

and their respective organizations—not academics—who engineer institutional reforms. The goals of strengthening the electoral connection and strengthening legislatures, however, should have appeal among such actors. Opposition groups, in particular, have a natural interest in holding elected officials accountable for their actions, and in strengthening legislatures, where they are likely to have some representation even when they are not contenders to control the executive.

Toward these ends, the following reforms should feature prominently in the agenda of opposition groups. First are reforms that encourage the development of legislative resources and expertise, such as allowing legislative reelection where it is prohibited, to encourage parliamentary careers. Along similar lines, increasing the physical resources of legislatures is crucial. Latin American legislatures are, for the most part, chronically understaffed and underequipped relative to executives and their Ministries. Increasing funding for skilled staff, library and data archives, and access to information technology is essential to developing legislatures capable of checking executive authority. Procedurally, the aggregate ceiling budget procedure should be attractive to opposition groups that have secured legislative representation, insofar as it maximizes legislative discretion over the distribution of funds across government programs while retaining a general incentive for executives to exercise restraint on overall spending levels. Of the reforms discussed in this chapter, perhaps the one most easily within reach of opposition groups is the publication of legislative voting. Technological obstacles to this reform are not formidable, opposition to it is difficult to defend publicly, and in some cases only a qualified minority (i.e., the legislative opposition itself) is formally required to demand publication of the record.

### 3

## *The Military*

Rut Diamint

The gradual decrease of militarism in Latin America did not result automatically from democratization. Persistent coup-making is no longer part of the regional political landscape, but the military retains a preeminent role in the resolution of domestic political conflicts. Government institutions remain unable to represent effectively various demands from civilians, thereby allowing the armed forces to mediate and their political influence to reappear under new forms.

In this chapter, I discuss some of the elements that currently characterize the military problem in the democracies of Latin America. Relationships between civilians and the military have changed as a consequence of the political and economic reforms of the past decade and the noteworthy reassessment of the concept of security that these reforms precipitated. The current relationship between governments and the armed forces is, nevertheless, far from the theoretical model of civil supremacy. The incomplete reorganization of power and authority, the persistence of unchecked military prerogatives, and pending institutional reforms allow for diverse forms of military power. This weakens incipient democratic controls and paralyzes the embryonic ability of society and the government to manage security issues.<sup>1</sup>

Latin American democracies are afflicted with shortcomings that encourage novel forms of military participation, while employing procedures that preserve a democratic image. For example, military officers manage considerable economic resources, intelligence agencies still serve the administration in power, military coup plotters espouse populist causes, paramilitary forces are instruments of social control, and a militarized police also undertakes social control. Against this backdrop, the role of the military tilts the balance of social forces to weaken democracy.

Military organizations have lost importance as corporate entities, but

their alliances with dominant social sectors allow them to continue to bargain over power. The exchange of favors with civilian elites grants officers corporate prerogatives within a democratic framework. The military has sought to adjust to the reform of the state by trying to preserve the sources of its power and the economic and personnel resources it had hitherto commanded. It adjusted to democracy as a corporation, defending its institutional privileges. The ability of military officers to question civil authority is more restricted than in the past, even though most social structures lack means and capacities to manage relations between civilians and the military through institutional channels.

Recent scholarship on military issues has not yet clearly defined the civil-military interrelationship within the new democracies of Latin America. For example, Wendy Hunter considers that there was an accommodation by omission in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile.<sup>2</sup> Hunter explains that this tacit agreement attenuates conflicts between civilians and the military; competition between them for power and influence remains within limits set by both parties when democracy is at risk. The formula that says, "we shall not meddle in your affairs if you do not meddle in ours," leaves the door open for a probable repoliticization of the military.<sup>3</sup> It also eases pressures on civilians to assume their responsibilities over public policies. Hunter's revealing research alerts us to the hazards of that omission but it does not analyze the political game or the specific pacts between the government and military officials. Nor does it consider the deinstitutionalizing effects of military prerogatives, nor the external factors that impel civil and military actors to maintain those prerogatives for the sake of governability.<sup>4</sup>

Other authors believe that military influence declines with the increased albeit unconsolidated exercise of political power by civilians. The research of David Pion-Berlin and Craig Arceneaux presents a sort of naïve and instinctive perspective: "But the long-term prognosis for civilian control can, we maintain, be improved should civilian decision-makers assert their own authority over specific operations in the short to medium term and, by so doing, stem military encroachment."<sup>5</sup> J. Samuel Fitch, however, points to the difficulties of maintaining civilian control, taking into account the Hispanic tradition in which the military is considered guardian of the homeland.<sup>6</sup> To counteract the absence of political leadership, Fitch proposes, "the U.S. may be able to provide technical assistance in certain areas, but the real need is likely to be to assist civilians in Congress and the defense ministry, rather than the military."

Both Pion-Berlin and Hunter believe that professionalization and the search for institutional objectives for the armed forces suffice to facilitate the military's withdrawal from politics.<sup>7</sup> Yet, political instability results mainly from the inability to subordinate the armed forces to a new framework of

governance and to establish institutional rules of the game to reshape corporatist prerogatives.<sup>8</sup> Neither military goal statements nor the allocation of resources and equipment are enough to guarantee a proper role for the military profession without the military's recognition and institutionalization of its accountability to civilian authorities.

### The National and International Role of the Military

The end of the Cold War had a direct impact on the military's missions. Edward Luttwak's convincing essay on the shift from geopolitics to geo-economics highlighted a series of changes in the area of security.<sup>9</sup> These changes led to a significant reduction of the military's role in regional integration processes. Powerful and influential private civilian agents assumed new leadership positions, often overshadowing government officials.

A state-centric conception, in which the nation's sovereignty and defense were more important than the citizen, is giving way to an emphasis on the value of the individual. As a consequence, the concern over the state's security is amended to include concern for sustainable human security. The issues on the new security agenda are societal: population displacements, ethnic conflicts, human rights violations, environmental degradation, and endemic poverty. These are already security concerns in developed countries. In Latin America, the inclusion of these social issues as concerns regarding political stability and governability expands the security agenda, turning social problems into state security issues.<sup>10</sup>

The armed forces had long been accustomed to seeing their own citizens as the enemy. They have had to learn to protect the citizenry and even to participate in international peacekeeping operations. These peacekeeping missions, known as "operations-other-than war" by the U.S. military, have a strong civilian component. During a peacekeeping mission, the military typically works alongside NGOs, health providers, observers from multilateral organizations, and other soldiers. The work of providing humanitarian aid and health care or of demobilizing combatants involves them in activities contrary to their roles as warriors. It also compels governments to think along different political lines, expanding their strategic visions from the national to the global arena.

This altruistic profile is new to the history of the armed forces in Latin America, where the civilian/military divide is still haunted by the unresolved issues of human rights abuses and various forms of military influence contrary to democratic governance. This points to an important difference from the democratic transitions of Eastern Europe, where the armed forces, faithful to the one-party system and accustomed to following the politician's orders, were more easily subject to civilian control. Many Latin American

armed forces are still not fully subordinate to their governments because their primary loyalty is to their own institutions rather than to their societies. Instead of redefining military issues in the context of a new institutional framework, Latin America's public space becomes militarized, as the structure, models, and doctrines of the military are applied to police tasks.

One of the most significant changes in Latin American democracies has been this overlap between the functions of the military and the police, further confusing institutional controls. The government's inability to provide adequate security for its citizens has prompted distrust in the institutions responsible for public order. Individual citizens at times take matters into their own hands, hiring private companies to ensure their security.

Several Latin American governments have enlisted the military in the fight against drug trafficking and organized crime or to stop protests by newly disempowered social actors. The mandate to incorporate civilian missions into the military leads to a contradiction: in actions intended to preserve global or regional peace, the military must include civilian missions, but when these are carried out at the national level, they constitute a new challenge to democratic consolidation.

### Power and Government in South America

For many years, Latin American societies were under either military rule or a civilian government where the armed forces reserved power to enable them to mediate between political contenders. The transformations of the past decade established a new covenant to provide for civilian rule that, although still incomplete, allows political forces to compete for office without the arbitration of the armed forces. In some countries this hegemonic rearrangement is successful, while in others it triggers uncertainty and disruption in the political regimes.

The progress of democratic reconstruction has been irregular at best. In Brazil, President Fernando Collor de Mello tried to establish a new civilian order while the bourgeoisie continued leaning on the military to reestablish the old balance of power. The agreement signed between Presidents Collor de Mello and Carlos Menem (Argentina) in 1990, leading to mutual disclosure of nuclear activities, the closing of the Cachimbo nuclear test facility, and the decision not to develop a nuclear-powered submarine, was interpreted as a measure to diminish the weight of the military complex in Brazilian politics.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, Brazil's military retains prerogatives under democratic rule that resemble those under the military government.<sup>12</sup> The Brazilian military is a powerful political actor and a state agency that retains numerous functions, privileges, and bargaining ability, assuring its influence in the deci-

sion-making process. The most basic tenet of civilian control over the military, the allocation of the leadership and management of the nation's defense policies to a civilian Ministry, involved a complex and tense process between the government and the military. For example, in December 1988 the minister of the navy, Mauro César Pereira, presented three serious objections to the creation of a Ministry of Defense: (1) the possible loss of identity of the individual forces, (2) the logistical difficulties of integrating the forces, and (3) the lack of competent civilians.<sup>13</sup> At the time, five high-ranking military officers were members of the president's cabinet, including the ministers for the army, the navy, and the air force as well as the head of the military cabinet and the chief of the intelligence service. The political re-composition at the end of the 1990s seemed aimed at sustaining new reforms leading to establishing Brazil as a global player: "Global player is an expression common to Brazil's diplomacy and foreign policy formulation that refers to Brazil's significant, if limited, role to play in world politics."<sup>14</sup>

Fernando Henrique Cardoso's administration reorganized the bases of presidential power. In September 1999, a constitutional amendment went into effect authorizing the establishment of a new Ministry of Defense.<sup>15</sup> However, a number of presidential decrees concerning military issues provided evidence that some civil-military conflicts remain. First, the government decided to replace the Department of Civilian Aviation, controlled by the air force, with the National Agency of Civilian Aviation. Second, the government sold 20 percent of the shares of Embraer, the state's airplane company directed by the air force, to a consortium of French companies. Third, the government privatized airport administration. The resistance of the air force led the president to request the resignation of the chief of the air force, Brigadier Walter Werner Brauer, which was followed soon after by the dismissal of the minister of civil defense, Elcio Alvares.<sup>16</sup>

These developments are striking considering the strong link between the Cardoso government's strategic plans and the geopolitical concepts of the army.<sup>17</sup> For example, the secretary for strategic affairs and the armed forces assess technological competition similarly.<sup>18</sup> The president's speeches echo military concerns about the country's vulnerability and inability to defend the Amazon region.<sup>19</sup> The programs to attain great power status in twenty-five years are publicly supported by high-ranking government and military authorities in the design of strategies for 2005, 2010, and 2020. There is in Brazil no military strongman, as there is in Venezuela or Chile, but the leadership role of the military in the Brazilian political system remains undisputed.

In Peru, it proved impossible for President Alberto Fujimori to include longtime elites in his modernizing project. As a result, the political weakness of the presidency required an alliance with sectors of the armed forces, while

the political parties disintegrated. Thanks to the internal reorganization, President Fujimori was able to utilize the usual political and social control methods employed by authoritarian governments: manipulation of public opinion, strategies of voter persuasion, and persecution of political opponents.<sup>20</sup> All this took place under the command of Vladimiro Montesinos, former adviser of the National Intelligence Service and Fujimori's closest aide, at the time in charge of mounting a sort of technological espionage and, above all, of knitting a spider's web to entangle the armed forces.<sup>21</sup> The use of the armed forces to break up workers' strikes, combat guerrillas, and support presidential despotism fragmented and ruptured the chain of command within the military, planting seeds of doubt regarding the future behavior of the military in subsequent administrations.<sup>22</sup>

Starting in the 1970s, the Peruvian armed forces—the only ones in Latin America that undertook a process of social and structural reforms—faced the traditional elite as well as the leftist sectors, whose causes they had partially taken as their own. The modernization process undertaken by the Peruvian armed forces differed from those of the other military governments of the 1970s that were based on a patrimonial, authoritarian, and conservative model. According to Juan Rial, the example closest to the Peruvian case is that of Guatemala.<sup>23</sup> In Ecuador, in contrast, the armed forces also had a bureaucratic-modernizing Left-leaning project as well as a technocratic one, but they failed to obtain support for these programs, further rupturing the social fabric.

Consistent with this assessment, in January 2000 a legitimacy crisis terminated the constitutional government of Jamil Mahuad in Ecuador. The privileges of the armed forces in Ecuador are eternal and they are transmitted from generation to generation. The military's proclamation during the January 2000 uprising gives an account of those privileges: "The armed forces will not allow its honor to be sullied by those who have betrayed the trust of the Ecuadorian people, leading hundreds of thousands of families into misery, and that have used their economic power with impunity to manufacture a scandal concerning the armed forces so as to distract attention from processes that urgently need to be carried out."<sup>24</sup>

The target of the January coup alliance was the "neo-liberal economic model, in particular, the proposed dollarization of the economy."<sup>25</sup> The Ecuadorian armed forces maintain a remarkable balance between a rejection of economic reforms and a convenient adaptation to free market rules and competition with the private sector. This participation in business activities has given the Ecuadorian armed forces the highest credibility rating, above those of the Church and the media.<sup>26</sup> This enables them to maintain their strong power and control, allowing them to mediate the political crises of Presidents Abdalá Bucaram and Jamil Mahuad. In Ecuador, trust in po-

litical democracy has decreased sharply thanks to the recurring political failures of the 1990s and the frequent instances of government corruption that contributed to the population's impoverishment. The credibility of the military has endured, free from accusations of human rights violations. This broad societal support for the military compares only to the similar, if smaller, support in Bolivia. In Bolivia, the Church and the media win the top ratings for institutional credibility, but the armed forces retain a significant degree of acceptance in comparison with other political players that are blamed for botched government reform and the costs of regionalization efforts.<sup>27</sup>

On January 21, 2000, a coup in Ecuador, perpetrated by a small and disorganized group, overthrew the constitutionally elected president. This group included 16 elite colonels, 195 officer-candidates of the army's Superior Polytechnic School and the army academy, and 150 "heroes of Cenepa" (officers who served in the 1995 war with Peru). This coup put the future of democratic governance in Ecuador at risk. First, it marked a significant break in the army's chain of command, further weakening the institution and leading to decreased control by the civilian authorities.<sup>28</sup> Second, it underscored the alliance between the armed forces—that did not engage in the repression of citizens—and the indigenous community that represents 30 percent of the population. Third, it inflamed the old internal divisions between two regions that have been at odds since the birth of the nation: the conservative landowners of Quito and the liberal merchants of Guayaquil. In this case, the alliance between the military and one elite had not weakened, and democratic reconstruction was unsuccessful.

Colombia is the most conflict-ridden country. Its government lacks a monopoly on power. In addition, the illegal narcotics trade risked turning the country into a narco-state, where authorities from the three constitutional branches were financed by drug money and where drug dealers directly controlled certain government agencies. The case of Colombia shows some success, namely, a weak military institution that has not participated in politics. Yet that political accomplishment does not result in a strong democracy, but rather in the failure of a nation-state and the destruction of a distributive model of political alliances. The armed forces have increased their relative political autonomy to carry out repressive activities, while the peace policies promoted by civilian authorities contributed to armed confrontations instead of demilitarizing the conflicts.<sup>29</sup> Plan Colombia augments military power, notwithstanding President Pastrana's claim that it would "strengthen democracy, improve citizen participation, achieve peace, effectively fight drug trafficking, modernize and expand access to the justice system, protect human rights and carry out social programs."<sup>30</sup> It is not clear how Plan Colombia will strengthen the justice system, improve civilian security, or

punish criminals.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, this plan could trigger numerous side conflicts. One controversy is developing over the impact of massive poppy field fumigation on neighboring countries. Another may be the institutional disarray that could be engendered by using the military to combat a police problem, without drawing a clear distinction between counterinsurgency and counternarcotics. In addition, peace negotiations are conducted between the government and the guerrillas, excluding the paramilitaries (who were included in the case of El Salvador) because military sectors consider them to be strategic allies in the fight against guerrillas.

Considering the dispersal of national power, the Colombian government's current lack of legitimate capacity to wield power is alarming. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) guerrillas, the largest subversive group on the American continent, number between 10,000 and 15,000 combatants. The FARC is present in some 450 of the 1,075 municipalities in the country. The National Liberation Army (ELN) has between 3,000 and 5,000 members; its specialty is actions directed at weakening the economy.<sup>32</sup> Paramilitary groups were responsible for three-quarters of the extrajudicial deaths in the late 1990s.<sup>33</sup> Also in the late 1990s, the police increased their resources, clearly competing with the military for their share of power. Furthermore, the police acquired facilities and technology at times superior to those of the military. In 1999, without the Colombian government's participation, General Rosso José Serrano, then the chief of National Police, personally lobbied the U.S. Congress. The police are almost functionally independent of the armed forces despite the fact that they fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Defense, not the Ministry of the Interior or of Public Security, as is the case in other Latin American countries. The police's high profile is a consequence of the severe internal violence: Colombia has the highest number of kidnappings (1,678 in 1998) and the highest homicide rate in the world (77 per 100,000 inhabitants between 1987 and 1992).<sup>34</sup>

Curbing the military's autonomy is not one of the government's priorities in part because there is no significant coalition pressing for substantial social change; today's landlord bourgeoisie includes drug dealers who have become cattlemen. Relations between civilian and military authorities exist in a context of deteriorated public order.<sup>35</sup> The Colombian situation poses risks beyond this nation's boundaries. On February 7, 1999, Peru deployed two additional battalions of about 1,200 men each to its northern border. Also in 1999, Ecuador reassigned units that had been stationed on the Peruvian border to its border with the Colombian Department of Putumayo in order to dissuade incursions by Colombian guerrillas and drug dealers. President Fujimori addressed the OAS, alerting it of the imminent danger of war on the border. Venezuela stationed nearly 12,000 troops at about seventy points along its border with Colombia. There were reports that more than a thou-

and guerrilla fighters attacked Port Inirida, a town on the Brazilian border, causing concern in the Cardoso government.<sup>36</sup> These troop movements could develop into military confrontations in the future as handy diversions from political or economic crises. Similar circumstances led to war between Ecuador and Peru in 1995.

Venezuela's situation was not much better as the twenty-first century began. Hugo Chávez's election to the presidency in February 1999 generated a high degree of internal tension and external unease because he revived fears of a potential military dictatorship. The number of voters who favor him does not suffice, as Michael Coppedge states in his chapter of this book, to assess Chávez's legitimacy. Despite thirty-five years of a tacit agreement that regulated civil-military relations, Chávez's tactics to form a hegemonic coalition have strayed far from normal democratic procedure. This has occurred in part in response to a long crisis characterized by extremely high levels of civilian violence and the inexplicable and widespread impoverishment of the population.<sup>37</sup> The new constitution concentrates power in the executive branch and grants prerogatives to the armed forces in different political areas, from education to economic development. Chávez's reliance on the armed forces raised the fear of the government's militarization, a fear further exacerbated by a 13 percent increase in the military budget (despite an overall cut in the government's budget of 10 percent) and a provision in the new 1999 constitution that deprived Congress of the right to oversee military promotions.<sup>38</sup> Military officers have been assigned to strategic positions. They manage the state-owned oil company and are increasingly involved in police work. However, the alliance within the military that had favored political reform has been weakened. For example, Jesús Urdaneta, former director of the political police, Chávez's prison cellmate, and an early inner-circle member, accused Chávez of devious administrative handling.<sup>39</sup> Chávez's old ally, Francisco Arias, competed against Chávez in the July 23, 2000 presidential elections.

Venezuela is entangled in a contradiction. Its political system, devoid of legitimacy, tries to regain it through another political arrangement that lacks democratic legitimacy but enjoys popular support. The leader of this political ploy is (not fortuitously) a military man who resorts to the rhetoric of restoration and order as he breaks all the rules of the political game, while still unable to create a new basis for legitimacy. The president justifies the lackluster record of his administration, claiming that, during the first year, the task was that of institutional consolidation and the removal of the bourgeoisie from the structures of power. But he had less luck than Fujimori in sustaining economic growth in an authoritarian situation; moreover, his objectives certainly diverged from those outlined in the so-called Washington Consensus, that is, the set of free market policies that acquired world-

wide intellectual and policy hegemony in the 1990s. The Venezuelan case under Chávez exemplifies how the failure of political parties can lead to a messianic project in which a populist leader bets on a miraculous salvation while he dilutes democracy.

Bolivia, too, has raised international concerns about the possibility of yet another democratic failure. In 1997, a military coup leader of years past, Hugo Banzer, returned to power by democratic means. Bolivian military officers also spread throughout the structure of government and consider themselves the custodians of democracy.<sup>40</sup> As Adrián Bonilla points out, "A central theme in the security agenda of Andean nations is the nature of civil-military relations. . . . In every country the armed forces remain key actors in domestic political processes, playing decisive roles in the origin and solution of political crises."<sup>41</sup>

Paraguay, paragon of the institutional imperfections that characterize Latin American democracies, also faced a deep crisis of legitimacy in the late 1990s. The assassination of Vice-President Luis María Argaña and the forced exile of President Raúl Cubas to Brazil in March 1999 give evidence of the violence employed to resolve political differences in Paraguay, where the armed forces are privileged participants. Paraguayan politics faces either the prospects of an old-fashioned coup ("A budding desire exists in that direction [of carrying out a coup], a desire which we follow")<sup>42</sup> or the possible electoral victory of General Lino Oviedo, a coup leader seeking to emulate Chávez. There is no legitimacy in either the official ranks or the opposition. The military are still the guarantors of "order." There is a lack of agreement on clear rules of the game. Instead, strongman personalist leaders prevail. The role of the Colorado Party is also disconcerting. It is at the same time a possible source of legitimacy, crisis, and confrontation. It is practically impossible to forge a new institutional consensus with this peculiar party system. Moreover, the military rebellion that attempted to depose President Juan Carlos Wasmosy was stopped not by an organized citizenry determined to defend democracy but by pressure from the international community and the threat of Paraguay's suspension from the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR).<sup>43</sup>

In Uruguay, the military problem seems comparatively minor, but there are still remnants of the privileges conquered by officers in power. The political regime functions without having reviewed its military history. The fears of the military were revived probably because of the break with the two-party system and the increasing power of a third socialist-leaning Frente Amplio (FA, Broad Front) party. In this context, an isolated event such as the case of the restitution of identity to the daughter of a *desaparecido* (a disappeared person, presumed murdered), granddaughter of a well-known Argentine

poet, effectively removed the separation between society and the military. Nevertheless, the statements of General Manuel Fernández, head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, demonstrate the endurance of old concepts: "The enemy seeks to obtain through democratic means the victory that it could not achieve by force." He forecasted that the armed forces "will have to fight again. The situation is changing from bright to dark."<sup>44</sup> He also noted that the armed forces would not ask forgiveness for their actions against the Tupamaro guerrillas. There are no military demands against the democratic system, but neither is there unquestioned subordination to its authority.

In Argentina, a new civilian hegemony was established as a consequence of the military's failed efforts at government administration and economic reforms and its defeat in the war with the United Kingdom in 1982 over the South Atlantic islands. This collapse of the armed forces did not by itself fully restore civil-military relations, however. The liabilities generated by President Raúl Alfonsín's judicial agreements and President Menem's amnesty brought about new lawsuits while preserving a significant distance between civilians and the military.<sup>45</sup> Compared to Chile, however, Argentina has made exemplary changes to consolidate democracy.<sup>46</sup>

Chileans still put up with a highly autonomous military abetted by a constitution made to order, which generates profound discord in society while the government furtively avoids confrontation. In Chile, the army has been willing to yield power in exchange for concessions, such as amnesty for those officers implicated in the abuses committed during General Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship and control over the military budget.<sup>47</sup> President Ricardo Lagos, however, has been firmer than previous administrations in carrying out his intention to limit military autonomy. Lagos insisted that the courts would decide Pinochet's future; Lagos has also sought to change the constitution. The Chilean political reform process has been notably slow and ponderous. Only in the late 1990s, thanks to international factors, did there develop the conditions necessary to legitimize civilian authority without the censorious mediation of the military, which still considers itself the guarantor of the state. The tension between subordinating the armed forces to the civilian government and the need to consolidate governability is influenced by the existence of a broadly supported political coalition allied to the military. The ruling democratic Concertación coalition and the opposition right-wing parties have not been able to carry out a full political reform, but they are in basic agreement on their vision for the country. This agreement on the military issue is reflected in implementation of defense policies through a civilian-controlled Defense Ministry. Nevertheless, divisions of opinion among civilians regarding the role of the armed forces contribute to maintain military prerogatives.<sup>48</sup>

## Power and Government in Central America

Central America has overcome militarism, but its people have become increasingly disenchanted with the meager economic achievements of the new democratic administrations. In the security issue area, there is a growing overlap between national defense and public order tasks. The reduction in the number of military personnel on active duty, a cause for celebration, dropped in El Salvador from 63,175 in January 1992 to 31,000 in February 1993; in Guatemala, from 53,000 in September 1996 to 31,000 in December 1997; and in Nicaragua, from 86,810 in January 1990, to about 14,500 in 1999.<sup>49</sup> This encouraging news, however, does not prevent the military from maintaining its influence and privileges relative to the rest of the citizenry.

For forty-three years Nicaragua suffered the Somoza dynasty, buttressed by a repressive apparatus that served the interests of the family and its allies. The next eleven years the revolutionary government of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) governed. It repudiated somozista principles while nonetheless militarizing society. The Sandinistas were defeated as a result of the deterioration caused by the economic crisis, the war with the "contras" (armed opposition bands strongly backed by the U.S. government), and the public's urgency to achieve peace. The preferences of the citizenry scattered, but nonetheless permitted a reconstitution of capitalist dominance. Since 1990, Nicaraguan citizens have had freely elected leaders of different political persuasions, shifting from socialists to right-wing liberals. In spite of the population's political uncertainty, democracy has prevailed in Nicaragua. In the final moments of Sandinista rule, Sandinista leaders incorporated a sector of the military into the party system. Budget restrictions and international pressures to reduce the size of the army undermined the role of the armed forces as key players in the political arena. The military does not feel defeated, however; it still maintains institutional strength.

The process of *civilianizing* internal security led to the (still unfinished) creation of a Civil Defense Ministry. A new police force was also created; legislation enacted in August 1996 mandated both civilian control and the professionalization of the police. These demilitarizing measures rested on the Central American democratic security agreements as a frame of reference.<sup>50</sup> But just as there was no military victory in the Sandinista era, in the 1990s there was no civilian victory to establish the rule of law among all the sectors. The conflicts that generated the war of the 1980s were not fully resolved.<sup>51</sup> Despite social trauma and the precarious economic situation, however, in the 1990s political forces came to accept peaceful pluralistic political competition, having lost their taste for combat. "It is the first time in the history of the Nicaraguan Republic that political opponents do not resort to violence to settle their differences."<sup>52</sup>

The emergence of democracy in Guatemala owes more to the failure of the authoritarian regime than to the success of pro-democracy forces. It was achieved through peace negotiations that revealed deep internal conflicts. In addition, the exclusion of a large segment of the mostly indigenous population highlights the lack of consensus between the government and society. The attempt to establish control over the armed forces has proven to be a tortuous process of advances and setbacks.<sup>53</sup> The program to restructure the army could not eliminate all the injustices of the authoritarian regime. Trust between society and the military is still a distant goal. Some Guatemalans still believe that bullets are legitimate forms of obtaining power.

The Guatemalan state is intrinsically weak because a segment of society does not feel represented by government authorities. This segment credits the government with ending the internal war, but blames the government for failing to bring about social inclusion and structural reform. The legacy of the war has not yet been fully overcome even though the Truth Commission, called "Comisión de Esclarecimiento Histórico" (Commission to Clarify History), seeking to reconcile Guatemalan society, documented numerous cases of abuse that occurred during the civil war.<sup>54</sup> Implementation of the peace accords has only been partially successful. The size of the military was reduced by 33 percent, but other pending agreements have not been implemented, or only partially so. Examples include the assignment of the Civilian Intelligence Agency to the Ministry of Government, the creation of the Security Advisory Council, the transfer of the Weapons and Ammunition Registry to civil authorities, the army restructuring program, the reorganization and redeployment of the armed forces, and the reevaluation of the military budget.<sup>55</sup> Alvaro Arzú's government began the important process of transferring control of the powerful military intelligence apparatus to civilian hands, but it was left to the government of Alfonso Portillo to finish it. The military's role is not likely to expand in the future, but in the short term it will be difficult to achieve a process of reconciliation, civil supremacy, and social inclusion capable of nurturing a sustained democracy.

El Salvador's governability crisis was not solved at the negotiating table, as Ricardo Córdova notes. None of the competing sectors obtained a clear victory. El Salvador's armed forces had been the region's most violent, yet it became a democracy and transformed its military policy thanks to strong bilateral support.<sup>56</sup> Pressure exerted by, and assistance from, the international community, especially the United Nations, defined the rules for the historic reduction of the size of the military and achieved the successful dismantlement of the guerrilla movement. As in Argentina, the scale of the crisis and the level of daily violence—the Truth Commission report was entitled "From Madness to Hope"—had a purifying effect. The military could not continue a war it could not win, and the guerrillas, having lost their so-

cial objectives, became a political party competing in open elections. The government had sufficient internal and external backing to disengage the areas of national defense from those of internal security and thus regulate the lawful tasks of the military. It replaced the militarized political police with a civilian police, enacted a law on compulsory military service, created the Human Rights Legal Defense Office and a national council to oversee the courts, with a mandate to purge the judicial branch. Despite resistance from some officers, a broad civilian coalition has triumphed in El Salvador thanks to the militancy of the victims of repression. Nevertheless, social conflict is still marked by frequent violence, high crime rates, the inefficiency of the justice system, and high levels of social inequality.<sup>57</sup> The survival of the new political regime is not at stake, but such turmoil demonstrates an explosive dissatisfaction with which a still weak state cannot cope.

The realignment of power in Latin American countries has paralleled the reconfiguration of the state. The state has long been defined as requiring a territorial entity and a population under a single legal system. Nonetheless, processes of integration have modified the criteria of territoriality through a real or metaphoric redrawing of borders. Border permeability evokes freedoms independent of a national frame of reference. Citizens believe that they accrue new rights and duties as members of supranational communities. This situation generates a need for adjustment between local and global law and requires a clearer specification of authoritative state jurisdiction. In this new "order," institutions are organized under different criteria that include both the concerns of states and the concerns of national and international societies. Military thinking generally rejects the reach of globalization. Yet the issue of civilian control of the military, seeking to end the role of the armed forces as the intermediaries in internal political conflicts, has become a regional and global concern as well.

### The Entrepreneurial Logic

Changes within the armed forces of several of the region's countries responded more to the need for government reform than to a redefinition of the role of military defense within the framework of democratic governance. Criteria of efficiency and rationality were applied to all armed forces, including those of developed nations. Executive and legislative branches of government took proactive control of the military through the powerful budget appropriations process. Yet, as a negative by-product of the same process, new forms of military power emerged under the rules of the game for the new economy.

The military carried out political-administrative tasks during the authoritarian regimes and managed companies that the state either wholly or

partially owned. This allowed the military access to the most powerful sectors, maintaining contacts and gathering information on private economic activities. The arrival of democracy found them well positioned to retain and sharpen their managerial skills.

The participation of the military in private-sector production and marketing represents the handling of considerable resources without congressional supervision or guidelines from the Ministry of Defense. This autonomy allows the military to compete with the civilian government (as in Ecuador) or affect civilian decision-making processes (as in Honduras). In Ecuador, for example, national security legislation allows the military to compete with the government as a social services provider. Article 38 of this legislation establishes that the armed forces "without damage to its fundamental mission will collaborate on the country's social and economic development." Article 48 further establishes that the military should "advise on the organization, preparation, and planning of telecommunications, transportation, construction, and other companies."<sup>58</sup> These provisions were interpreted to give the Ecuadorian armed forces a strong presence in various firms. The armed forces provide both employment and patronage: their reach exceeds that of the civilian government itself, politically co-opting the citizenry, willingly or unwillingly. As Bertha García Gallegos has noted: "The government and the political class have delegated, more or less explicitly, an excessively wide spectrum of social responsibility to the military (in areas of education, health, community development, forestry, and the environment). But the military has also usurped such responsibilities, acting autonomously as an institution that faces no effective civilian control."<sup>59</sup>

The Ecuadorian armed forces continue to increase their economic power. The Department of Industries of the Ecuadorian Army (DINE) owns iron and steel industries, a footwear factory, an agro-industrial firm, a flower business, a hotel and tourism network with sophisticated hotels (Marriott), a multipurpose factory that produces backpacks and tents for tourists, a local General Motors plant, a mining company, a shrimp harvesting enterprise, a men's and women's clothes manufacturing company, the Rumiñahui bank, a company to manufacture pickup trucks, electromechanical tools, household items, water and sewage pipes, a foreign exchange financial services company, and several factories related to military production, in addition to partnerships in other companies.<sup>60</sup> This army is modeled on very peculiar defense criteria. Contrary to the United States, where the private sector competes for defense contracts, ensuring greater transparency and control, in Ecuador, the military acts as a holding company that not only has a monopoly on armed force but also on economics. The director of DINE, Ramiro E. Ricaurte, has said: "DINE has pursued diverse areas of economic activity in order to satisfy the requirements of the armed forces and of the



community, generating wealth, development, employment and the well-being of thousands of Ecuadorians.”<sup>61</sup> Is this the peacetime mission that we should want for the armed forces?

This situation is similar to the one described by Arnaldo Brenes and Kevin Casas for Central America: “The Central American generals traded political influence for two things: impunity from human rights violations and non-disclosure of their personal and institutional finances.”<sup>62</sup> These activities are outside existing oversight statutes and therefore are not plausibly punishable.

The banks of the Honduran and Guatemalan armed forces, this study shows, are some of the main banking institutions in Central America. The military welfare institutions throughout the region have traditionally been autonomous financial entities, funded from the public treasury but not subject to fiscal oversight. They took advantage of years of military dictatorships to increase their wealth. In both Honduras and Guatemala, military institutions participate in the agricultural, livestock, communications, transportation, manufacturing, and real estate sectors of the economy. In Honduras, the armed forces are the eighth largest business entity in the country.<sup>63</sup> Leticia Salomón points to the malaise that this situation creates within the business community, whose members complain of the uneven playing field because of the favorable treatment that the armed forces get from the government, allowing them to lower their production costs.<sup>64</sup>

In Nicaragua, as a result of the changes in the 1980s implemented by the Sandinista government and in the 1990s modified by President Violeta Chamorro, numerous public-sector and military enterprises were privatized. Nevertheless, the military still owns companies and enjoys an elitist distribution of urban and rural properties among members of the high command, awarded as postwar compensation to individuals,<sup>65</sup> not to the military institution. Members of the high command have become partners of companies possessing vast extensions of land in the northern, central, and western parts of the country, such as Consorcio Comercial Agropecuario or Commercial Farming Association (CONAGRA) and Empresa Agropecuaria San Miguel or San Miguel Farming Enterprise (AGRESAMI), land acquired from demobilized soldiers.<sup>66</sup>

The penetration of Central American armed forces into the business world is not an exception but rather the result of political agreements granting them immunity and privileges in exchange for accepting elected civilian rule. No multilateral agreement, or pressure from an international institution, or legal action can reverse the personal and institutional enrichment of the military. Governments can attempt to build controls so that armed forces accustomed to privilege and dedicated to narrow professional objectives, such as the fight against drug trafficking and smuggling, accept and re-

spect the control of civilian authorities. Yet there is little doubt that it will be more difficult to dismantle an economic organization built on legal loopholes.

Corruption has also played its part in the accumulation of military wealth. In 1998, the Argentine press reported on the involvement of Fabricaciones Militares (Military Industries), a dependency of the Ministry of Defense and the Argentine army, in a weapons sales scheme to Ecuador and Croatia. The army profited from the secret lease of weapons to Military Industries, which exported them. In effect, the army sold on the open market goods that properly belong to the nation. The use of the revenues from these sales remains unknown. The sales were arranged illegally with the complicity of members of the executive branch; there was obviously no external audit. The courts have been handling this case. The case surprised the citizenry. It exposed government corruption and brutal, mafia-like methods, such as the induced explosion of a gunpowder factory and the blowing up of a helicopter that carried Argentine and Peruvian military passengers.

In Peru, too, the corrupt handling of national resources has been denounced. Javier Velásquez Quesquén, an opposition deputy from the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA) party, called on Congress to appoint an investigating committee. Should high military officers be found to have participated in corrupt government deals, he argued, they should be charged with treason: “Neither the Comptroller’s office nor the internal audit departments of the armed forces or of the National Police, much less the Congress, have audited or investigated anything; for that reason I believe that it would be timely to investigate.”<sup>67</sup> On October 29, 2000, Lieutenant Colonel Ollanta Humala Tazo led a military uprising in opposition to the persisting influence of Vladimiro Montesinos. The military rebels justified their actions as an attempt to cleanse Peruvian politics: “The montesinista generals became rich from participating in drug trafficking, weapons smuggling, and other businesses. They seriously compromised the well-being of the army, the Peruvian people, and the very existence of Peru as a sovereign nation.”<sup>68</sup> When the *Liberación* newspaper disclosed that Montesinos had a \$2 million account in the Swiss bank Wiese, President Alberto Fujimori said that “the revenues correspond to the earnings reported by a consulting law firm in which Montesinos is a partner, which operates independently of the advisor’s activities in the National Intelligence Agency.”<sup>69</sup> A few months later, Montesinos became a fugitive, having provoked the crisis that toppled the Fujimori regime. A videotape surfaced in which Montesinos is seen giving money to an opposition deputy to switch allegiance to Fujimori’s party. Once Montesinos was no longer at Fujimori’s side, the press printed a report from the Swiss Embassy in Lima that he had \$48 million in Swiss banks.<sup>70</sup> This was no longer a case of military but of govern-

ment corruption, sheltered by the shady alliance of the president with a sector of the armed forces. The officers loyal to Fujimori did not have a political agenda; they had economic ambitions. They did not need a coup to reach their objectives, just a president who required a spurious alliance to stay in office.

In Paraguay, according to analyst Carlos Martini, President Alfredo Stroessner based his power on engaging a group of officials whom he made partners in the "great business of corruption." Stroessner called it the "price of peace": corruption in exchange for loyalty, business deals in exchange for devotion.<sup>71</sup> This thinking permeated the entire economy, rapidly generating wealth for the military leadership. The government "relied on discretionary administrative practices that led to corrupt acts carried out with impunity."<sup>72</sup> The young leader of the conscientious-objector movement against the compulsory military draft, Camilo Soares, stated, "The army must be abolished for the sake of the country. We will then avoid generals that are both corrupt and untouchable, officers who decimate our forests and commit all types of injustices with impunity."<sup>73</sup> Another sign of military corruption was the proliferation of landing strips in regions under military jurisdiction, with an unusually high rate of activity attributed to smuggling and drug traffic.<sup>74</sup>

This type of competition in the marketplaces of societies with clear institutional shortcomings further weakens transparency and public control. Personal protection, economic security, or business "insurance" are bought from individuals who use their institutional power to compete unfairly with the private sector and, at the same time, use their leverage to increase their dominance in society. The military-businessmen are not taxpayers; the blurred relationship between public institutions and private enterprises allows military-businessmen to remain exempt from paying taxes.

In Brazil, circumstances differ. Its military industry is highly competitive and managed under a government budget. Its products have civilian as well as military application. The military-industrial complex accounts for an important proportion of the country's exports, giving the armed forces a strong voice in economic policies. The U.S. Arms Control Disarmament Agency ranked Brazil among the ten leading arms suppliers to Third World countries in the 1980–87 period. Aircraft manufacturer Embraer, armored-car industrialist Engesa, and rocket and ballistic missile systems manufacturer Avibras accounted for most Brazilian arms exports.<sup>75</sup> In Argentina, military prerogatives were cut when the military-industrial complex firms were liquidated. To be sure, unlike in Brazil, these companies were not competitive, were poorly managed, and did not have an export market. The decision to dismantle them, however, was not a response to their inefficiency; rather, it was an effort to restrict the military's independent resource base.

In Brazil and Chile, the armed forces still manage their own enterprises

while they receive funds from taxpayers for their institutional purposes. In comparison to the previous cases, this form of accumulating power is more rational and in closer alignment with the law. This does not mean, however, that professional armed forces, with specific missions, are less corrupt. The critical factor is not in the level of professionalism of the armed forces but in the political system, the courts, and the institutional configuration of power. Military missions do not eliminate economic prerogatives—note that the armed forces of Peru are quite professional. The key change depends on the democratic exercise of authority, respect for the separation of powers, and citizen oversight.

The military's incursion into the private sector is one of the characteristics of the period of state reform. Its consequences have not been fully analyzed, but they most likely cripple the development of institutional capabilities of new Latin American democracies. The military's autonomous financial prerogatives are contrary to the concept of civilian supremacy, that is, the democratically elected government's capacity to set national defense priorities and oversee their implementation. Only then will doubts disappear regarding the long-term loyalty of the armed forces to civilian authorities.<sup>76</sup> In Mitch's words: "In the extreme case, the armed forces operate a miniature government on their own—receiving petitions from various civilian groups, making policy decisions, allocating resources to different programs, and implementing those programs as they see fit. This military 'state within the state' is not subject to democratic control, nor is it accountable to the nation through any democratic mechanisms except for superficial oversight by the president."<sup>77</sup>

In the meantime, the armed forces obtain more power relative to the government and more privileges over civilians. Once the armed forces lost the discretionary use of the state's economic resources that they had enjoyed when they were in power, they looked for financial alternatives to use at will. They developed business capabilities. This instrument is more dangerous than its predecessor. In the past, the constitution deemed them violators of national laws although there was no political will to bring them to trial. Now, within the rule of law but without standards for punishment, they have greater immunity to reach their corporate goals without the risk of a future penalty.

### The Institutional Logic

The existence of properly functioning institutions, with transparent procedures and accountability, is a key indicator of the quality of a democracy. If we were to grade the Ministries of Defense using these criteria, the scores would be pretty low. Governments have not invested resources to counter-

act the tradition of military autonomy that marked Latin American societies. The defense ministers of many countries continue to be active or retired military officers. In countries with civilian defense ministers, they often function as intermediaries between military and civilian authorities; they do not set defense policy, determine the mission of the armed forces, oversee policy compliance, or correct deficiencies as they arise.

In almost all countries, Defense Ministries have a limited role as policy makers. This results in part from fear of antagonizing the armed forces, thus hampering governability. It also stems from the lack of civilian expertise on defense issues, a subject that has always been in the hands of the military. This lack of proficiency undermines the capacity of civilians to function as professional peers relative to the military.

Mexico was long characterized by the efficiency of a bureaucratic apparatus in agreement with the ruling party's needs. Its National Defense Ministry embodied a tacit accord between the PRI and the armed forces, each acknowledging respect for the other's rights. There are no civilian employees in the National Defense Ministry or the Navy Ministry. Officers on active duty lead both of them. Civilians working in military schools are under "piecemeal contracts," which is a legal way to hide these governmental activities. In effect, state authorities do not set Mexico's defense policy. It is set by military authorities. The army manages the National Defense Ministry just as the navy manages the Navy Ministry. Each Ministry reports directly to the president and each represents military interests in the executive branch. Mexico does not have a Ministry of Defense.

In Paraguay, in 1999 Nelson Argaña, son of assassinated Vice-President Luis María Argaña, was named minister of civil defense in an attempt to reinforce civilian rule. This Defense Ministry has civilian officials, but the military brass assigned to the top managerial posts makes the key decisions. In addition, the armed forces high command is at the same hierarchical level as the Defense Ministry; the high command decides institutional policy.

In Bolivia, "the Ministry of Defense is neither a policy-making institution nor a forum for debate. It has become a residual entity for inter-party agreements. The appointment of its top officials depends more on inter-party politics than on the strategic preservation of national interests."<sup>78</sup>

Ecuadorian Ministry of Defense employees are mainly active-duty or retired military personnel. No civilian occupies a technical or management position. Civilian personnel in Empleados Civiles (ENCIS) are in middle management administrative positions (mainly mid-level advisory positions in specific areas such as the environment, development, and law). Military personnel fill approximately 89 percent of all jobs. Staff from the army's Polytechnic Institute, one of the country's top schools, also participates directly in the administrative system (they control computer networks, for example),

which gives them a strong voice in public administration. In the Defense Ministry, each military branch has its own standard operating procedures. In general, interservice relations are quite weak; the military services share little information between themselves and even less with other government agencies.

In El Salvador and in Guatemala, defense ministers are always generals. The peace agreement reforms did not change this situation. Military officers fill all posts that set and implement military doctrine. In Honduras, in contrast, a civilian was named defense minister, notwithstanding military resistance, eliminating the position of commander-in-chief, which came to correspond with the presidency. In response, the army's commander-in-chief, Colonel Rodolfo Portillo Interiano, rallied the military leadership against Defense Minister Edgardo Dumas Rodríguez, the first civilian to occupy this position. Acting as the new commander-in-chief, President Carlos Flores Facussé responded firmly. He dismissed or reassigned all officers who opposed civilian control of the armed forces in order to send a clear message regarding civilian supremacy.<sup>79</sup>

In countries with civilian defense ministers, such as Argentina, Chile, Brazil, and Uruguay, there has been a change. Civilian management of defense policy is considered a prerequisite of democracy. The best data are Uruguay's. The Ministry of Defense reports that it employs 27,676 military and 2,377 civilians. Although not explicitly stated, the Ministry counts the members of the armed forces as Defense Ministry personnel.<sup>80</sup> Yet not even in Uruguay, one of the countries where civilian state institutions remained strongest, was the establishment of full civilian supremacy in setting defense policy achieved. For example, President Julio María Sanguinetti created the National State Directorate for Intelligence to replace the Defense Information General Directorate. The new directorate's task is to advise the executive branch on national and international intelligence and counterintelligence issues. This new institution still depends on the Ministry of National Defense. An armed forces general heads it, and its executive director is also a high-ranking military officer.<sup>81</sup>

In Brazil, the military increased their participation in President Itamar Franco's government (1992–94). Franco expanded the number of military officers appointed as ministers from five to seven: the three military Ministries (Army, Navy, and Air Force) and also Transportation, Communications, Federal Administration, and the Strategic Affairs Secretariat. Members of the armed forces also headed two state companies (Sudene and Telebras) as well as the federal police.<sup>82</sup>

Brazil established a civilian Ministry of Defense in 1999. In its first year, the Defense Ministry did not have a full administrative staff. Only in 2000 was it assigned a building. Many tasks still remain in the hands of the armed

forces. The significance of the state bureaucracy, especially that of the Foreign Ministry, suggests that Brazilian government strategic policy will remain remarkably coherent. Little resistance is expected from the military so long as Defense Ministry objectives coincide with military interests.

In the southern cone of South America, the publication of the White Papers on Defense in Chile and in Argentina represented a significant step forward in setting defense policy as the policy of the state.<sup>83</sup> These official documents were based on agreements reached at the hemispheric summits of defense ministers. They were a first, imperfect, albeit politically very significant attempt to set defense policy formally. The Chilean draft emphasized concepts while Argentina's was mostly factual, reflecting the characteristics of each country's defense community. The comparison of these two documents reveals the Chilean military's influence over defense-related issues. For example, what Argentina sees as "globalization" with various positive and negative consequences, Chile sees as "unipolarity" under U.S. hegemony. The evidence also shows that increased political control over the armed forces results in more democratic values, principles, and interests in the sphere of national defense and in the assignment of very different tasks to Defense Ministries.<sup>84</sup>

From 1953 to 1990, Colombia's defense ministers were military officers. The first task of the first civilian minister was to win the trust of the military establishment and, at the same time, regain public respect for the military, which had deteriorated during the previous administrations because of scandals linked to corruption and the narcotics trade.<sup>85</sup> But defense policy in Colombia transcends the responsibilities of a civilian defense minister. Colombian defense policy must include the design of basic strategies toward guerrilla counterinsurgency, peace negotiations, and international relations. In the late 1990s, the armed forces acquired more power and autonomy, yet the danger to the Colombian state makes security issues not so much a concern about military subordination to civilian authority as one of the issues of greatest importance for state survival.

The main obstacle to the design of defense policy as the policy of the state has been the lack of government investment in training qualified public officials. Several countries of the region have defense schools, run mostly by the armed forces. These schools do not train a permanent corps of qualified civilian public officials for the Defense Ministry, however. Rather, they create a social club whose members share ideas and interests. Some countries have set up public policy schools to improve public administration skills, and most have institutes to train the diplomatic corps. None of these offer specialized courses in areas of defense, security, or strategy, however, nor do the universities. A clear and steadfast political decision to improve the civilian government's capacity is the only way to address these problems. An in-

vestment in the skills of those in charge of formulating defense policy and strategy will only begin to yield results in the medium term.

The lack of democratic change is even more evident in the intelligence services. The attempts to circumscribe these agencies within a legal framework, through Congress, with the objective of exercising civilian control over their activities, have only been partially successful. Argentina succeeded in curtailing its intelligence services. In 1987, new legislation on defense separated the areas of defense and security, but legislation regulating the intelligence sector was not enacted. President Fernando de la Rúa's government carried out the most important personnel reduction program affecting the intelligence services, dismissing 1,070 agents; the army retired 600 other civilian intelligence agents.<sup>86</sup>

In Brazil, the shift from the Brazilian National Intelligence Service (SNI), which had been the dictatorship's most powerful agency, to the Brazilian Intelligence Agency (ABIN), created during the government of Collor de Mello, resulted from a process marked by stressful relations with the military and the reluctance to eliminate an instrument useful for gathering domestic political information.<sup>87</sup>

In most Central American countries, the intelligence services had functioned as authoritarian enclaves to persecute citizens. The peace processes required the reform of intelligence services to align them with the new postulates of civilian security. In Guatemala, the September 19, 1996 agreements to strengthen civilian rule and set the function of the army within a democratic society achieved this objective. In Honduras, the National Intelligence Directorate (DNI) was eliminated. It had exercised military control over the population for thirty years. In Nicaragua, the Popular Sandinista Army's general reduction and restructuring plan also featured a decreased number of personnel engaged in intelligence activities. In every case, new laws were enacted to subordinate the intelligence services. Civilian governments did not achieve significant reforms, however, nor did they reach consensus on the proper role of these agencies under democratic governance.

Two serious institutional deficiencies have been the lack of well-qualified civilians and of effective control over the intelligence services. A third has been the inability of the legislatures to oversee defense policy. Legislatures have the right to ratify or deny military promotions. In Argentina and Honduras, for example, legislatures have used this power to prevent the promotion of military personnel who have violated citizens' rights. The worst case has been Venezuela. Congress rejected the promotion of thirty-four officers who had participated in coup attempts, but the executive granted the promotions anyway despite the legislative veto.<sup>88</sup>

A common characteristic in the region is that Congress has a nominal capacity to monitor public-sector spending. In a democracy, fiscal policy is the

tool that sets public administration priorities according to the government's political preferences. Yet in most cases, Finance Ministries lack the tools to assess in detail the proper use of appropriated funds once these have been allocated to each military service. Congress is even less capable of auditing expenditures.<sup>89</sup>

Some countries in the region increased their defense spending from the 1980s to the 1990s, but most have experienced a decrease linked to the rise of democracy and the end of ideological confrontation (see Table 3.1). Nonetheless, the long-standing guidelines of budgetary allocation have persisted.<sup>90</sup> The rise in defense spending in Colombia and Mexico is a direct consequence of new threats, such as drug trafficking and terrorism. In Central America, there has been a marked reduction in outlays. The increases in Chile and Brazil are attributed to the cost of modernizing the armed forces. Ecuador and Peru had an upward spike linked to their war in 1995. U.S. military assistance, very significant in some cases, should be added to these totals (see Table 3.2).

Civilian expertise on defense issues will take many years to develop. Military management of a nation's defense and security, carried out as if the armed forces own these policies, cannot be reversed immediately. Legitimate civilian leadership depends on the knowledge and training of a corps of public officials, congressional and political party advisers, and the slow but necessary development of academic work to address these issues. This is

Table 3.2. U.S. Military Aid, 1998 (in U.S. dollars)

Country	FMS <sup>a</sup>	FMSC <sup>b</sup>	DCS <sup>c</sup>	IMET <sup>d</sup>	E-IMET <sup>e</sup>
Bolivia	43,560,000	3,436,000	133,457,170	220,000	24,933
Colombia	68,226,000	11,775,000	79,808,925	607,000	316,814
Venezuela	30,852,000	6,427,000	187,346,453	400,000	388,000
Mexico	2,722,000	20,317,000	182,327,876	921,000	1,008,000
Argentina	7,298,000	215,000	213,404,551	607,000	196,559
El Salvador	7,016,000	271,000	3,962,187	512,000	333,462
Ecuador	1,761,000	2,746,000	56,638,503	534,000	108,289
Bolivia	238,000	3,285,000	3,365,755	570,000	134,196
Honduras	4,659,000	370,000	2,945,018	425,000	69,559
Peru	1,031,000	14,462,000	19,284,136	462,000	199,642

Source: Adam Isacson and Joy Olson, *Just the Facts: A Civilian Guide to U.S. Defense and Security Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean* (Washington, D.C.: Center for International Policy, 1999). Also see "Arms UN-Control: A Record for U.S. Military Exports," in *Transitions or Democracies? U.S. Arms Transfers and Military Training*, 4th ed. (Washington, D.C.: Democratization for Demilitarization Project, April 1999).

FMS: Foreign military sales: p. 157.

FMSC: Foreign military construction sales: p. 143.

DCS: Direct commercial sales: p. 160.

IMET: International military education and training program: p. 130.

E-IMET: Expanded international military education and training program: p. 133.

... a new leadership is built, based on the suitability of its members, which eliminates civilian inadequacy in the eyes and minds of the armed forces.

### New Threats and Old Armed Forces

In Europe, Japan, and North America, there are strong trends to conceptualize defense in terms of what has become known as the new security agenda within a framework of assertive multilateralism. In the hemisphere, the acceptance of these missions is in tension with the limited capacity of the armed forces to face threats that have greater political and social implications. None of the South American military institutions have modernized their doctrine. Weapons and equipment purchases generally do not derive from centralized planning (Chile excepted); such purchases take place within the constraints imposed by the reform of the state yet still maintaining traditional guidelines of deployment and mobilization.

Latin American governments have signed numerous global agreements, such as the UN Armaments Registry (reproduced by the OAS) and the Chemical Weapons Convention. They have signed bilateral memorandums of understanding on security as well as agreements on subregional defense, confidence building, border issues, and control over customs houses. Except

Table 3.1. Defense Expenditures

Country	Defense Expenditures (in \$U.S. millions)			Defense Expenditures per Capita			Percent of Gross Domestic Product		
	1985	1997	1998	1985	1997	1998	1985	1997	1998
Argentina	5,157	4,972	5,157	169	143	147	3.8	1.8	1.8
Bolivia	181	155	147	28	18	17	2.0	2.0	1.8
Brazil	5,515	18,546	18,053	41	112	108	1.8	3.3	3.2
Chile	2,287	2,922	2,952	189	200	200	10.6	3.8	3.7
Colombia	604	2,542	2,474	21	71	68	1.6	3.3	3.2
Ecuador	405	692	522	43	57	42	1.8	3.5	2.6
Paraguay	85	134	128	23	26	24	1.3	1.5	1.4
Peru	913	1,276	970	49	52	39	4.5	2.2	1.6
Venezuela	1,174	1,540	1,281	68	67	55	2.1	1.8	1.5
Guatemala	167	182	153	21	16	13	1.8	1.5	1.2
Honduras	103	101	95	23	16	15	2.1	2.1	2.0
Mexico	1,768	3,664	3,755	22	39	39	0.7	1.0	1.0
Nicaragua	314	36	29	96	8	6	17.4	1.4	1.1

Source: The Military Balance, 1999-2000.

for rare examples linked to training for peacekeeping missions or human rights courses of questionable effectiveness, these agreements do not add up to a new doctrine that reflects the new postulates of human security or regional cooperation.<sup>91</sup>

Traditional missions, however, continue to exist. As Jorge Domínguez points out, "There has been at least one militarized inter-state dispute per year in Latin America and the Caribbean since 1991; the frequency of militarized disputes actually increased in the second half of the 1990s. Though the worst incident was the full-scale war between Peru and Ecuador in 1995, interstate disputes are also common within Central American countries and between Venezuela and Colombia."<sup>92</sup> The military considers that its main function is the defense of the nation's sovereignty and territory.

Participation in peacekeeping missions has helped to relegitimize officers who had lost the due deference of citizens. This is one of the most promising ways to democratize and control the armed forces. Argentina is the most active Latin American country working with the UN. It went from 20 observers in 1988 to over 1,400 soldiers in 1994. By the end of 2002, more than half of its permanent military personnel had served under the UN flag. Uruguay is the second largest Latin American contributor of military personnel to the UN. In 1998, almost 900 Uruguayans participated in the UN mission to Mozambique. Up to 1999, Brazil had sent close to 12,000 soldiers to peacekeeping operations. At the end of the Gulf War, the Chilean air force sent a squadron of helicopters to monitor the Iraq-Kuwait border, and since 1991 it has participated in six missions. Bolivia, Ecuador, and El Salvador have also sent troops for these operations, and some of their officers train at the Argentine Joint Training Center for Peace Missions. Paraguay's former ambassador to the UN, José Félix Fernández Estigarribia, tried unsuccessfully to involve his country's military in peace missions in order to reduce the likelihood that the military would interfere with the country's fragile democratic transition.<sup>93</sup> Notably, in spite of its declared intention of collaborating with the democratization of the military in Latin America, the U.S. Southern Command has not included the promotion of peace missions among its recommendations for the region.<sup>94</sup>

This auspicious participation of the Latin American military is offset by the risks entailed in the fight against drug trafficking. Counternarcotics operations tend to blur the distinction between security and defense, once again giving the military custody of its own citizens and involving the armed forces in areas for which they are neither suited nor under congressional supervision.

Drug trafficking fosters the "securitization" of defense, that is, increased financial resources, equipment acquisitions, and security forces personnel while levels for the same items decrease within the armed forces. The armed

forces of the Southern Cone countries rejected U.S. suggestions to refocus their military missions on what the United States perceived as most important based on its own drug problem: "The impact of the drug industry has been devastating on U.S. society. Annual imports of 300 million tons of cocaine, 70 percent of Colombian origin, have caused 100,000 deaths and \$300 billion in costs in the last 10 years. Cocaine imports feed the habits of 12 million drug users in the United States, including 3.6 million addicts, contribute to 40,000 drug related deaths per year, and lead to untold economic costs for health care, public safety, and the loss of productivity."<sup>95</sup>

In the late 1990s, despite this initial reluctance, some countries took a more flexible attitude while in others drug trafficking came to be touted as the most urgent threat. In Argentina, for example, the former head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Vice-Admiral Jorge Enrico, said that the armed forces cannot remain inactive or passive" about the narcotics trade, and added, "I don't see the armed forces doing police work. This should be left in the hands of the security forces. There are several areas in which we can participate, however, such as coordination and the command and control of large scale operations."<sup>96</sup> In Brazil, this is already happening. On November 29, 1999, 100 men from the army, navy, air force, and police participated in Operation Mandaçaru to eradicate marijuana plantations and trade.<sup>97</sup> The Brazilian military's intervention in internal security is neither legal nor illegal.<sup>98</sup>

The situation in Uruguay is similar. Dr. Juan Luis Storace, former minister of defense, affirmed that the armed forces are the "most effective resource against" drug trafficking: "I don't deny the participation of the Ministry of Interior (in charge of the police force) but . . . it would seem that the armed forces have greater reach outside the country's boundaries."<sup>99</sup>

The situation in Central America is different. Some traditional military issues related to unresolved border disputes linger, but there is also no reluctance from either civilian authorities or military officers to make the fight against drug trafficking the military's central mission. With a deficient judicial system, limited budget resources, and inadequately prepared security forces, it is logical that the military be assigned to these tasks. In 1982, President Ronald Reagan declared the "War on Drugs" as a principal national security objective, but this did not imply that the United States would put its armed forces in charge of this fight. Mexico fears the "colombianization" of the drug issue because this course of action expands the power of the military while it neglects the search for political solutions.

The risk to be highlighted is this behavior's destabilizing potential to democracies. Pion-Berlin and Arceneaux concur that this is the predominant vision: "In sum, the dominant presumption is that operations located outside the traditional military roles are more difficult to contain, and ultimately more harmful to civilian control." But they also consider that "the variety

of civil-military experiences throughout South America alone is enough to falsify the simple correlation between internal security and military role-expansion on the one hand, and the erosion of civilian authority on the other."<sup>100</sup> I do not agree with this analysis based on the ill-advised extension of Huntington's concept of subjective/objective control to the military in Latin America. Fitch shares my assessment: "The persistence of the 1960s American notion that Third World militaries should be actively engaged in 'civic action' and 'nation building' encourages the military view of themselves as multipurpose state institutions, rather than a specialized profession with a specific military function."<sup>101</sup> Drug trafficking issues tend to weaken the inchoate formation of normative channels to design defense policies, increase the range of military autonomy, and produce de facto military participation without civilian government oversight.

In 1992, an expert advised the U.S. Congress not to center its Latin America policy exclusively on the war on drugs:

Some observers warn that a concentration on drug-related issues obscures other fundamental long-term policy goals such as stability, democracy, respect for human rights, the environment and overcoming poverty. In this vein, they suggest that by promoting host nation military involvement in Andean counter-drug operations, the United States is promoting a policy that could strengthen the power of the military at the expense of often fragile civilian democratic political institutions in the region.<sup>102</sup>

Destabilizing effects are generated by the policies of a powerful state bearing on politically fragile democracies in the process of consolidation. There is a contradiction, moreover, within the U.S. government between an agenda that promotes respect for human rights, governability, and institutional strength, and another driven by the pragmatic policies of the U.S. military. In pursuit of its anti-drug campaign, the U.S. Southern Command tends to emphasize intramilitary contacts, exacerbating the imbalance between civilian and military authorities in Latin America.

This lack of coherence is also evident in the difficulties of attempting to establish policies to combat crime, which is one of the biggest threats to security in Central America. In 1997, there were 300,000 assault weapons in circulation; the murder rate was 140 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, the highest in the continent. Also in 1997, Guatemala reported 100 lynchings and attempted lynchings.<sup>103</sup> This public security crisis prompted the reassignment of the armed forces to internal security activities. The problem in this instance is not the inability to define military missions, but rather the lack of authority to maintain public order, aggravated by the residual violence from the authoritarian regimes.

### Conclusion: The Americas Running at Two Speeds?

In Latin America, the mechanisms to establish interstate subregional relations have been more effective than those to foment trust among the government, the citizenry, and the military. The failure to control the armed forces does not imply a return to the era of military coups. The issue in the twenty-first century is the different forms of military influence over politics. A regional policy assessment is any government's goal but it has not been achieved regarding defense issues. Human rights issues are also still pending. Different situations in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Bolivia, and Guatemala show that political annulment of lawsuits against the military or plans to demobilize troops do not suffice to erase memory or create trust. Security forces are not considered impartial, accountable before the law, or respectful of human rights and democratic procedures.

U.S. military structures exacerbate these deficiencies. U.S. military assistance programs only deepen the region's institutional imbalances and undermine civilian capacities to formulate defense policy. Many Latin American military officers continued to receive professional training in U.S. military academies to the end of the 1990s (see Table 3.3).<sup>104</sup> They become the counterparts of the Pentagon and the U.S. Southern Command, thus gaining a measure of autonomy in handling defense matters.

The commander-in-chief of the U.S. Southern Command, General Henry Shelton, explained the importance of maintaining intermilitary contacts: "In many parts of the world, the military is often the most cohesive institution that wields significant power and thus can influence the outcome of events during a crisis and affairs of the government."<sup>105</sup> This vision does not help to build the civilian leadership that the region needs.

Christopher Gibson and Don Snider have studied the dynamics of civil-military relations in the United States, focusing on the decision-making process. They demonstrate that the armed forces acquired a greater capacity to participate at the highest levels of decision making, developing expertise in making political decisions.<sup>106</sup> This is also the case in Latin America. The armed forces are not only undertaking missions of a civilian nature, they are also enhancing their ability to influence decisions in other governmental institutions. Research into the decision-making processes of several Latin American countries shows that the principal demand of the military is greater inclusion in the government's decision-making process.<sup>107</sup>

In another extended study of civil-military relations in the United States, Beaver and Richard Kohn found that the military tend to reject civilian culture. With some amazement, they find that military officials believe that civilian leaders have a right to be wrong." These authors believe that this conception runs contrary to the premises of civilian control. Yet this

**Table 3.3 School of the Americas Students, 1998**

Country	Number of Students	Percent of Total
Argentina	20	3
Bolivia	52	8
Brazil	0	0
Chile	153	23
Colombia	150	23
Ecuador	10	2
Honduras	24	4
Mexico	60	9
Peru	42	6
Venezuela	30	5

Source: Adam Isacson and Joy Olson, *Just the Facts 2000–2001: A Civilian Guide to U.S. Defense and Security Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean* (Washington, D.C.: Center for International Policy, 2001), 91.

conception has been a constant factor in the relations between the military and politicians in Latin America. The authors add: “Contrary to the traditional understanding of civilian control, a majority of elite military officers today believe that it is proper for the military to insist rather than merely advise (or even advocate in private) on key matters.”<sup>108</sup>

If these behaviors are worrisome in countries with a strong democratic tradition, what implications do they have for the political regimes of Latin America? Most Latin American governments have not confronted issues of inadequate civilian control or the lack of civilian competency to set defense policies. Nor have political and social leaders invested in training well-informed political party counterparts of military officers. Only such capable civilians could eventually institutionalize a dialogue with the military.

What are the consequences of this diagnosis? Latin America is running at two speeds. In Europe, the two speeds refer to the differences between countries whose societies are more developed and convergent and that have similar economic indicators (rate of inflation, level of unemployment, etc.), on the one hand, and those that are less developed and whose economic indicators are less positive, on the other. In Latin America, the level of institutional development must be added to the assessment. Thus some countries have implemented economic reforms, joined the global marketplace, and restructured their political order. Despite many challenges, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Mexico, and Uruguay are on the path to democratic consolidation. In contrast, Paraguay, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Andean countries are stuck at the slower speed. In the second set of countries, no pact guarantees the unhindered operation of political forces or the

military’s withdrawal from taking part in government. Moreover, this “fault line” between the two Americas does not imply that the military question is resolved at either of the two speeds. As Patrice McSherry points out, “Throughout Latin America, the armed forces remain convinced of their right to intervene in politics and society, and such missions give the militaries justifications for maintaining large forces in the absence of credible threats.”<sup>109</sup> Institutional imbalances will persist as long as there remains a discrepancy between legal authority and political power. This generates an unending struggle for the control of the state apparatus, where either the military wins the dominant coalition or their reaction provokes political instability. The best strategy to discourage this perverse logic is to create a civilian defense community. This paves the way back to Karl Deutsch’s concept of a security community: a territory with deeply rooted and pervasive practices and institutions, which generate long-term expectations that changes will be peaceful and that disagreements and disputes will be resolved eschewing violent conflict.<sup>110</sup> The inclusion of various national and regional civil society organizations will strengthen this civilian community, contain the autonomy of the armed forces, and properly set the military question as a matter of state policy. Ultimately, security issues belong in a new public sphere, where all governmental institutions are configured and questioned. The result will be a civil society willing to control and improve the state’s performance and the health of democracy.