican initiative, if followed, would probably have induced highly internationalized negotiations, contradictory to the strategic principles of this study.²¹ But it received little support within the region.

By August 1982, however, Venezuela and Mexico found that some reasons for their earlier diplomatic differences had disappeared and proposed jointly to host negotiations to settle the then worsening border tensions between Honduras and Nicaragua. To their reputed dismay, this initiative was upstaged in October by the Meeting of Foreign Ministers in San Jose, which neither Mexico nor Venezuela attended. It advocated a much broader U.S.-favored formula for settling the area's conflicts, including a regionwide ban on the import of weapons and on the use of foreign military advisers.

The San Jose meeting was soon discredited as a mouthpiece for U.S. policy, and Mexico and Venezuela joined with Colombia and Panama on the island of Contadora, Panama, in January 1983, to propose an end to foreign intervention in Central America, the suspension of all military aid, a negotiated settlement of El Salvador's civil war, and talks to end the fighting in Nicaragua between government and exile forces. In response, Costa Rica and the Central American Democratic Union proposed that the five Central American states, including Nicaragua, meet with the Contadora Group—and without the United States—to reconcile and fuse the San Jose and Contadora initiatives. As a result, the Contadora Group has been conducting regionwide consultations to prepare for peace talks. The Group's proposals in July 1983, endorsed by the five Central American nations, have evolved to include a commitment to nonaggression, a ban on new arms imports, a halt to arms smuggling, the removal of foreign military trainers and advisers, prohibition of the installation of foreign military bases, and the creation of joint or international mechanisms to guarantee that one country's territory is not used for conducting acts of aggression against another.

The trend seems promising: The Basin nations are increasingly working together to establish a regional framework for conflict resolution. The earlier tendency to seek European support for international negotiations is waning.²² And even though the United States may be

²¹Mexico's security and military policies, and the principles and institutions underlying them, are changing and may reveal a "Maximilianist" tendency (named after Emperor Maximilian, an Austrian sent from France to rule Mexico on Emperor Napoleon III's behalf briefly during the 1860s).

²²However, the Contadora Group has appealed to the U.N. Security Council for support, potentially in the form of a U.N. peacekeeping force. Although this would probably

excluded from some regional meetings, U.S. policy principles and the resurgence of U.S. interest and power in the region are being respected by our allies.

There is still a long, difficult road ahead, and it is far from clear whether our neighbors can agree to a collective approach in Central America and then act authoritatively to oblige local compliance. A call for negotiations, say between Honduras and Nicaragua or between Nicaragua and the United States, has been an easy step to propose. The acid test for developing a coalitional military strategy may come in El Salvador.²³ U.S. military assistance and success at establishing an elected government in 1982 helped produce at least a stalemate between the military and the guerrillas; but given continued right-wing excesses and deficiencies in the El Salvadoran military's operations, the guerrillas' prospects for military victory may grow again (although they are far from assured politically).

Should the El Salvadoran situation disintegrate, the United States is not in a good position to impose a unilateral solution. Ever larger doses of U.S. economic and military assistance may not be the keys to success. And under present circumstances, the U.S. Congress and the American public would not endorse a U.S. military intervention to prevent a guerrilla victory and the consolidation of a revolutionary, possibly communist, regime. Most of our allies in the Basin also would soundly condemn a U.S. military intervention to prevent a left-wing victory. Elements in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador might, however, want to form a right-wing military coalition that regionalizes the fighting and the flow of military manpower and materiel. In that case, the United States would find its options quite limited and dependent on the dispositions of our Basin allies.

When and how might our Basin allies, especially the larger nations, join with the United States to create a regional peacekeeping force? This study cannot answer that question, but it is important to recognize that instituting a peacekeeping force may be the highest expression of collective security. *Military intervention to prevent left-wing revolution*, which is unacceptable to our Basin allies and much of the U.S. public, is not the only potential form for a military coalition strategy. In the case of a disintegrating El Salvador, another peacekeeping purpose might be *politico-military interposition to halt both left-wing and right-wing violence against the people*, while political negotiations

not be in U.S. interests, the fact that the group has been reaching outside the inter-American system has encouraged Fidel Castro to express approval of the group's initiatives.

²³On another test, Castro's Cuba, see Gonzalez, 1982a.

compel a return to peaceful change.²⁴ If this approach could be effectively carried out against extremists of the left and right, it might have enough legitimacy to engage the active cooperation of our neighbors while also generating substantial support among the U.S. public. The presence of such a coalitional peacekeeping force might indirectly strengthen the negotiating prospects of moderate political elements, who are otherwise known as the ones who don't have the guns.

²⁴A similar purpose lay behind the unsuccessful U.S. proposal in 1979 whereby, given Somoza's agreement to resign, the OAS would install a peacekeeping force in Nicaragua to assist the new government in pacifying the country. In another step in this direction, Costa Rica proposed earlier this year, with little effect, that the Contadora Group provide a small peacekeeping force to patrol its border with Nicaragua, where Sandinista and anti-Sandinista forces were creating problems.

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This study examines some operational military issues involving the Caribbean Basin, and it reflects the broader concern that answers to operational military questions should depend heavily on answers to more fundamental questions about why and how the United States should be interested in this complex, unstable region. Based on an examination of current trends as well as historical experience since promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine, the study advances a conceptual framework that identifies underlying geostrategic principles for guiding U.S. policy in the Basin. The study then proposes specific measures for developing an integrated political, economic, and military strategy that would advance U.S. interests and meet the interests of Basin neighbors.

