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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Patricia Derian

DATE: August 8, 1977

FROM : Fernando E. Rondon

SUBJECT: Record of Your Visit to USCINCSO (Canal Zone), August 3, 1977

1. United States Army School of the Americas - USARSA

The School of the Americas currently has 230 students. Thirteen Latin American countries are represented on the faculty, including Argentina. There are no Argentine students. The school is operated on IMET funds (training). The courses are all in Spanish, which would be very hard to do if the school were in the continental United States. USARSA offers essentially the same elective courses as the Command and Staff School at Fort Leavenworth. (We were given the course catalogue or training module.) Courses on mechanics and military intelligence were dropped as a result of low student enrollment.

P.D. - I'm interested in the curriculum. While I know it is primarily military, many students go on to become political leaders. I'm interested in interrogation techniques.

Colonel Halsey - We are very sensitive to the current laws of Congress. The Harrington Amendment restricts police training. We discontinued any suspect courses. We teach military subjects. Military police is a military subject but there was low participant interest in this subject and the course was discontinued in FY 1975. Military intelligence was dropped in FY 1977.

General McAuliffe: There is nothing being taught here or at the Air Force or Navy schools that could be interpreted as police courses. In some countries, such as Venezuela, the National Guard is really a police force. We try to avoid having military officers who are in police type of work in the school. We screen our students. A national guard officer is ineligible unless he is changing his line of duty.

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

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P.D. - Was any sort of police ethics taught?

A. - We used courses taught to the U.S. Army in the States.

P.D. - Did those courses have ethical standards?

A. - This school teaches people to be soldiers. An infantry battalion has an intelligence officer. He must be alert to squadron needs. Prisoners are taken. There are classes on the Geneva Convention. I would hesitate to say we teach ethics exactly. We teach rules of ground warfare.

P.D. - In dropping intelligence aspects, does that mean there are no interrogation techniques taught?

A. - Even when courses were taught, interrogation dealt with things like traffic accidents.

P.D. - Interrogation is sometimes essential. Where do they learn rules and techniques?

A. - We have training on our own "code of conduct." This is where our people are taught what to say - what to provide. At unit level, when prisoners are taken, there is no interrogation. Prisoners are passed on to specialists.

P.D. - Where is that taught?

A. - Not here. Any class that requires an intelligence officer to teach it is judged to be too deep. We have no intelligence officers here. There are service schools in the U.S. There is an intelligence school at Fort Gordon.

P.D. - When people undergo prisoner stress situations, do you use hoods.

A. - No hoods.

P.D. - Do Foreign students go to police schools?

Gen. McAuliffe: I doubt it. Since 1975, it is unlikely for military police. I don't know about intelligence school.

2. USCINCSO Headquarters (The Tunnel)

The military in Latin American have a vital role and traditionally have been involved in politics just as we have been involved.

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There are three kinds of assistance. Grant aid will end at the end of FY 1978 and is given to Bolivia, Panama and Paraguay. There is IMET. FMS sales and credits is good, sound business. It aids the balance of payments, provides jobs and reduces the unit cost of military equipment. In FY 1976, FMS credits totaled \$140 million.

Problem areas: There are legislative restraints on funding. Some are concerned about an arms race, others fear that defense spending diverts funds from social needs. As a result of American denials, the Latin Americans are turning elsewhere and spending more on military equipment than they would have otherwise.

The Latins spend less on arms than any other area. They average 3% of ONP, with the exception of Peru.

They purchase 25% of their arms from us; 75% elsewhere.

President Carter's policy of limiting arms sales will tend to have less impact on Latin America than anywhere else.

Our military presence dates to 1922 in Brazil; 1934 Argentina; 1939 Colombia; 1940 Chile, Ecuador and Peru.

Our security assistance orients the Latin American military towards the U.S.

Our new approach emphasizes sovereignty and human rights.

P.D. - Our principal objective is to work to improve the observation of human rights and to distance ourselves from repressive governments. We try to take a country by country approach, which means our tactical approach to each country is different and will take time.

The whole military issue is exasperating. ^A Human rights is coming as a surprise to many, particularly in Southeast Asia. I have testified to ask that punitive actions not be mandatory. Say we?

Military service in Latin America represents high status and potential for advancement. There are very few functioning institutions. When things get tough in Latin America, only the military seem to be able to hold things together. Many in the U.S. believe that the American military association makes us somehow partially responsible for what they have learned how to do.

We are not the most significant supplier of arms so our military programs seem morésymbolic - a token of our esteem. Then why are we doing what we are? What good does it do those countries? It is good business for us but in terms of national security, what good does it do when repression is growing? Is it good for our people to operate out of defense ministries in places where there are problems?

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- A. - We do need to keep up military relations through IMET. I don't think that our courses help military men to form juntas. I don't think that military rule in Latin America will change soon.

In Bolivia, we sell nation building equipment - bulldozers, trucks and barges. In Guatemala, there is a big difference in attitude between those trained in the U.S. and those not.

Why security assistance? No country poses a threat. But there are resources and UN support, which is important in wartime. The Latins will have a military force for their protection. If we are not involved, there will be a part missing in our overseas efforts.

Col. Saunders (J-2): There are three axis: (1) There is the role the USSR might play to take advantage of the continent. Peru has 85 Soviet advisors and may have purchased a new tank (T-62). The Soviets are trying very hard to get involved in commerce; Brazil and Argentina are of particular interest. (2) Things go awry in Latin America, e.g. Cuba, and the American public becomes upset. We have to deny such opportunities and avoid crises. (3) If the U.S. does not provide, Europe tries to take over. The French are very willing and have opened new spaces in their military academies.

P.D. - Human rights is really grim. The main focus of Congressional attention is human rights. How can we achieve our two part objective?

Col. Saunders: The root dilemma is an economic social one involving their traditions. You need better distribution of wealth; too much is in the hands of the few.

P.D. - The expectations of the poor have risen. We have to be sure we are not linked to governments that are on their way out. Look at Greece. We should not be identified as friends of the oppressors.

General McAuliffe: The objective is to have a hemisphere which is reasonably stable, not hostile, free of inter-country rivalry, and to encourage overall trade and commerce. The Armed Forces are a means to improve the overall lot of nations. We upgrade educational levels and encourage nation building equipment. We seek reasonable military balances between countries so that no one might take advantage of an imbalance, such as Peru. We try not to start an arms race but keep some kind of balance.

Most countries are influenced by the military. Frankly, few of us who have seen it, like it. A military man does not know how to run a country, except, perhaps, if there is an emergency and a limited objective.

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Our military representation is a means to transmit U.S. views, objectives and desires. There have been cases of military and diplomatic representatives not moving together completely. We have positive instructions to our military who are members of the country team. I have no stovepipe channeling to military to go one way when the Ambassador goes another way. It is there to help convey the U.S. desires with one voice but to different people. It is a useful instrument that must be in lock step with the Ambassador.

P.D. - In many countries, day to day police work is done by military. Talking to Foreign Ministry does not help. We need to infuse our values constantly.

General McAuliffe: How should we reward countries which protest human rights? I prefer rewards rather than punitive measures. Most countries think of rewards as being material. I come in big on education. Don't cut off any but give some countries more.

3. Air Force School

Subjects taught at the Air Force School are almost entirely technical. Many high school graduates receive technical skills. 13,876 students have been trained since 1943.

PSD 366 HA Subj File

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South American Trip - Aug 77 - Rept. Tels.