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**AN EXAMINATION OF NATION ASSISTANCE:
SHOULD THE U.S. SUPPORT THIRD WORLD EFFORTS TO
COMBAT INTERNAL LAWLESSNESS, SUBVERSION AND
INSURGENCY?**

BY

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An Examination of Nation Assistance:
Should the U.S. support Third World efforts to
combat internal lawlessness, subversion, and
insurgency?

by

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Abstract

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Title: **An Examination of Nation Assistance: Should the U.S. Support Third World Efforts to Combat Internal Lawlessness, Subversion, and Insurgency?**

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This paper examines the relevancy of the current National Military Strategy's (NMS) strategic concept of Peacetime Engagement and its component of Nation Assistance in a post Cold War, Third World environment. This strategy promotes the need to assist friendly nations in upholding democratic ideas by supporting their efforts to combat internal lawlessness, subversion, and insurgency. The strategy also endorses conducting civil-military operations, engaging in bilateral and multilateral exercises, sharing intelligence and communications, and providing logistics support. This latter use of Nation Assistance appears to be both legitimate and helpful to Third World democracies. However, the first component of this strategy has historically led the United States into costly Third World conflicts that this research shows has had few positive effects, and often has been harmful. This paper also examines this strategy in terms of vital interest. Regional assessments of Africa, Asia, and Latin America revealed no vital interest for the United States to conduct insurgency or counterinsurgency missions under the guise of Nation Assistance in any of these regions. As a result, this paper recommends this component of Nation Assistance be eliminated from the NMS and replaced with economic related assistance that will better serve our goal of promoting democracy.

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Introduction to a Strategy Lost in Time

The Purpose.

The current National Military Strategy (NMS) under the strategic concept of Peacetime Engagement and the component of Nation Assistance includes the need to assist friendly nations in upholding democracy by supporting their efforts to combat internal lawlessness, subversion, and insurgency.¹ Joint Publication 1-02 describes this strategy as assistance rendered to a nation during peacetime, crisis, or emergencies for foreign internal defense.² The National Security Strategy gave birth to this component of Nation Assistance by stressing that one of our nation's central goals is to promote democracy abroad.³ Applying Nation Assistance in a limited sense such as conducting civil-military operations like building road systems, improving a country's infrastructure, and administering medical assistance; sharing intelligence and communications; engaging in bilateral and multilateral exercises; and providing logistics support appear to be legitimate, helpful to Third World Nations, excellent training for our armed forces, and in our national interest. However, when assisting friendly nations to combat internal lawlessness, subversion, and insurgency is included,

U.S. military history shows that such strategy has engaged our armed forces in numerous long and bloody civil wars in the Third World. These operations for the most part were handled with little skill and most often with no success.⁴ This expensive, dangerous, and, more often than not, useless strategy has no place in our current NMS. Military strategists must better define our goals and actions to be accomplished under the guise of Nation Assistance. No politician or military leader should allow our armed forces to engage in an internal Third World insurgency or counterinsurgency operation unless that action clearly displays a vital U.S. national interest.

The Scope.

This study will address this thesis by examining U.S. national interests as it relates to the strategy of assisting friendly nations to combat lawlessness, subversion, and insurgency in the Third World. It will also build a case for the proper use of Nation Assistance in the post Cold War world as opposed to a world divided by two bipolar superpowers. All discussions will center around the United States' ability to pursue its interests and strategies based on ways and means at the country's disposal. Finally the study will make brief regional assessments of Africa, Asia

and Latin America as representative Third World regions and examine U.S. interests and the appropriate Nation Assistance that should be provided. This paper will not address this thesis in relationship to areas outside of the Third World. All of the internal conflicts that the United States has become involved in since World War II have, at the time of involvement, been part of the Third World.⁵

U.S. National Interest in a Post Cold War Era

During the Cold War, the United States opened its purse and military resources to Third World Nations repeatedly to thwart communism in a bipolar world environment of East versus West. This practice manifested itself in the Domino Theory which gave credibility to almost any military action taken even if such actions appeared to be peripheral interests rather than vital interests.⁶ This was often true to course even when a nation's civil unrest would take distant 2nd and 3rd order effects to even remotely affect our vital national interests.⁷ The massive military buildup during this period certainly gave our country the means to intervene at will. Since a keystone to our national strategy consisted of promoting and upholding democracy, Cold War policy makers often concluded that Third World insurgency and counterinsurgency operations provided legitimate ways to achieve that end.

As the Cold War came to an end, so did widespread communist influence in the Third World. This has enabled many countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America to experiment in democratic reforms and to hold free elections. Initially this trend appeared to be the way of the future and had the flavor and smell of Cold War success. However, many

of these same nations failed to plan for effective primary and secondary education programs, failed to reverse increasing income inequalities, refused to invest in welfare and health initiatives, and let the overall environment of their countries deteriorate. Some sources believe that this democratic revolution has run its course in the Third World and that a reversal in this trend has already begun.⁸ With this reversal, a natural trend will be a return to conflict and unrest because these countries face monumental economic, ecological, and social problems with little means to solve them.⁹ With the successes of the Cold War still fresh on our minds, there will be many who will want to help save these nations from themselves. However, such tendencies must be reviewed in terms of U.S. national interests, military capabilities, past successes, and economic reality.

Since the end of the Cold War, our country has been looking for a peace dividend that would help fund internal domestic needs and reduce an escalating national deficit blamed by many Americans on prolonged military spending. As a result, an effort has been made by the Clinton Administration to limit military actions to only vital interests and let coalition forces or an invigorated United Nations (UN) provide legitimacy to engagements that lie on

the periphery of our national interest.¹⁰ However, since the UN charter forbids the organization from taking sides in internal conflicts, this leaves many engagement possibilities open for debate on whether to commit U.S. Armed Forces to protect sibling democracies in distress.

Even while pursuing the Clinton Administration's approach, our expenditures on UN peacekeeping activities, alone, increased from \$800 million in 1990 to almost \$4 billion in 1994.¹¹ Such escalating costs, even without considering other unilateral U.S. engagements, will eventually stretch thin the American will to support international military escapades when such expenditures compete with domestic goals. Also, the efforts to achieve a smaller post Cold War military are straining the structure that is left by involving them in the numerous peacekeeping activities associated with this approach.

Nation Assistance in a Third World Shift

With Bosnia being the exception, security issues have already shifted from East-West to North-South, thus focusing more on Third World problems.¹² With this new turn toward the South, we need to examine some examples of successful Nation Assistance involving U.S. military interventions. El Salvador, considered by some to be a major success story, cost this country in excess of \$5 billion over a ten year period.¹³ Economic inequities, a historically repressive government, and continued violence erode the roots of its society and still leave a huge question mark as to whether democracy will survive.¹⁴ In another Cold War showcase, the United States funded millions of dollars in military aid to the Contras in the 1980s to oust the Communist based regime of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. Since 1990, this Third World nation has experienced free elections and a trend toward democracy; but today, it has a 60 percent unemployment rate while 70 percent of the country still lives in poverty.¹⁵ Despite our expenditures in the 1980s and broad support for the Contras, the Sandinistas could come to power again through a free election process.¹⁶ Such developments only make one wonder how much worse or better off Nicaragua would be today if the millions spent on military aid had been

given as Department of Defense Nation Assistance in the form of educational aid, infrastructure improvements, medical support, and other human capital programs. Such aid could have sparked economic recovery and given less cause for conflict within the country.

One recent study on Third World conflicts describes them as "debates about survival and then development to allow the countries of the South into the prosperity of the North."¹⁷ If this is true, U.S. military engagements can do little to help such nations and can harm ongoing development activities there over the long haul. Third World countries find it difficult to avoid internal conflict because most tend to be poor and largely unindustrialized with weak central governments.

Investments in such environments have become expensive, sometimes lengthy, and always questionable on the amount of payback that has been realized. Gillis et al. in Economics of Development believes the following three political prerequisites must exist for economic development: "political stability, political independence, and government support for development."¹⁸ Very few countries in the Third World enjoy any of these positive economic indicators.¹⁹ Since economic development seems to represent the only hope

for stability in the Third World, the future in the near term appears to be filled with risks of internal conflict and constant change in governments.

With this in mind, the United States must assess its engagement strategy in Third World countries. Our nation must promote economic and political stability and give support to only those governments that not only show democratic tendencies, but, more importantly, invest in their respective human and natural capital. We must also reverse the historical trend of supporting Third World internal conflicts that only benefit the propertied elite. The reason that many of our post-hostilities activities in the Third World fail, stems from the loss of support of the most important entity in these countries: the population itself. Economic recovery will go nowhere unless the people of a nation obtain a better standard of living. In fact, if this does not happen, some believe that these weak and limited democracies will be replaced, once again by "equally weak and more violent authoritarian regimes."²⁰ Without a new U.S. engagement strategy, any political, military, or economic support rendered to Third world countries will be at risk of having no return on investment at all.

Alternative Strategies

The U.S. could approach providing Nation Assistance in the form of military support to Third World internal conflicts from several directions. We could of course return to the Cold War approach that considered any country or political group remotely supporting democratic ideas worthy of military assistance and engagement. Our nation could also continue the use of the Clinton Administration's approach and selectively employ support for those countries or political groups that are considered vital to our interest and look to collective security arrangements to engage in those areas considered of lesser interest to the U.S. Finally, we could disengage ourselves from the Third World and render no Nation Assistance in the form of military support to internal conflict unless such conflict threatened the very security of our nation.

Unilateral Dominance Approach.

Since a bipolar division of power no longer exists, it seems very unreasonable and costly for the U.S. to return to the Cold War approach that frequently used military support on a world-wide basis to combat lawlessness, subversion, and insurgency. The Domino Theory justified use of military resources for these activities during the Cold War. However,

with no East-versus-West competition today, such widespread use appears to make little sense. In most future cases, there will be no clear vital interest for the U.S. to use military means to stabilize unrest in the Third World.²¹ In fact, with these countries no longer able to play East against West, "their very poverty places them in a category of geopolitical insignificance."²² With military budgets on the decline and the American public still looking for that post Cold War peace dividend, this approach is not only politically unlikely but also economically impractical. Nation Assistance that includes Third World insurgency and counterinsurgency missions as a way to promote democratic ideas certainly appears less relevant today than before the collapse of the Iron Curtain.

Vital Interest Approach.

It seems that a more sensible approach would be to provide Nation Assistance in the form of military intervention to only those countries or political groups in the Third World that clearly show a vital interest for the United States. When appropriate, we would solicit the UN or a coalition effort to intervene in those areas of lesser interest. Vital interest popularly defined suggests a situation on which our nation is unwilling to compromise and

is ultimately willing to go to war to reach the desired ends.²³ With this definition in mind, we should take a closer look at this approach. After Vietnam and the end of the Cold War, our nation appears to be unwilling to support long and costly military campaigns regardless of political correctness. Some military writers believe that "the internal problems that cause multiple conflicts in the Third World are usually both deep-rooted and long-term; and even when directly applied, U.S. power can only provide partial solutions to these problems."²⁴

Our counterinsurgency doctrine contains the long term idea of winning the hearts and minds of the people through the extension of democratic reforms and principles.²⁵ However, most Third World governments threatened by an insurgency lean toward repression and terrorism on their populations as instruments of containment, not democratic reform.²⁶ When our country appears to support such repression, we certainly have the potential of alienating the supported country's populace as a whole. If we accept the premise that the center of gravity is the people of a country, the loss of popular support could mean the loss of the country in the long term, regardless of who is the recognized victor.²⁷ One military writer points out that

"internal conflicts in Third World countries signify deep rooted problems in the governments themselves and may point to some of the following ills: concentration of power in a family, tribe or class; lack of representative or transition mechanisms; government corruption; limited economic redistribution; or weak administrative and legal institutions."²⁸ Such environments do not promote democracy as described in the NMS and cannot capture the support of the American public or Congress for overt or covert military operations.

In this discussion, it appears that promotion of U.S. vital interests and support for insurgency or counterinsurgency in the Third World are oxymoronic. The very environment of the post Cold War suggests that the American public will be unwilling to spend a vast amount of scarce resources in Third World countries for internal conflicts. Nor, as the definition of vital interest suggest, will they be willing to go to war to support such causes.

A Disengagement Approach.

The final approach to Nation Assistance that offers support for insurgency and counterinsurgency operations in the Third World represents the least costly and most cautious approach. Using this strategy, the U.S. would engage only in

those internal conflicts that threatened the very security of our nation. Unilateral engagements would be limited to operations such as protecting the flow and distribution of vital resources, moving against countries who export terrorism, protecting our environment against ecological disasters, and guarding against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Such actions are covered under other components of the NMS other than Nation Assistance.²⁹ Humanitarian aid and peacekeeping missions would be accomplished through coalition efforts and not as unilateral Nation Assistance operations. Some writers on military strategy have already endorsed such an approach.³⁰ Today's economic reality, in respect to U.S. military engagements in the Third World, begs for this type of new strategy.

In countries such as Somalia, the problems are so significant and deeply rooted that any help outside of humanitarian aid produces little or no results. Other Third World countries show signs that they too may drift toward "weak central governments that coexist with personal fiefdoms of charismatic leaders or warlords who carve out sections of these states and protect them with their own security forces."³¹ Third World unrest cannot be settled at a reasonable cost and must compete for resources with strong

U.S. interest in Europe and other more developed parts of the world.³² Furthermore, Americans will not view Third World assistance as a vital interest when a proposed action must compete with domestic claims on scarce resources.³³ These arguments certainly support the idea that the U.S. should disengage from Third World internal conflicts unless they threaten our country's well-being. Using this strategy, U.S. engagements would be limited to economic and nation building activities for those Third World countries that clearly show the desire for stability, that invest in human and natural capital, and that lean toward democratic reforms. Internal conflicts must be settled internally by the warring factions of a nation rather than through U.S. military intervention.

Regional Assessments

This last option for a new approach to Nation Assistance shows strong merit for consideration. However, limited regional assessments of the Third World must be conducted to test this theory. Such assessments may indicate that some insurgency and counterinsurgency missions may be justified if these countries or regions possess valuable resources vital to the welfare of our country, are strategically located on key lines of communications, or show some other vital economic or military value where internal conflict cannot be tolerated by the United States.³⁴ For this limited evaluation, the study will focus on Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Africa.

Africa over the last decade has experienced a catastrophic economic downturn with per capita incomes declining during the 1980s at an annual rate of 1 percent across the continent.³⁵ One economist believes that such trends may "act to reverse recent democratic gains and will make the region even more impoverished, with less food, more unemployment, and rampant social ills."³⁶ Direct investment by U.S. interests on the African continent are minimal. Total exports from Africa shrank from about 2.5 percent in

1970 to less than 1.2 percent in the early 1990s and its share in the world's commodity markets (excluding oil) has fallen from 7 percent to 3 percent over the last 20 years.³⁷ Such weakness in African economies make it impossible to import needed products. Historically, with little variance over the last decade, U.S. exports and imports to Africa amount to less than 5 percent of total U.S. trade.³⁸ Africa contains an enormous supply of strategic minerals such as chromium, platinum, cobalt, copper, zinc, manganese, and oil.³⁹ Well known precious metals and stones such as gold and diamonds also have been harvested there for years. However, in all cases these same commodities are found elsewhere around the globe which leaves Africa with no vital interest to the United States that would require a military intervention. On the contrary, it is in our economic interest to open trade in this region and stay out of internal conflicts. Such interference could threaten open markets and trading agreements if the wrong warring factions were supported. Even though the U.S. must continue to push for democratic reforms in Africa, we cannot lose sight of the fact that no long term stability will be realized on this continent until the economic problems are solved. Therefore, as Ambassador Daniel H. Simpson advocated in U.S. Africa

Policy: Some Possible Course Adjustment, "the United States should focus its present policy to concentrate its engagement in Africa in the economic realm and not militarily."⁴⁰

Some African countries such as Morocco (Straits of Gibraltar) and Egypt (Suez Canal) are arguably located on key lines of communications. In the strict sense, unrest in this area could possibly become a vital U.S. interest. However, such interest will also be high on many other countries' lists and will probably fall under another component of the NMS other than Nation Assistance. Any internal conflicts in these areas will certainly fall within the realm of collective security or coalition interest and must be pursued on such terms. Such key lines of communication no longer possess the same importance as they did when sea power was the only game in town. Now air power can be projected anywhere in the world in a matter of hours which lessens the strategic significance of temporary blocked land and sea lines of communications.

Finally, some Americans still hold the lingering Cold War belief that the U.S. must insure the rights of all people to live under democratically chosen governments, regardless of the cost. Such beliefs are dangerous and has led the U.S. in the past to provide military assistance to regimes that

only remotely leaned toward democratic reforms. Michael Clough, in Free at Last?, aptly made the following quote: "Transforming undemocratic political systems, reforming collapsed economies, and ending civil wars are extremely difficult tasks, especially in Africa."⁴¹ With the end of East versus West influence in Africa, the United States has rightfully decreased covert operations and military interventions across the African continent and has given less foreign assistance to authoritarian clients who traditionally used this competition for their own advantages.⁴²

This trend toward U.S. military disengagement represents a move in the right direction but does not explain recent U.S. involvement in Rwanda, Zaire, and Somalia. In the latter, news reports projected mass starvation and strife among the poor and the young. Such reports gained support for humanitarian relief operations. However, the U.S. military expanded the humanitarian mission to something more like Nation Assistance when policy changed to include disarming warring factions in Somalia. The results turned into a policy disaster and a military embarrassment as young Americans shed their blood for questionable reasons. In Rwanda and Zaire, military support remains centered on disaster relief and so far has not become directly involved

in the internal conflict. In both cases, the U.S. intervened under the auspices of a UN action. However in Somalia, the interference in an internal civil war quickly turned American public opinion away from support of the engagement even under the guise of humanitarian relief. The U.S. cannot disengage from the African continent but must limit activity there to economic activities, humanitarian operations, and disaster relief. We no longer have any substantial geopolitical interest in Africa that requires military intervention.⁴³

This assessment has found neither valuable resources vital to the welfare of our country, nor strategically located areas on key lines of communications that would cause U.S. intervention into internal African civil wars. There are no vital economic or military reasons for this country to support insurgency or counterinsurgency operations on the continent of Africa.

Asia.

No area of the world possesses the potential to stir the emotional fervor of the American public as does Asia. Vietnam, for this generation and many to come, has burned a template into American foreign policy on how not to conduct business. However, without a proper assessment of this

region, an important portion of the Third World would go unaccounted for in terms of U.S. interest.

Economic growth, with the ability to support enlarged military capabilities and the ability to exert increased economic and political influence, characterizes the changes taking place in most of Asia.⁴⁴ Many Asian countries, in the traditional sense, no longer fit neatly into the Third World category. China, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore all have economies that are beginning to rival those in Europe and North America.⁴⁵ Poverty still has a foothold in some of these countries, but overall the middle classes are growing and the standard of living is getting better. Important to note is that North Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and the Philippines still remain among the least developed nations of the Third World. They have some of the same problems as African Third World nations and could succumb to civil war at any time. However, all have a brighter outlook for future development than their African counterparts which tends to suggest more stability.

Average incomes in the area as a whole are expected to increase three to fivefold between 1990 and 2030.⁴⁶ East Asia accounts for a fifth of world trade today and may reach one third of the world's trade by the year 2000.⁴⁷ Southeast

Asia represents a market for more U.S. exports than either South America, the Middle East, or the former Soviet Union and eastern Europe.⁴⁸ The United States imports oil, textiles, electronic components, and a broad range of consumer goods from Asia in an ever growing capacity.⁴⁹ It is apparent that the United States has important economic interests in Asia and should continue to push for open markets in the region. However, even with this much to lose in the area, it would not be in our vital interest to interfere in internal conflicts in any of these countries. Many have military governments; some have monarchies; some have benevolent autocracies; and some have democratically elected governments.⁵⁰ In a sense, Asia has broken the widely held paradigm that strong economic success must be linked directly to democratic ideas. With this in mind, the U.S. must promote economic development in Asia as the primary strategy and not intervene politically or militarily in the internal conflicts of these nations. Instead of military intervention, it will be time that tells whether Asian political systems fall to the economic paradigm. The apparent economic development in the region will make countries look inwardly over the next several years and will make intervention by the United States unlikely unless the

weapons build-up in the region (highest in any region outside of Middle East) leads to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or to threats against important trading partners such as Japan or South Korea.⁵¹ Outside of these possibilities, no apparent scenario exists that would make intervention in internal conflicts in one of these nations necessary.

Even internal upheavals in one or more Asian states that result in spillovers into other friendly Asian nations should be responded to by a UN action and not a unilateral U.S. intervention. The Philippines and Cambodia are representative of the few nations left in Asia and Asia-Pacific still ripe for internal conflict. After considering Vietnam, very little support exists for any intervention in Asian civil wars on the continent itself. However, because of the United States' long standing relations with the Philippines and its historical strategic location on key lines of communications, some circumstances could lead to sentiments that would force some type of intervention there. This was very apparent in November 1989 when rebel forces took over two air bases in the Philippines and the U.S. showed willingness to use force.⁵² At the time, the Cold War was just ending and we still had fixed-base agreements with

the Philippines which probably justified that near military intervention. However, today an insurrection in the Philippines or in any other Third World nation in Asia or Asia-Pacific certainly should not justify U.S. intervention. With Guam and Okinawa filling the void on the key lines of communication in Asia-Pacific, the Philippines and other Third World Asian nations take on less importance and certainly do not fall into the realm of vital U.S. interests.

This assessment of Asia has found neither valuable resources vital to the welfare of our country, nor strategically located areas on key lines of communications that would cause intervention into internal Asian conflicts. There are no vital economic or military reasons for this country to support insurgency or counterinsurgency operations anywhere in the region.

Latin America.

This region of the world has traditionally been recognized as vital to the interests of the United States because of its proximity to our borders. Such concerns in the past led to the birth of protectionist policies, such as the Monroe Doctrine, that gave the U.S. almost *carte blanche* intervention rights into the affairs of Latin American countries. Today, with only Cuba as the lone hemispheric

holdout to democracy, it appears that the United States was relatively successful with its Cold War Latin American policy.

U.S. investors pump enormous capital into Latin America amounting to at least 50 percent of all foreign investments there.⁵³ However, U.S. exports to the region have declined from 17 to 14 percent of the nation's total between 1980 and 1990 while imports have declined from 15 to 13 percent of the U.S. total during the same period.⁵⁴ Major items imported from Latin America include oil, tin, copper, bananas, coffee, beef, and some manufactured goods.⁵⁵ Trade agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) will increase trade between Latin America and the U.S. but will probably not reach the point where the United States becomes totally dependent on such trade. The products imported from Latin America can be obtained from other regions of the world in sufficient quantities. Therefore, it is not in the interest of the U.S. to engage in Latin American internal conflicts to protect the flow of strategic resources.

Much of Latin America is not strategically located on key lines of communications. However, the Panama canal represents the exception to this rule. Even though less so than fifty years ago, it is still vital to the interest of

the U.S. to keep the canal open to commercial shipping and naval passage. Any threats to the right of passage through the Panama canal would probably lead to U.S. military intervention by collective or coalition security measures or, if necessary, even unilateral intervention.⁵⁶ With the help of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the UN, we should try to avoid unilateral action in Latin America. However, with this help absent and with no other clear alternative to unilateral military intervention, the United States would protect this vital interest by any means necessary to include becoming involved in an internal civil conflict.

Mexico, as an emerging nation among Third World states, lies on the southern border of the U.S. and as such becomes strategically significant. Any insurgency, subversion, or lawlessness that would lead to mass refugee movement into the United States or conflict spillover into our country would automatically become a vital U.S. interest. Even though care should be taken to insure that the Mexican people as a whole are given voice in any post conflict agreements, military intervention could be necessary to secure the peace in the area. In the absence of clear UN authority, the American public and Congress would definitely view conflict this close

to our borders as a vital interest and approve unilateral military intervention.

The so-called "War Against Drugs" represents the latest military mission that could lead to intervention in Latin America. One Latin American writer believes that this is only a "replacement of the Cold War Strategy of containment that continues justification for U.S. intervention in Latin American countries and their civil unrest."⁵⁷ Even if this is the case, the drug problem has grown to such epidemic levels in the United States that the problem has become a national issue. Latest public opinion polls show that Americans are so concerned over drugs that they are willing to spend money on sanctions and other forms of force to get other countries to help solve the U.S. drug problem.⁵⁸ Peru, for example, produces over 60% of the world's supply of the drug cocaine.⁵⁹ The U.S. has sent military aid and forces to that country to help eradicate the drug trade that is being aided by a local insurgency called the Shining Path. The U.S. will continue the War Against Drugs as long as the American Public sees this as a vital interest and will continue support for intervention in Latin American countries where such drugs are produced. This may also include a war

against insurgents, if they are involved in the drug trade there.

Finally, since all Latin American countries other than Cuba have some form of pluralistic Democratic government, it would appear that counterinsurgencies to protect these fledgling democracies would automatically be of vital interest to the U.S. Michael J. Kryanek in his essay on "Intervention and Interventionism" pointed out that "the history of U.S. intervention suggests that the use of force is more likely to lead to revolution than stability and constructive political change."⁶⁰ Intervention in El Salvador and Nicaragua led to years of revolution in those countries and as of yet has not produced stable unions. In El Salvador, one economist believes there has been a "failure to achieve broad improvements in living standards which will eventually fuel social tensions, shatter hopes for economic recovery, and put the country at risk for more internal conflict."⁶¹ Economic hardships increase public dissatisfaction and encourage protest against regimes in power, regardless of what form of government they may be.⁶²

The majority of the Latin American populace remains excluded from the political process because their interests are not effectively represented by the state and as such,

represent a ticking time bomb.⁶³ While the U.S. fought hard to convince Latin American countries to adopt democratic precepts, we failed to convince them to invest in human capital which represents the center of gravity for any nation. Instead the U.S. in most cases backed a propertied elite that gave little back to the society as a whole. One economist is convinced that if the "U.S. reverses this trend, Latin American governments will either have to accommodate the popular pressures and needs of the people or else be unable to defend themselves against them."⁶⁴ It is not in the best interest of the United States to keep the social and propertied elite in power at expense of the Latin American people. The U.S. must make use of the OAS and UN for internal Latin American disputes which will allow the U.S. to be seen as more of a regional peacekeeper than as a "meddler who cares little about the Latin American people."⁶⁵ We must use our military aid in operations that lead to real democratic reforms and an investment in human capital. Such missions could include building schools for better education which at the same time would promote long-term stability. We could also build road systems that would not only promote security but could also induce economic development.

Finally, we could administer to public and environmental health which would improve living standards, build upon work force capabilities, and ignite the seeds of evolution that will lead to the establishment of a middle class.

This regional assessment of Latin American shows that the U.S. has vital interest in Panama because it is located on a key line of communication in this hemisphere, in Mexico because it is strategically located on our southern border, and in any Latin American country or insurgency therein that promotes the shipment of illegal drugs into the U.S.

Interventions for the above interests are covered under other components of the NMS such as Counterdrug, Counterterrorism, and Peace Enforcement. Therefore under the component of Nation Assistance, there appears to be no vital interest that would call for insurgency or counterinsurgency missions in Latin America.

A New Strategy for Nation Assistance

As the arguments above indicate, that portion of our Nation Assistance policy that has historically led to insurgency and counterinsurgency operations in the Third World must be changed. Third World countries no longer automatically become significant to our vital interests since East-West competition is no longer relevant. Many Third World states are dominated by ungovernability, anarchy, instability, economic stagnation, and ecological decay which make intervention useless. Because of the Vietnam experience, long-term military engagements paid for by American blood has become unacceptable to our country. The American public seeks a peace dividend in a more internally focused post-Cold War United States. Military engagements in the Third World to promote democracy will not represent a vital interest to this country unless there is a clear and direct threat to our national security. Even when humanitarian relief is required, the U.S. must only engage in that activity and leave conflict to the internal warring parties.

Our new NMS must reflect these changes in the world environment. There is no justification for engagement in insurgency and counterinsurgency operations outside of the

Western Hemisphere. Even then, our interventions should be limited to the protection of the Panama Canal, threats to our immediate borders, or the War Against Drugs - all of which are covered under components of the NMS other than Nation Assistance. In view of the scarce means available and the small return that can be expected, in any case, Nation assistance that encourages engagement in insurgency and counterinsurgency in Third World nations must stop.

Therefore, the following phrase: "by supporting their efforts to combat internal lawlessness, subversion, and insurgency" as written in the current NMS should be deleted. It should be replaced by a new strategy that clearly promotes assisting friendly nations in upholding democracy by promoting investment in human and natural capital, assisting these nations in building better infrastructure, and providing military aid directly linked to economic development and stability.

ENDNOTES

¹ The Joint Chiefs of Staff, National Military Strategy of the United States of America, 1996 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996), 8

² The Joint Chiefs of Staff, DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, Joint Publication 1-02, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1994), 255.

³ The White House, A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996), 32.

⁴ Donald M. Snow, Third World Conflict and American Response in the Post-Cold War World (Carlisle Barracks, Pa: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1991), 34.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁶ David Jablonsky, "The Persistence of Credibility: Interests, Threats, and Planning for the Use of American Military Power," Strategic Review (Spring 1996), 8.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁸ Steven Metz, America in the Third World: Strategic Alternatives and Military Implications (Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 1994), 13.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹¹ Dennis J. Quinn, ed., Peace Support Operations and the U.S. Military (Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1994), 4.

¹² Snow, 49.

¹³ Todd R. Greentree, The United States and the Politics of Conflict in the Developing World (Langley AFB, Virginia: Center for Low Intensity Conflict (CLIC), 1990), 33.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁵ Associated Press, "Poor Nation's Problems to Determine Election," Carlisle (PA) Sentinel, 20 October 1996, sec. A, p. 5.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, sec. A, p. 5.

¹⁷ Snow, 13.

¹⁸ Malcom Gillis, et al., Economics of Development, 2nd edition, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1987), p. 23.

- ¹⁹ Ibid., 23-24.
- ²⁰ Sandor Halebsky and Richard L. Harris, eds., Capital, Power, and Inequality in Latin America, (Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1995), 103.
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- ²² Ibid., 15.
- ²³ Ibid., 30.
- ²⁴ Greentree, 13.
- ²⁵ Ibid., 27.
- ²⁶ Ibid., 27-28.
- ²⁷ Snow, 39.
- ²⁸ Greentree, 19.
- ²⁹ The Joint Chiefs of Staff, 9-12.
- ³⁰ Metz, vi.
- ³¹ Ibid., 14.
- ³² Ibid., 6.
- ³³ Snow, 31.
- ³⁴ Ibid., 6.
- ³⁵ Jeffrey Herbst, U.S. Economic Policy Toward Africa (Council on Foreign Relations Press, New York, 1992), 1.
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- ³⁷ Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Mear, eds., Africa, Third Edition (Indiana University Press, Indianapolis, 1995), 379.
- ³⁸ Herbst, 11.
- ³⁹ Daniel H. Simpson, U.S. Africa Policy: Some Possible Course Adjustment (Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 1994), 7.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., 14.
- ⁴¹ Michael Clough, Free at Last? U.S. Policy Toward Africa and the End of the Cold War (Council on Foreign Relations Press, New York, 1992), 111.
- ⁴² Peter J. Schraeder, United States Foreign Policy Toward Africa (Cambridge University Press, Great Britain, 1994), 259.

- ⁴³ Clough, 118.
- ⁴⁴ Stuart Harris, "The Economic Aspects of Pacific Security," Adelphi Paper 275 (March 1993), 16-17.
- ⁴⁵ Lewis W. Snyder, Growth, Debt, and Politics, (Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1996), 74.
- ⁴⁶ Martin and O'Meara, 377.
- ⁴⁷ Ross Garnaut, Asian Market Economies, (Institute of South Asian Studies, Singapore, 1994), 10.
- ⁴⁸ John Bresnan, From Dominos to Dynamos, (Council on Foreign Relations, Inc., New York, 1994), 2.
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- ⁵⁵ Merilee S. Grindle, Challenging the State, Crisis and Innovation in Latin America and Africa, (Cambridge University Press, Great Britain, 1996), 28.
- ⁵⁶ Frederick S. Weaver, Inside the Volcano, The History and Political Economy of Central America, (Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1994), 249.
- ⁵⁷ Martha L. Cottam, Images and Intervention, U.S. Policies in Latin American, (University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1994), 163.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid., 177.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid., 165.
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- ⁶¹ James K. Boyce, ed., Economic Policy for Building Peace, The Lessons of El Salvador, (Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, Colorado, 1996), 1.
- ⁶² Grindle, 45.
- ⁶³ Halebsky, 16.

⁶⁴ Weaver, 250.

⁶⁵ Dent, 419-420.

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