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**SALVADORAN CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS:  
STRATEGIC NEED FOR A NATIONAL PLAN**

**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

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During the past fifteen years, the majority of the Latin American nations has returned from autocratic rule to duly elected democratic governments. This paper deals that an approach to appropriate civil-military relationships in Latin America in the framework of developing National Policy and a National Strategy. Although the military appropriately takes a subordinate role to its civilian leaders, it nevertheless plays a key role in the economic progress of the developing nations of Latin America. Particularly in El Salvador, which has only just recently resolved a decade-long insurgency, there exists an absolute need for the civilian and military leadership to work efficiently and effectively together in mapping out and achieving Salvadoran National Objectives.

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## INTRODUCTION

A king without sword is condemned to lose his kingdom. From this simplistic assessment it is very easy to infer that from the first human organized society, the enforcement of law was based upon the use of force. In the same way that mankind needs a priest as liaison with the omnipotent God, that threat with eternal condemnation for sinners, it is also necessary for society to count with another important element that represents the force or the threat to use it: the soldier.

Political thinkers have emphasized that though force is only part of the political equation, its existence is mandatory for society's survival. Without taking into account what kind of political system we study (socialism, capitalism, monarchy, etc.), the state always needs the ability to exercise force to assure public order, subdue enemies abroad, and guarantee progress and development; however, in the long run, the way in which force is used, will determine the political structure of the state.

What is a soldier? It is possible to say that soldiers are a class of men set apart from the general mass, trained to specific uses, formed to peculiar notions and governed by a very special laws. Under this view, the very existence of this special group of people, raises deep political concerns. In order to be effective, soldiers must be conditioned to unquestioning obedience. A disciplined army is in essence, dangerous to liberty, but undisciplined it's useless for the purpose for which it exists. The key for this dilemma rests on the loyalty and obedience of the Army's leaders to the State and its basic principles.

This research deals with an approach to the idealistic civilian-military relationship in the framework of developing a Nation's Plan. This investigation is a curriculum requirement of the United States Army War College, but more importantly, the final objective of this paper is to provide to the Salvadoran strategic leadership, those who take part in policymaking at the highest level, the paper's analysis and conclusions that may prove beneficial to them in formulating a National Strategy in carrying out National Policy.

Also, it is important to acknowledge that this paper is the result of a synthesis of the work of many writers and strategic thinkers that over time have made important contributions on this subject. There is nothing new under the sun and, in the view of this author, doctrines and principles are different only in degree not in essence; however, it must be admitted that for the unique case of El Salvador, going from the general to the specific has been very useful...

## **CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS: AN HISTORICAL SUMMARY**

Armed Forces are seen as guard and threat to freedom at the same time, as protector and challenger of the National Objectives; this opposite and simultaneous view places the military in a very delicate and critical situation in today's society. The military is different from the rest of society. Everyone in the military is obedient to doctrine and procedures, always seeking efficiency and effectiveness. Personal relationships are based on rank and military position. Individual importance or influence can be assessed at a glance by the bars and stars on the uniforms.

It may be appropriate to say that due to its weapons, its relative isolation from society, its discipline, and its loyalty to its commanders, the military doesn't represent a real threat to freedom. But what about the military leaders themselves, the commanders, the people within the higher ranks? Despite stereotypes, military thinking is not inflexible, but it is as orderly as possible. Politicians have an unfounded aversion for the military, thinking of military men as inept for political maneuvering; nevertheless, no officer ascends to the higher ranks without first gaining a broad knowledge of public affairs, international relations, and national planning.

In addition, in order to be promoted to the most senior ranks, military officers are required to study world politics and strategy, including National Defense Doctrine and its philosophical underpinnings. Civilians, on the other hand, are sometimes self-taught in the strategic arts, often with a background in law rather than international studies or national security affairs. Pragmatically speaking, is there any school or university that teaches practical politics for everyday work? How many members of the three branches of Latin American or Salvadoran government have formal qualifications for their jobs as policymakers? Unfortunately, very few.

In fact, their background knowledge is frequently less systematic than their military counterparts (although not necessarily less extensive).

The political process employs several informal techniques for influencing policymaking: deal-making, populism, and coalition-building. Open deals and direct public appeals usually result unacceptable for the public welfare and the military only turns to them as a last resort on particularly vital issues.

### **The Caudillo**

Most Latin American Constitutions mold into their fundamental philosophy a supportive foundation for idealistic democracy; however, in practice, coups, rebellions, mass violence, and dishonest elections, have frequently been the distinguishing and defining features of Latin America political life. Latin American revolutions have no significance for the majority of the people since they are not really affected directly and their lives go on unaltered by revolutionary changes. This provides incontestable evidence of a particular set of social, economic, and political conditions that in practice runs counter to democratic principles. The “democratic way of government” in Central America during three quarters of this century for instance, could be defined as bipartisan; bracketed by the party in power (the official party) and the other one in jail (the opposition).

But into that euphemistic assessment must also cast an important phenomena of the Latin American political scene: *caudillismo*<sup>1</sup>, or the doctrine of government by a strong man. The history of Latin America may be reduced to the biographies of its representative men in positions of power. Pundits have referred to them as “monarchs in republican dress,” “natural leaders,”

and “men with a mission”<sup>2</sup>, as well as numerous other descriptions, positive and desplicative. Well established during the Nineteenth Century, caudillos today seem to have gone the way of the dinosaurs. Nevertheless, the tradition of the caudillo survives and even flourishes. Political creeds exist; personalities have always mattered more than programs; and parties are as much the expression of personal loyalties as of political principles.<sup>3</sup>

The roots of caudillismo lie deep in the colonial past, in the structure, the character and the traditions of Spanish American society. In those early days of colonial Spanish America, absolutism was the key word and guiding principle. It may have been a paternal, even benevolent, absolutism, but absolutism nonetheless. Bottom line: the *caudillo* was above the law, and always impatient to exercise his absolute will.

Salvador de Maradiaga, the Spanish historian has observed: “...Spaniards are a highly individualistic people. Anarchy, is their natural state. They were used to authority, but they were used also to ignoring authority. *Obedezco, pero no cumplo*, I obey but I do not execute.”<sup>4</sup> As we can see, from this kind of idiosyncratic predisposition towards autocratic authority, it is not hard to understand why the tradition of authority developed in Latin America not in the impersonal state but in the person of the *caudillo*. Dictatorship, the extreme of *caudillismo*, became the norm of government, revolution the preferred method for changing it.

A military class enjoying special privileges (*fuero militar*)<sup>5</sup>, made its appearance in Spanish America early in the Nineteenth Century before the independence movements began. But it was war (revolutionary and post-independence wars) that strengthened militarism. Over time, military interests became different than civilian ones and generals who had commanded armies, aspired to govern countries. Most of them had bases of general support from the general

population and also were able to inspire loyalty among their immediate followers. There were many examples of despots and tyrant *caudillos*, nevertheless not all *caudillos* were of that sort. There were also sincere and high-minded men, not without honor and many cared deeply about the countries which they ruled.

Struggling for stability, the problem of how to reconcile freedom with order gave birth to another kind of presidential autocracy under civilian oligarchic control. Decades of dominance by oligarchies with the military at its beck and call, encouraged the masses (and ambitious or idealistic military officers) to refute and terminate institutionalized oppression and corruption, preparing the way for another cycle of with a brand new *caudillo*.

### **The Military and Democratization**

Perceptions of inadequacy by civilians and the military often mirror each other. The military occasionally feels that civilian policymakers do not fully understand military affairs, while civilian leaders see the military as parochial and insensitive to political considerations. Problems can easily occur when officers believe civilian officials are basing military decisions on electoral politics rather than strategic necessity or the national interest.

The increased role of the National Assembly in National Security can encourage the intrusion of narrow political considerations into the determination of matters that ideally ought to be resolved by professional experts. No one would argue that the military should move away from its formal, orderly thought processes or become more overtly political in terms of making public appeals and engaging in deal-making. Similarly, few would suggest that political leaders should make decisions in a radically different way.

By rule of thumb, decisionmaking in the democratic political arena is deliberately inefficient. The inner philosophy is that the more power and authority are diffused, the harder they are to abuse. The military must recognize this, and accept the frustrations and inefficiencies of democratic politics. There is a corollary to this: military decisionmaking is poorly understood out of the military environment. This is highlighted especially in the National Assembly, where deputies tell more jokes about the military than the military does of them. There's a fundamental lack of knowledge between each camp that forms a wide breach in understanding.

The military also must understand that due to its own nature as the Nation's warfighter, it inadvertently intimidates civilians. From a political perspective, the military professional is a useful but alien being. He not only dresses, talks, and behaves differently from the norm, but he also seems driven by unusual goals and values. Perceptions and appearances often matter more than reality. Formal institutional arrangements are often less important than attitudes.

### **The United States Template**

In the United States, the relationship between the military and civilian policy makers is based on a single principle: civilian control. All other issues in relation to this, are designed to assure it. Civilian control over the military is part of the American political tradition. According to Samuel P. Huntington, an American historian and expert on civil-military affairs, "... most Americans believes that military officers are more conservative in their attitudes than other major groups in American society".<sup>6</sup> The belief is that the greater the role of the military professional in policymaking, the greater the reliance on the military instrument of national power.

Trying to justify the existence of the US Marine Corps, Marine Lieutenant General Victor Krulak concluded that the Corps existed because the American people wanted it to. Logic of this kind applies for civilian control of the military, and as long as most Americans believe these things and so long as the beliefs of the American public shape national policy, then civilian control of the military remains a vital national interest.

American civil-military relations has two levels:

- **First level with specific issues, key individuals and transitory in nature.**

Interface between the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff is probably the single most important communication link at this level. The Secretary of Defense provides the interface between civilians and the military. Whether he is seen as pro- or anti-military sets the tenor for all civil-military relations.

- **Second level, enduring questions with essential values.**

Individuals and issues are important to the extent they represent questions that must be solved as the global security environment changes. What is the appropriate level of involvement of the military in national policymaking? Where does an officer's loyalty ultimately lie? The whole notion in this context, rests on the idea that the military must be able to contribute to national policymaking; however, with recent changes in the global security environment there's no consensus about military involvement in it.

## NATIONAL SECURITY DOCTRINE

### Basic Concepts

In order to correlate the ideas examined in this work, it's necessary to read from the same sheet of music, or in other words, it's essential to talk the same language; for this reason, it is useful to present here, some basic doctrinal concepts.<sup>7</sup> Of course no one is the absolute owner of truth, however there are some approaches discussed in the following pages, which are based on geopolitical thinking.

Analyzing civil-military issues is no easy task without understanding that there's a deep relationship among geopolitics, the military and democracy. National security concepts are based upon geopolitics and these, in turn, explain attitudes and military behavior.

Geopolitics sustains the organic concept of the nation-state; this concept holds that countries are analogous to living organisms that are born, grow, seek living space and resources in order to increase their power, and then eventually decline and perish.<sup>8</sup> The military has the tendency to identify itself closely with this, and they find that their vital mission is to defend the organic state from internal and external threats. With this organic metaphor internal enemies of the state are seen as malignant cells attacking its host. The military attempts chemotherapy first, but if this fail, the ultimate step will be surgical removal. This type of mind-set must be understood not in the context of right or wrong, but as a fixed procedure. For the average citizen this could even sound cynical, but it must be seen not as a moral issue, but as a framework that has nothing to do with moral approaches.

In military educational institutions, where military officers undergo their professional formation, geopolitics is understood as the basis for strategy, international relations, and national development. From that start point, additional concepts follow that are necessary to establish a common understanding or reference point for effective discussion or dialogue<sup>9</sup>:

- **State**

A political-juridical entity constituted inside a given territory, by means of sovereign organization and without superior hierarchy; established among a society to order it by means of power exercise, to promote the achievement or maintainment of the national goals.

- **Nation**

A group of people united by material, spiritual, traditional, and race ties; also by national spirit and social ideals.

- **Common Wellness**

A group of social conditions that permits to every society member, to reach personal achievement.

- **Development**

The satisfaction of needs that determines the level of quality of life for a nation's citizens; including the concepts of economic, social and political progress. It constitutes a reasonable life standard for the whole nation.

- **National Development Policy**

The art of exercising national power toward global strengths, with the purpose of achieving and maintaining national goals.

- **National Security Policy**

The art of exercising national power, in order to guarantee the achievement or maintenance of national goals, reduce or eliminate current or potential antagonist and pressures.

- **National Goals**

The qualities and aspirations related to physical, political, economic and social integration within a nation and that, realistically interpreted by the authorities, are transmitted to the peoples' sensibility as individual or general customs or necessities of the national community.

- **National Power**

All the means that the nation possesses effectively in any given situation to influence and try to achieve its interests and aspirations. Consequently, this power is fundamental to achieve and maintain National Goals.

- **National Permanent Goals**

The actual translation of national interests into objectives, taking into account its own survival as a nation-state; this means assuring self-determination and prosperity. These could be interpreted as economic wellbeing, political independence and social development. They represent the basic wish list which the people of the Nation desire.

- **National Current Goals**

The aspirations or needs, even when not satisfied, but whose achievement and maintenance is considered within the range of national power range available during a determined period of time. They represent *what the nation can really do now*.

## • Relationship between Policy, Strategy and National Power

After concluding the basic National Planification concepts, it is convenient to make some brief observations about the relationship in the Policy-Strategy-National Power equation.

- National interests inform the development of National Policy. National goals and objectives are developed during the process of developing and articulating National Policy.
- The achievement of National Goals assumes the idea of a call to action or the use of one or more of the Nation's elements of power.
- The use of power implies the existence of a National Strategy , which informs the preparation and use of that power. Being that, this strategy is very dynamic, it will be modified in accordance with the variations of power available, and the National Policy.
- National Power is used by the National Strategy as its instrument of action.
- The National Strategy employs the means of power and plans and directs a group of strategic actions using the different elements of National Power available.
- National Strategy could be defined as the art of executing the National Policy.
- National Policy by means of National Strategy applies power to achieving or maintaining National Goals.

## National Security and Development

National policy-making demands the achievement of National Goals within two major considerations: national security and development. The first consideration is oriented towards the elimination of all social, political, economic, and military vulnerabilities that could become destabilizing threats or pressures to the state.<sup>10</sup> Development, on the other hand, pretends to strengthen all elements of national power in order to assure the common wellness of the people.

It is not possible to promote national development if a sound security national environment does not exist; at the same time national security is not guaranteed if the nation does not have an appropriate level of national development that allows utilizing national power resources to eliminate state vulnerabilities. Consequently, development and security are two faces of the same coin; one can't exist without the other.

From the above, a very controversial concept arises: National Defense. Here it is necessary to say that this a particular concept for every state and depends upon what the National Constitution of each country establishes as National Doctrine. According to the Salvadoran understanding: *National Defense is the group of state resources and actions within internal, external, economic and military fields, to confront any aggression or conflict threatening National sovereignty and territorial integrity.*<sup>11</sup>

Therefore, the Armed Forces are not the National Defense in and of themselves, they are only part of the equation, just one of several elements of power available to the State. The military is only the nation's armed element of power, that serves the state in dissuading or confronting the threat as necessary.

There are several models for describing the National Defense: the traditional model, the popular model and the militia model.<sup>12</sup>

- **Traditional Model**

Large organized military units operating permanently. This is the model for most developed countries with sufficient resources available and many interests to defend.

- **Popular Model**

Every citizen is trained for war, without making this a full time occupation. Its dissuasive characteristic rests in the knowledge that any nation mounting aggression against them, will have to face a "nation at arms".

- **Militia Model**

Here, the Nation has a modest command cadre serving as permanent personnel, and the majority of military forces are provided by reserve elements training during weekends or vacations to allow them to prepare an effective and efficient National Defense

Each of these models are only theoretical references establishing defense systems. They can't be copied from one country to another, given the different and unique country situations and geopolitical conditions. Needs, resources, interests, threats and the will of the people in its democratic expression, are all important factors in establishing a national defense system.

The National Defense system established in a country, must consider that National Defense is not only the military's responsibility, given that its dimension and objectives in defense matters are mainly political. If democracy building is a permanent political goal of the State, then National Defense must be also.

National Defense is only a way to reach that common wellness, the so called National Security. The lack of it makes it almost impossible to find our way towards safety conditions of national development. So, we can say that failure or success National Defense is related directly, in the short or long run, to National Security and Development.

## **NATIONAL PLANNING SCHEME**

### **Underdevelopment Factors**

#### **Ideology**

It is absolutely necessary that all Latin American countries are aware of the criteria of ideology within a democracy. National Ideology does not interfere nor diminish the true course of a practical and consistent democracy.

#### **Political Instability**

This is one of the main obstacles to progress among Latin American nations; such as the government's discontinuity in the planning and execution process. As political power is transferred from one political party to another, many government's plans end up in the trash can, yielding in its place a new panacea from the winning political party in ascendancy. This natural process, inherent in a democracy, runs counter to the needs and requisites for long-range national development.

#### **Historical Paternalism**

Latin American countries have long been accustomed to an accommodating paternalism, that in the long run has had a negative effect on development. US foreign policy had been the fundamental cause for this situation, because it historically has used economic aid to recipient nations without encouraging them towards a more dynamic and self-reliant, independent position. It sometimes even looks as if US officials encourage this morbid government accommodation.

### **Educational Dilemma**

The failure in the educational field is more evident in the Central American and Caribbean areas, where there is a low percentage of literacy. However the dilemma in Latin America is not only in basic education levels, but there is also a critical problem in higher education. The questionable autonomy of universities is one of the major pitfalls for academic development among underdeveloped countries. Behind this autonomy is an official encouragement for abusing pseudointelligence. The excessive emphasis on the universities' autonomy disenables students to learn, since scientific and logic criteria follow a disciplinary order, that requires certain a degree of authoritarian imposition..

### **Speculational Attitude**

In most cases, without an ideology or national doctrine of its own, Latin American countries adopt a speculative attitude before any kind of crisis. Confronted by even modest political tremors, they frequently adopt very drastic measures, such as freezing all savings and bank funds for instance; an economic measure that runs counter to political and economic recovery because it generates a lack of confidence in the near future of the nation.

How could anyone expect a wealthy economic activity, to freeze all currency, when it is absolutely essential for that activity? Naturally, in response to this kind of measures in the political scenario of a nation, there's a very negative speculation: socialist tendencies. It's necessary to understand that socialism is feasible only in countries that are economically advanced and technically developed. It can't work in a developing country for a very simple reason: the lack of social capital to underwrite the kind of programs that socialist systems imply.

It is now well established by the historical events of the past five years that in order to progress beyond economic underdevelopment, it is necessary to adopt capitalist free market schemes or something very similar.<sup>13</sup>

## **A NATIONAL PLAN**

### **The New strategic Role of Latin America**

The basic nature of armed conflict may be shifting away from conventional state-versus-state warfare and declining in strategic salience.<sup>14</sup> Some writers predict a melding of law enforcement and traditional military functions in response to “gray area threats”, the privatization of security, and new forms of high-tech terrorism. The concept of national security may be expanded to include protection of cyberspace, ecology, and public health. Future armed conflict may often involve subnational enemies, ethnic militias or well armed and highly organized criminal gangs. The so called low-intensity conflict may pose the dominant security threat. At the same time, the ongoing “revolution in military affairs” might alter the nature of essential military skills, further eroding the distinction between things military and non-military. The expanded use of the military in operations other than war, such as peacekeeping, disaster relief, ecological cleans-ups, or counter-narcotrafficking, could also have long-term effects on civil-military relations. The military services and civilian leaders currently agree that the primary tasks of the armed services are to deter and win wars.

Democracy in Latin American is a slow growing plant,<sup>15</sup> and it must be seen “not only as a juridical structure and political system; but as a system based on the continuous economic, social and cultural improvement of the people” (1917 Mexican Constitution). There can be no political democracy without social democracy, and the current social infrastructure is still relatively undemocratic. There is not a ready or firm foundation for the democratic process and true

democratic government. A highly personalized interpretation of politics, authoritarianism, oligarchic rule, or the rule of a dictator, these are the traditional forms of Latin American government. However, the terms upon which political power will be held are changing, the sphere of government has been enlarged. The twin forces of nationalism and socialism have been released.

In the future, it is highly likely that the best representation of the military will be civilian leadership, and the role of the generals that have exchanged military power for political power will be at an end. The Army is a permanent national institution;<sup>16</sup> the military man is there to obey his superiors; the officials that make up the Armed Forces are in actuality a class apart from the civilian sector, a professional class with very particular loyalties towards the institution. Additionally, they possess direct control over the weapons and arms they are trained to use; no revolution or coup d'etat can be carried out without the support and consent of all or part of them and as we know, the majority of all revolutions are really just military coups. It is an intelligent government that cares for, cultivates and disciplines its Armed Forces.

In most Latin American countries the army is at once an instrument of power and a political force. If those military establishments are kept within due bounds and the people in the streets recognize them as subordinate to the civilian authority of the state, this nation will progress well along its democratic way toward development.

### **Internal Solution for Internal Problems**

North America won the bipolar confrontation; Latin America participated as an ally of the Western hegemony center. The capitalist system acquired global presence. Toffler qualifies the euphoria caused in the West by the Soviet Union's fall as a bad case of collective ecstasy of

senseless joy.<sup>17</sup> It looks like we are immerse into a new dark age of tribal hates and wars multiplied by wars.

Latin America also took part in this collective eestasy, without an understanding that for them, it was the worst possible and senseless celebration; their options for future development will be economically affected by the opening of East Europe and Russia in world market economies, and also by its return to strategic insignificance. Western nations have a major interest in avoiding the collapse of those potential markets with which capitalism must legitimately interact, in order to demonstrate that it is a better option than the communist experiment that with the demise of the Soviet Union, has now faded into history.

Latin America stills suffers from a debilitating underdevelopment reflective of its slow economic grow, an alarming demographic explosion, inorganic urbanization, maldistribution of wealth, unemployment, deviant social behavior, and the general malaise of intolerable social conditions. Our countries have achieved the consolidation of weak democracies as the predominant political system, but without an appropriate social and economic structure as a guarantee of that democratic process.

### **Keys for development**

#### **National Consensus Project**

It is necessary to define a consistent and enduring line of action; we must avoid destroying with each change of government the efforts of the former one. All this could be a product from a National Consensus Project. There's not much room for economic creativity in present pre-industrial countries; antagonistic ideological views don't fit comfortably into the

options of operational nature. What, how, and for whom to produce does not permit exclusive answers.

### **Development from a Human View**

It doesn't matter what type development policy has been used, it must begin with human and moral achievements, taking into account that man is both the raw material needed for promoting development and the beneficiary of the development itself. It is necessary to define new values, attitudes, and institutions, throwing away bad influences from an aggressive cultural penetration. Of course it's easier to modify material aspects, technologies, machines, tools, than norms, values, attitudes about the world and the life.

### **Values Development**

Gorbachov used to say: "The ideological and moral values erosion toward an atmosphere of *I don't care*, every time with less discipline and loyalty demands... dishonest people that knows very well their rights, but in the other hand, ignoring their duties. They almost doesn't give anything to society, but they manage to extract from it the best possible. They live from incomes that they were not earned, sick of civic indifference and passivity". We are in complete agreement with this assesment; there are fundamental changes in modern man's values and attitudes; in consequence, we must to work toward the cultivation of moral and ethical human values within the new democracies.

### **State Development**

In this age of globalization, transnational threats and actors have appeared that are not states. Many observers propose that the concept of Nation-State is already an obsolete concept of only historic interest without any contemporary value. However, the practical necessity and

truth is that the state is an historic element that must be developed and adapted to modern world challenges. Nothing could be more dangerous for underdeveloped countries than sudden state weakness and diminished sovereign power. International solidarity is claimed without internal solidarity. It's necessary to avoid adhering to ill understood doctrines, that everybody accepts as axiomatic truths. Development of the state implies developing its own political and administrative systems; the state must establish coherence in the economic base, the social structure and the social superstructure.

### **Education: Vaccine against poverty**

We must accept that one of the basic failures of underdeveloped societies is based upon education. The great future social investment is, in our daily environment, a vulgar expense, not only talking about money and budget constraints, but also that scarce resources have been unresponsively wasted. The cost-benefit relationship has been negative, because there are a broad number of systems, functions of economic capacity of every family; the education offered by the State to the people, has been the base for its future marginality. For the teachers, the architects of the future, society has been unable to give them the respect their position of trust merits. The key to overcoming underdevelopment rests in education. If we don't overcome this obstacle, more poverty and mediocrity lie ahead in our future. There isn't any more strategic resource than knowledge; there is no freedom in the mud of ignorance. If a country wants to progress, it must know how to do things, or at least know how are they made. The shopper countries receive leftovers, the obsolete, the polluting, the dregs that advanced countries doesn't want anymore.

Toffler assures us that power is based on wealth, weapons, and knowledge, and also that only knowledge is a pure expression of power, because without it, the other two are nothing. If a

government improves education, it automatically is fighting poverty at its roots. In this way there will be a real national liberation, because the newly educated generations of the future will build a society better than the present one.

An educated labor force, in the long run, will be better remunerated. The government must seek basic public education for everybody as primary goal; an historical mistake had been the fact that higher (university) education has been subsidiezed by basic (primary and secondary) education. In other words, in allowing one student to graduate from a university, how many other younger students are losing the opportunity of going to school at all? Let the private sector take care of university education. Education it isn't a matter of spending more, it's a matter of spending well.

## **CONCLUSION**

Latin American politics have been described as a pendulum, swinging back and forth between democracy and dictatorship; economic and social pressures have historically forced Latin American militaries to stage coups, seeking to restore order and economic stability. Moving into the next century, most of Latin American countries are presently ruled by democratic governments; however the question here is whether or not the pendulum is going to swing back.

During the present century, the most frequent type of democracy tested by Latin American countries, had been the liberal one. Liberal democracies also rely on the rule of law as an essential element for success. This means that all groups in a society, including the military and other powerful elites, must accept that laws apply equally to all citizens and that no individual or group is above the law. At the same time, it is fundamental that the people should have the opportunity to choose to change their government on a regular basis.

But how long can democracy survive if a large part of the people live in poverty? At what point will the poor decide that democracy can't solve their economic problems? The governmental lack of administrative capacity (either because of corruption or lack of knowledge) have been part of the basis for justifying military coups, and even rationalizing that some of these coups were well-intentioned efforts, conducted as part of the military man's patriotic duty; nevertheless and not withstanding their good intentions, the final result is always democracy instability.

The marriage of the clearest and best minds from the civilian and the military communities, could be a good approach in the search for a new Latin American democracy template; inherent in this purpose is in the understanding that the man in uniform must be a competent professional

in this purpose is in the understanding that the man in uniform must be a competent professional able to contribute to national building, but not to dominate it. If military establishments are kept within appropriate bounds and the people in the streets recognize them as subordinate to the honest and competent civilian authority of the state, half of the task will have been accomplished.

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> Michael Howard, Soldiers and Governments, (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1957), 156.
- <sup>2</sup> Francisco Garcia Calderon, Latin America: Its arise and Progress, (London, 1913), 99.
- <sup>3</sup> G. S. Wise. Caudillo, A Portrait of Antonio Guzman Blanco, (New York, 1951).
- <sup>4</sup> Salvador de Maradiaga. The rise of the Spanish American Empire, (London, 1947), 203.
- <sup>5</sup> Howard, 157.
- <sup>6</sup> Gabriel Marcela, Warriors in Peacetime: the Military and Democracy in Latin America, New Directions for US Policy, (London: Frank Cass and Co., Ltd.,1994).
- <sup>7</sup> Centro de Altos Estudios Estrategicos, Manual para la Planificacion de la Defensa y Desarrollo Nacional, (San Salvador, El Salvador, 1993).
- <sup>8</sup> Coronel Jorge E. Atencio. Que es la Geopolitica?, (Buenos Aires, 1965) y General Augusto Pinochet, Geopolitica, (Santiago, 1974).
- <sup>9</sup> United Nations, Estudio sobre los conceptos de seguridad A/40/553, (New York: United Nations, August, 1985).
- <sup>10</sup> Reglamento de Seguridad Nacional del Ejercito de Chile, (Santiago: Chilean Army, 1993).
- <sup>11</sup> Centro de Altos Estudios Estrategicos, op cit.
- <sup>12</sup> Manual de Guerra Politica del Colegio Fu-Shin-Kan del Ejercito de la Republica de China, (Beijing: Chinese Army, 1993).
- <sup>13</sup> Luis M. Chang, Reflexiones para el progreso, (Taipei: Instituto de Relaciones Internas, Universidad de Chengchi, 1992).

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<sup>14</sup> Francisco Rojas A., “America Latina en la posguerra fria: Nuevas oportunidades para la cooperacion para la paz”, Revista Relaciones Interiores, (Heredia, Costa Rica:Universidad Nacional, IV Trimestre,1992),17-28.

<sup>15</sup> W.W. Pierson, “Pathology of Democracy in Latin America: A symposium.” American Political Science Review. (1950): 99-149.

<sup>16</sup> Michael W. Foley, “Laying the groundwork: The struggle for civil society in El Salvador,” Journal of Inter American Studies and World Affairs. (Vol. 38, Number 1. Spring 1996).

<sup>17</sup> Alvin Tofler, Power Shift, (Barcelona: Plaza & Janes,1990).

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