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About This Journal

Your first question may be, "what does Modus Vivendi mean?" Modus Vivendi is Latin for "way of life," but in International Studies parlance it signifies a "state of affairs where two opposing parties agree to differ." Thus, we are open to any view concerning international affairs. Modus Vivendi is an appropriate name for a journal dedicated to an intelligent discussion of global issues.

Your second question may be, "why do we need an International Studies journal at Rhodes?" Indeed this is a good question because student journals abound at Rhodes. However, the I.S. department is completely unrepresented in these journals. This is ironic given the large amount of lengthy papers that I.S. students traditionally have to write. Students have written fine papers that are merely filed in some dusty cabinet and never looked at again. Modus Vivendi serves as a vehicle for recognizing outstanding papers pertaining to international affairs.

A deeper question, might be "why do we need the discipline of International Studies at all?" Recent years have seen a veritable explosion of international events that have significantly affected our lives. Demilitarization in the West coupled with increased violence in the rest of the world, deforestation and its unforeseen consequences, the spread of market forces to unprecedented locations such as the former Soviet Union, the globalization of business, the continuing poverty and general decrepitude of the nations of the Southern hemisphere, etc. , are all manifestations of a changing international structure that is furiously transforming the world before our eyes. The importance of this change demands attention, discussion and research. An intellectual eclecticism is necessary for the adequate study of these phenomena. Thus, we encourage all majors to submit to this journal in the future.

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The Politics of Peripheral States:
U.S. Foreign Policy in Bosnia and East Timor

by

Jason Carmel

"I came from hell"

-a wounded Bosnian refugee airlifted to Sarajevo from Gorazde

"Am I my brother's keeper?"

-Genesis, 4:9

As recently as April 21, 1994 President Clinton affirmed the need to "make the Serbs pay a higher price for continued violence" in what is now the beginning of the fourth year of Serbian maneuvers to create a Greater Serbia out of Bosnian land in the former Yugoslavian Republic (FYR). The United Nations has made numerous resolutions condemning the Serbian aggression, mandating an immediate Serbian withdrawal, and even advocating military air operations to protect designated Muslim safe havens and United Nations personnel in the region.

In addition to U.N. condemnations, the Russians, the Turks, the Hungarian government, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Albania, France, Germany, as well as NATO, the United States, the European Community, Congress and the Bosnians themselves have all publicly denounced the Serbian invasion as being, among other things, "a very dangerous escalation,"(1) "a potential massacre of staggering proportions,"(2) and "fascist thuggery on the march."(3)

Despite the general outrage expressed by members of the international community concerning the irredentism of Serbia and the reports of ethnic cleansing contained therein, the Serbs possess up to 70% of all Bosnia-Herzegovina. Threats are issued and reissued almost daily in the form of NATO air strike ultimatums and U.N. resolutions, all of which draw lines that the Serbs are quick to ignore. Vocal government officials from Europe, the United States and the United Nations claim analogies between the removal of Muslims from Bosnia by the Serbs and Hitler's Final Solution aimed at destroying the Jews in the mid 1940s or Hussein's attack on Kuwait and methodical annihilation of the Iraqi Kurds. The widely publicized reports of mass rapings and concentration camp style compounds for Muslim refugees never fail to provoke world-wide disgust and condemnation.

Bosnian officials have written innumerable pleas to NATO, the U.N., the European Community and the United States, asking first for humanitarian aid, then for military support, and finally for a mercy airstrike upon their own people to save them from the degradation of slaughter by the Serbian army or decimation from hunger and disease. Bosnian President Izebegovic visited President Clinton in Washington in late 1992 and left without any promise of a U.S. intervention.

With the existence of such a horrible war on the periphery of Europe, one would almost expect the consummate world power to usher in a U.S. sponsored solution, supported, in all likelihood, by U.S. funds and military. One could anticipate such support if not simply

to deter future violence on moral grounds, then to at least appease the mass of U.S. citizens and foreign dignitaries who await a more active U.S. role in the Balkans. The EC, to date, has withheld any substantial effort towards an imposed resolution of the violence in Bosnia, "more or less subconsciously expecting that Big Brother [United States] would step in if things really turned nasty."(4) Similarly, the United Nations has turned expectantly toward the United States, still aghast that the parties involved in the war possess "such a remarkable stamina for mutual butchery that none of the classic peaceful means enumerated in... the United Nations Charter has been enough to stop the conflict."(5)

The United States can by no means claim insulation from or ignorance of the horrors that occur in Bosnia daily. Even were it not for the daily proliferation of Balkan related stories in the media available to the public and the government, the Clinton administration would still have access to its yearly State Department Report on the Human Rights Practices in Serbia/Montenegro. This report makes clear references to Serbia's "sustained military, economic, and political support for the ethnic Serbs responsible for massive human rights abuses and acts of genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina."(6)

However, to date, the United States has acted conservatively, if at all, in response to the shocking reports emanating from Bosnia. In July 1991, the U.S. supported the EC arms embargo to the region and trade sanctions followed in November. Presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton repeatedly threatened the Serbs with air strikes if the no fly zones established in UN resolution 781 in December 1992 were violated. In February 1993, the U.S. sponsored peace talks in New York without noticeable success and merely compounded threats to use U.S. airpower to enforce UN no fly zones and demilitarized areas.

The U.S. did, in fact, destroy a tank and a command center with F-16 fighter jets in early April 1994 to demonstrate some resolve in their threats, but has consistently refused to even consider the introduction of ground troops in the conflict. Only more unheeded condemnations and vague threats of future limited airstrikes have been offered by the U.S., leaving the EC and the UN wondering what to do on their own accord, the Serbs wondering if anybody will attempt to do something significant to deter their advances, and the Bosnians wondering if anybody even cares about them anymore.

If words were weapons, the U.S. would have dropped the equivalent of thousands of bombs on the rump Serbian state. If threats were troops, then whole regiments of U.S. ground forces would be stationed in and around Bosnia to prevent any occurrences of human rights abuse. But this is not the case and the region remains as war torn as ever. The resulting standoff in Bosnia is leaving all interested parties second guessing the reasons behind the disturbingly reserved U.S. policy in the region. Were it earlier in the Clinton Presidency, one might have conceivably attributed the U.S. inaction to the lack of an "architectonic structure in U.S. foreign policy" that SAIS professor and scholar Frederick Holburn claims accompanies most new presidencies.(7) However, already well into the heart of Clinton's term, the recent situation in Bosnia following the indiscriminate Serbian bombardment of Gorazde and Bihac leads one to realize that no end to the violence is apparent. And still no U.S. initiative seems forthcoming as the presidency progresses.

Others suggest that Clinton's inexperience in foreign policy issues, stemming from his former gubernatorial position in Arkansas, could be a factor in the benign U.S. attitude

toward the Balkans. Some might argue that, like President Carter tried to do, Clinton generally will ignore non-threatening international crises, choosing instead to concentrate on the domestic agenda, including issues like health care reform and crime. Professor Holburn offers that Clinton's current policy is "to try to avoid as many issues as possible on which Congress must act for fear of taking away support from domestic issues." (8) This case is especially compelling now, with a Republican sweep in the November elections. Clinton's non-involvement policy could also imply his having learned certain political lessons from George Bush, who allegedly lost the 1992 election to Clinton due, in part, to his overemphasis on foreign policy and his neglect of key domestic issues such as the budget deficit. (9)

While this may be a viable influence on executive decisions in theory, Clinton has felt no compunction in directly engaging on a negotiating level in North and South Korea and the Middle East, or in attempting to land troops in Somalia and Haiti during his tenure in office.

Barring this domestic reasoning for U.S. policy, the United States could be avoiding the Balkans due to a sheer lack of national interest in the area. The lack of valuable political and natural resources in the FYR could simply outweigh the moral demand for U.S. intervention. The U.S. has found itself playing a much more active role with conflict resolution in the former Soviet Union because of its nuclear capabilities and in the Middle East because of its natural resources, and must therefore scale down its commitments in other less crucial areas. So while the threat of a conflict spreading from the FYR either into Western Europe or the former Soviet Union might require a policy revision, the situation as it stands today does not necessitate U.S. involvement.

Another very reasonable factor in the decision to provide only minimal U.S. military support to the peace-keeping effort in Bosnia is the historical difficulties of fighting on that terrain. Hitler's troops were plagued constantly by partisan guerrillas under Yosip Broz Tito. The mountainous terrain lends itself to ambushes and traps able to decimate entire platoons of foreign soldiers without causing a single indigenous casualty. No foreign military force, least of all one that still battles with memories of a cruel tour in the jungles of Vietnam, would be enthusiastic about sending troops to such a region.

The U.S. is also aware of the new role of the EC throughout the Bosnian crisis. More than once, the EC has expressed to the U.S. a legitimate desire to play a more active role in solving European security problems. In the post cold war era, the U.S. has no reason to begrudge its European allies this at its own military and economic expense. A more stable Europe would be a better economic trading associate, as well as "a reliable partner in building and maintaining peace and in defending common interest." (10) However, while the U.S. may heartily embrace Europe's new leadership role in its own backyard, based on recent events, the EC "has shown an embarrassing lack of strategic political objectives," and might not be united enough to be effective in the FYR without the U.S. (11)

Whatever the reasons behind the U.S. policy in the Balkans, it should be noted that the decision to abstain from troop involvement in Europe's periphery represents an attempt to define a new U.S. international role in the post cold war era, especially concerning regions that pose no significant threat to the U.S. itself. Based on Clinton's involvement in Bosnia, one can extrapolate three well defined characteristics of the emerging new "peripheral state policy" for the United States. Most significantly, the U.S. will no longer

involve itself in non-threatening regional crises, unless victory is assured and inexpensive. The WEU predicts that "a new kind of containment policy is being developed, in which the United States only intervenes in crises that are manageable, cheap and close ended, except in the event of mortal threats to American security."(12) Professor Holburn agrees that in the Balkan case, "you have to have [military] preponderance and you have to know the outcome. That's not a recipe for action."(13) Additionally, the U.S. will involve itself militarily in these peripheral state conflicts only as a buffer to prevent them from spreading into other more strategic regions rather than to correct the crisis itself. In June of last year, Secretary of State Warren Christopher sent the first U.S. troops to the Balkans not to act as peace keepers in Bosnia or in Sarajevo, but to the republic of Macedonia to prevent violence from spilling over from Bosnia and widening the conflict. The U.S. has since doubled its troops in Macedonia and has entertained requests from the Romanian government to send U.S. troops there for the same purpose.

The third element of the emerging U.S. peripheral state policy is the substitution from military assistance or presence to humanitarian aid. This represents the Clinton administration's attempt to reconcile national interest oriented foreign policy with public demands to do something to end the carnage in the myriad of violent regional conflicts from the FYR to Rwanda. Humanitarian aid, coupled with a stern U.S. presence to prevent the proliferation of the conflict, is the most the U.S. can do without actually committing itself to any long term costly military engagement. As underscored by Secretary of State Christopher:

"We can't do it all. We have to measure our ability to act in the interests of the United States, but to save our power for those situations which threaten our deepest national interest, at the same time doing all we can where there's humanitarian concern."(14)

This new policy forces the U.S. to reevaluate its priorities and to make some very distasteful decisions (or, as the case may be, to distastefully refrain from making any decisions at all).

The same situation exists, for example, in East Timor, where anywhere from one-sixth to one-third of the East Timorese have been annihilated and 80% of the population has been forced from their homes by their Indonesian invaders since the conflict began in 1975. Again, as with Bosnia, the U.S. recognizes the genocidal practices by the Indonesian aggressors and the incidents of "torture and mistreatment of criminal suspects, detainees, and prisoners."(15)

And again, the United States has taken no decisive action against the Indonesians. Strikingly similar to the Balkan conflict, however, is the U.S. reaction to the Indonesian abuses in July 1993 which included verbal condemnations of the human rights violations at the G-7 economic summit in Tokyo, and the denial of weapons sales to Indonesia in light of "sensitive issues in the case... including human rights concerns in Indonesia."(16) But like Bosnia, the literal rape of East Timor poses no threat to American national interest other than a public disgust at the atrocities occurring. The systematic butchering of the East Timorese has, additionally, left the U.S. with no cause for alarm that the conflict will spread anytime in the near future to more strategically important regions. The U.S. has cut all military aid formerly given to Indonesia under the International Military Education and Training Program, yet offers little in the way of relief for the East

Timorese.

Without a doubt, the role of the U.S. in the post cold war era has changed dramatically. Whereas with the Soviet threat looming over the heads on presidential administrations it was relatively easy to warrant U.S. involvement in nations like Angola or Vietnam, the current administration must participate in considerably more soul searching before it is able to justify to its constituents an extended U.S. presence in a peripheral conflict such as Bosnia or East Timor.

It will prove difficult, however, for the United States to wash its hands of all peripheral conflicts regardless of the level of violence and death while maintaining its current international stature. Xanana Gusmao, the leader of the Maubere resistance against Indonesia in East Timor, gave a 28 page defence plea in May, 1993 after his capture, in which he indicted the United States for its alleged support of the Indonesian invasion and for its complicity during the recent massacres there. Indeed, the Indonesians used American made OV-10 Broncos and Skyhawks to facilitate the 1975 invasion, and a CIA operative in Jakarta during the invasion concedes that "[without] continued heavy U.S. logistical military support, the Indonesians might not have been able to pull it off." (17) While the U.S. has ceased all military support of President Suharto's regime, it has done little if anything pro active to assuage the extreme repression, nor has it taken steps to foster a democratic atmosphere which U.S. military equipment helped to originally destroy. A 1994 *New Statesmen and Society* poll indicates East Timor as the least democratic political region in the world, yet the Clinton administration has ordered no active military involvement at all, just as in Bosnia. (18) According to Gusmao, those threatened by violence who are peripheral to the U.S. in conflicts such as the one in East Timor, "are the responsibility of the international community, a question of international law. It is a case in which universal principles are at stake." (19) It is apparent that, whether justified or not, the United States will receive a great deal of criticism, like that of Gusmao, for ignoring these allegedly universal principles under this new peripheral state policy.

For Gusmao, the new foreign policy of the U.S. has a very ugly dimension: "Political realism is political subservience, the denial of the individual conscience, the death of the conscience of a people." (20) It is this "death of the conscience of a people" that the U.S. must contend with, as it slowly withdraws itself out of peripheral regional conflicts. The conscience of the United States will, in fact, suffer as it refuses more and more to intervene to stop obvious massacres and other human rights violations that do not occur in regions defined as U.S. national interest. As recently as 1991, the Suharto government conducted a massacre of over 270 peaceful demonstrators in the capital of Dili. Despite this, the U.S. continues to advocate "Indonesia's incorporation of East Timor, without maintaining that a valid act of self-determination has taken place," simply because "nothing the United States or the world was prepared to do could change that fact." (21) Perhaps in the post cold war era, the United States will make it a policy to adopt this more passive, less engaged attitude toward all regions considered non-essential to U.S. national interest or survival.

Whether a shift away from interventions that do not have national interest issues at stake would be morally depraved or political intelligent remains to be seen. This is not to suggest, in normative terms, that the U.S. could, or even should interfere in every region where the potential for violent deaths of innocent people might bruise the conscience of

the American political sector. Rather, it is a detached recognition of a quid pro quo attitude that is slowly enmeshing itself into U.S. foreign policy. The latest 40 billion dollar trade agreement with Indonesia has more balance sheet economic value to the Clinton administration and to the U.S. in general than does a military engagement in the South Pacific to free the East Timorese. As for the FYR, the U.S. has shipped marines to the Adriatic coast not in response to the 210,000 indigenous deaths that have occurred since the fighting began, but rather for the possible evacuation of 1,200 trapped U.N. peacekeepers. Defense Secretary William Perry insists that the marines will see no combat outside of the possible evacuation mission. In a televised interview, Bosnian Ambassador to the United Nations Muhammad Sacribey called all U.S. and NATO assistance to date "worthless," and concluded cynically that he "must question their sincerity all along."(22)

If U.S. reaction to the events in East Timor and Bosnia are any indication of current trends, then the Clinton administration is preparing to bear the brunt of international criticism for refusing to involve the nation on behalf of brutally repressed people in politically peripheral theaters. The U.S. disengagement from peripheral regions is certainly the most politically savvy decision, since few things are less popular on a domestic level than expending blood and treasure on conflicts that seem worlds away from the average American citizen. It is evident that a majority of Americans would undoubtedly prefer a non-interventionist policy in a place like Somalia over seeing the corpses of American soldiers being dragged through the streets on international news broadcasts.

Regardless, it is evident that as conflicts become increasingly ethnically based on smaller scales, violence and atrocities of this kind will multiply, as recent events in Rwanda, Somalia and elsewhere can attest. And in the case of Bosnia and East Timor, the United States, as it redefines its foreign policy agenda, must prepare itself literally to stand idly by and watch the slaughter of thousands for the sake of a more focused national interest.

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The Iran-Iraq War: Personalities and Problems of Legitimacy

by

Elizabeth Markovits

Introduction

In September 1980, Saddam Hussein invaded Iran and began what would become the longest conventional war of this century. The war had profound effects not only in the Middle East, but throughout the world. In order to understand the dynamics and effects of such a conflict, one must examine the underlying causes. Problems tend to arise in the analysis, as many observers have not viewed the conflict in its proper context. One must understand the political currents in the region in order to avoid improper generalizations. The Middle East is an area with its own peculiar historical situation and, it follows that politics in the region follow a distinct pattern of their own. This paper attempts to uncover the causes of the Iran-Iraq War through the examination of the prevailing political trends in the region and the history of the two states.

Iran and Iraq had a history of animosity; border, ethnic and religious disputes began at least as early as the sixteenth century while Iraq was part of the Ottoman Empire and Iran was the base of the Persian Empire. By 1958, both states were independent, and the conflict continued. At the outbreak of the war, Hussein wanted to regain the half of the Shatt al Arab (Arab river) that had been surrendered to Iran in the Algiers Declaration of 1975. The territory surrounding the river had long been a source of conflict between Iran and Iraq. Yet the real causes of the war are more complex. The war was not only a territorial conflict, it was a fight for political hegemony over the region and an attempt on both Hussein and Khomeini to legitimize their regimes and consolidate power within the countries.

Politics in the Middle East

In the Middle East, as in much of the Third World, the political history is defined by personalities rather than institutions. This was the situation in both Iran and Iraq at the time of the war. In a system dominated by personalities, the political institutions of the state become secondary, tools of the regime, and, oftentimes, symbolic. What is left is often a bureaucratic-authoritarian regime which attempts to placate the population without fostering a democratic state-society relationship. The head of state, who, in this region, does not have the mandate of a popularly elected leader, must have an alternate source of legitimacy. The population must be satisfied in some way or else it will demand increased political participation or revolution.

In order to maintain power, the leader must either be an extremely charismatic figure or else be able to provide increased economic goods to the population. The charismatic figure often portrays himself as a common citizen, fighting for the freedom of the people against a chosen enemy. The idea of the "enemy" is often an effective tool used to mobilize the masses in support of the regime. The leader also must be adept at the manipulation of the popular political culture. He must present himself as the embodiment

of the state in the minds of the masses and create a cult of personality. In the Middle East, leaders have often referred to the "glorious past" when the state was the head of an empire, i.e., the Persian or the Ottoman Empire, and have attempted to revitalize this idea in hopes of increasing popular support for the regime's programs. Legitimacy is enhanced if the leader can use various symbols of the national identity to his advantage. In the Middle East, Islam has typically been a tool used by the state in order to increase popular support. The manipulation of nationalism and historical traditions also are useful for this purpose.

If the leader cannot do these things, he must find an alternate source of legitimacy- the meeting of the economic expectations of the population. The diffusion of Western values into the popular culture of the Third World creates political and economic expectations that the regime is expected to fulfil. Rather than move towards democracy and increased political participation of the masses, the leaders hope to rely on the economic appeasement of the population. In the Middle East, oil has often provided such a means to almost immediate economic growth.

Another important aspect of Middle East politics is the role of the military. The military establishment in many Third World countries is an active political actor, ready to take control of the government if the regime is not living up to expectations or cannot control the population. The military has become a major political institution in many countries and one that must be dealt with effectively in order to keep it somewhat subdued. Even a military figure that becomes head of the state is subject to military intervention. In order to insure longevity, the leader of the state must maintain a political order which is satisfactory to the military or else divert its attention to other arenas; foreign wars are especially popular for this.

Causes of the Iran-Iraq War

The Case of Iraq and Saddam Hussein

In July 1979, Saddam Hussein became the president of Iraq, after working relentlessly within the Ba'th Party to consolidate his power. Immediately, he was faced with the need to insure his political longevity and legitimacy. He needed to establish his control as leader of this historically unstable country. The economy in Iraq had been revitalized after Hussein had nationalized the oil industry in 1972, as vice-president of the revolutionary Command Council (an institution of the Ba'th Party); thus, there was little for Hussein to do in the economic realm. Hussein needed a way to mobilize the masses in his support. He achieved this sort of support with the Iran-Iraq War; the name given to the war in Iraqi literature was *Saddam's Qadisyya* (Saddam's War). The war enabled Hussein to establish himself as *the* leader of Iraq, fighting a just war against a longtime enemy. Regaining control of the Shatt al Arab was especially important to Hussein, as he had been the Iraqi negotiator concerning the Algiers Declaration which left the river to Iranian control. Hussein considered the treaty a personal humiliation and felt that regaining sovereignty over the territory was necessary to demonstrate his legitimacy as the leader of Iraq. These territorial ambitions further fueled nationalism.

Hussein also recognized that legitimacy could be enhanced by making Iraq the premier state in the region. The era of General Nasser (Egypt's president until 1972) was over after the 1967 War with Israel and the position of regional hegemon was open. Both Syria and Iraq competed for this power. Hussein realized that the defeat of a regional threat,

could propel him and Iraq to a place of leadership in the Middle East. He hoped to destroy the Iranian Revolution and its message, which was perceived as dangerous to many Middle Eastern leaders, thus gaining prestige not only in the region, but also in the West. Before the Revolution, Iran had been the "favorite" of the U.S. in the Middle East; Hussein hoped to enter in its now vacant place. The Iranian government, at the time of the invasion, was perceived to be very weak and an easy target; Hussein expected the war to last three weeks. It was during this time that Iraq's standing within the region reached its peak; Hussein hoped that this would translate into acceptance of him as the new leader of the Arab world.

It is important to realize the effect of a personality in such a regime. Hussein has been paired with Hitler and described as a ruthless, fearless, cunning and disciplined war lover. His desire to become the leader of the Middle East was fueled by his own personal ambition. Immediately after coming to power, he ordered the execution of twenty-one cabinet members, explaining that "he who is closest to me is farthest from when he does wrong." Statues and portraits of leader were ordered and placed on almost every building in Baghdad. Speaking against Hussein meant the death penalty and all typewriters had to be registered with the police. Hussein achieved in creating a cult of personality around himself, even though much of it had to be done through coercion.

Saddam Hussein was also faced with the necessity of creating a place for the military within his regime. The military had traditionally been a part of Iraqi post-independence politics; Iraq was the site of the first military coup in the region (1936). A civilian when he came to power, Hussein quickly militarized his regime, placing great emphasis on the transformation of Iraq into a military superpower while taking care to insure their loyalty. He increased the size of the military almost 150% in the first five years of his regime, gaining military superiority in the region. However, Hussein realized that the advantages of an enormous military were counterbalanced by its drawbacks. Even as head of the military, Hussein needed to protect his position from its ambitions. A foreign war, against a traditional enemy would keep the military and its leadership occupied and reduce the chances of a military coup.

Another incentive for the war pertained to the area in dispute. Not only was the Shatt al Arab a symbolic source of conflict between the two countries, the area surrounding was predominantly Arab and contained oil fields. The fact that the territory was inhabited by Arabs provided a significant amount of legitimacy to Hussein's claim that it should be controlled by Arab Iraqis, not Persian Iranians. Additionally, since the area was inhabited by Arabs, Hussein counted on their support in the war, and he got it. However, a much more acceptable explanation for the conflict over the territory most likely lies in the oil fields. Iraq was doing well economically at this point, but, as the invasion of Kuwait demonstrates, the control of oil fields is acceptable incentive for the already hostile Iraq to invade another country.

The Situation in Iran

On January 19, 1979, amid revolutionary cries for the overthrow of the monarchy, Shah of Iran fled the country. Ayatollah Khomeini had been a powerful figure in the Iranian clergy and easily ascended as the effective head of state. Khomeini was a genuine charismatic figure and was able to mobilize the population in the name of Iran and Islam. He set up a theocratic state in Iran and offered the people of Iran an alternative to the

Western culture that many Moslem Iranians felt was destroying the foundations of their own culture. The Ayatollah's legitimacy lay in his ability to portray himself and his ideology as the saviour of Iran. Khomeini also was aware of the "Glorious Past of Persia" and the emotions this carried. If he could regain this position for Iran, at least in the minds of the population, he could further enhance his legitimacy.

Still, there were problems in the early Islamic republic. Khomeini quickly revealed his true colors as an authoritarian spiritual leader. Also, Iran, which had been a well-supported ally of the United States before the revolution, was now isolated in the world, diplomatically and economically. The military was in disarray, there was a sense of fear and distrust in the country, the economy was weak and the new leaders had little political experience.

The situation in Iran after the revolution was perceived by outside forces, especially Saddam Hussein, to be one of weakness. It was this perception that led Saddam Hussein to believe that the war would be a quick, easy victory. Hussein hoped that the chaos in Iran would render the new, inexperienced government helpless to a massive surprise attack. This perceived weakness was one of the main causes of the war; if Hussein had believed that the Iranian government could mobilize the way it did, chances are, he would not have attacked with so little thought.

Khomeini needed a rallying cry to guarantee that the population would remain mobilized in his favor. Although he did not instigate it, the war would become a useful tool for turning attention to external enemies and away from Khomeini's non-democratic state building. Khomeini's role as the spiritual leader in a war which was portrayed as the ultimate fight against evil enhanced his political and religious legitimacy; Islamic symbols were used to mobilize support. It is important to remember that in Iran, Islam had at least the might of nationalism, if not more, and the state was in control of religion; the regime was thus able to utilize powerful religious sentiments of the population.

It is also important to remember that the war was a competition for hegemony. As Iran was not the instigator in the conflict, it is hard to say that Iranian ambitions were at fault. Still, the war allowed the new Iranian government a chance to prove itself to a hostile world. The hostilities between Iran and Iraq were long standing historical conflicts regarding religion, territory and pride. The rise of the Islamic state and Khomeini proved to only worsen the relations between the two; Hussein and the Shah had normalized relations, but now there was a completely different Iran. Khomeini had spent thirteen years in Iraq but was asked to leave in 1978; he considered this a personal insult and never forgot it. This animosity between the two states added to the desires of both Hussein and Khomeini to establish dominance in the Persian Gulf arena. James Bill described the war just this: a struggle for hegemony.

Clarification

Many analysts of the Iran-Iraq War have made a point of explaining the conflict in terms of a battle within Islam. This is an easy assumption to make, especially from a Western perspective; however, it is incorrect. The war was essentially a political war; Saddam had little interest in Islam as a political force, except for its destruction in Iran. His government was dominated by generally secularized Sunnis. There was little, if any, truly religious motive for Hussein to invade Iran. To Khomeini, Islam was an effective tool in

the mobilization of Iranian forces. Islam was not a cause for protecting the territorial integrity of Iran.

Iraq is a heterogeneous society; more than half of the population is Shiite, the rest, including the majority of the government, Sunni. The Iranian government thought that the Shiite population would rebel against Hussein, as they had done in the past, and weaken the Iraqi position. However, the Shiite Moslems in Iran proved to be of little significance in the war; Hussein had already eliminated this possibility. Starting in April 1980, Hussein had ordered the removal of thousands of Shiites from Southern Iraq and the execution of Shiite activists. Thus, Hussein's political security was free from the internal threat of Shiism.

Conclusions

The Iran-Iraq War was a monumental event in the history of the Middle East. The war ended after eight years with little resolved. The war took a generation of both Iran and Iraq young men and was a tremendous financial catastrophe for both sides. The war also solidified Iraq's position with the United States, who supported Hussein diplomatically and militarily; the United States would later regret this during the next Gulf War.

The causes of the war were complex. Most obvious are Saddam Hussein ambitions to become a regional hegemon and establish his legitimacy as the leader of Iraq. Hussein's aspirations became the center of Iraqi politics during this time, understandable in a region dominated by personality. Also, Hussein's need to keep the military occupied and thus removed from internal politics was a factor in his instigation of the conflict.

The historical rivalries between Iran and Iraq are important in the context of the war. Without these, which included the territorial dispute regarding the Shatt al Arab, Hussein would have not be so able to mobilize his population and so quickly (after coming to power) choose an enemy. These antagonisms created as sense of nationalism within both countries which fueled the passions which are necessary to wage an extended conventional war.

Iran's political instability contributed to the causes of the war. Iraq believed that the country was in chaos and thus would not be able to counter its efforts as quickly as it did. This perceived weakness made Iran an easy target for attack by a hostile state; a victory, whether easy or difficult, would still be a victory.

Finally, Khomeini's need for legitimacy and own desire to establish the new Iran as the dominant power in the region added to the fire. He needed a force to justify the consolidation of his power and to mobilize the population behind him. In a hostile environment, such as the Middle East was to Iran at this time, Khomeini needed a way to prove Iranian strength and perhaps even establish Iranian power in the region.

The Iran-Iraq War is easily attributed to a single cause; it is important to keep the politics of the region in mind when studying the war. By its very nature, a war is complex and full of surprises. This war was full of miscalculations and ended without apparent reason as to its causes; nothing was accomplished, except the near destruction of two of the most powerful states in the Middle East.

Endnotes

- 1 Dilip Hiro, *The Longest War* (New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 2.
- 2 Ibrahim Tehrani, "Iraqi Attitudes and the 1975 Agreement." Farhang Rajaei, ed. *The Iran-Iraq War*. (Gainesville, Florida: University Florida Press, 1993), p. 14.
- 3 Mehran Kamrava, *Politics and Society in the Third World*. (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 5.
- 4 Mehran Kamrava, *Revolutionary Politics*. (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1992), p. 25.
- 5 Mehran Kamrava, *Politics and Society in the Third World*. pp. 9-11.
- 6 Ibid, p. 186.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 This is not true for every Middle Eastern country (example: the Gulf States), yet the institution of the military is significant enough in the region as a whole to merit mention.
- 9 Mehran Kamrava, *Politics and Society in the Third World*. p. 27.
- 10 Internet, excerpted from Compton's New Media, Inc. 1994.
- 11 Peter Mansfield, *A History of the Middle East*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 287.
- 12 Richard Bulliet, "Aggression in Historical Perspective." Farhang Rajaei, ed. *The Iran-Iraq War*, pp. 210-211.
- 13 Stephen Grummon, *The Iran-Iraq War: Islam Embattled*. (New York: Praeger, 1982), p. 10.
- 14 John Stoessinger, *Why Nations Go To War*. (New York: St. Martins Press, 1993), p. 184.
- 15 Peter Mansfield, *A History of the Middle East*. p. 280.
- 16 Iran, after the Islamic Revolution, was perceived as a political threat to the other Middle East governments because of its message and Iran's supposed plans to spread the revolution. See Grummon, *The Iran-Iraq war: Islam Embattled*.
- 17 The ideology of the Iranian Revolution included the belief that other countries in the region should be purged of their "corrupt, secular" regimes and replaced with rule by Islamic law and the clergy.
- 18 Bill and Springborg, *The Politics of the Middle East*. (New York: Harper Collins, 1994), p. 385.
- 19 Dilip Hiro, *The Longest War*. p. 69.
- 20 Ibid, p. 38.
- 21 John Stoessinger, *Why Nations Go To War*. p. 181.
- 22 Ibid, p. 183.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Samir al-Khalil, *The Republic of Fear*. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989), p. 21.
- 26 Ibid, pp. 119-120.
- 27 Ibid, p. 34.
- 28 Dilip Hiro, *The Longest War*. pp. 10 and 38.
- 29 John Stoessinger, *Why Nations Go To War*. p. 184.
- 30 Heather Deegan, *The Middle East and Problems of Democracy* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), p. 49.
- 31 Bill and Springborg, *The Politics of the Middle East*. p. 205.
- 32 Khomeini was not the actual head of the Iranian state; still, his political influence was greater than all others.

- 33 Heather Deegan, *The Middle East and Problems of Democracy*. pp. 51-53.
- 34 Bill and Springborg, *The Politics of the Middle East*. p. 382.
- 35 Ibid, p. 385.
- 36 John Stoessinger, *Why Nations Go To War*. p. 185.
- 37 Dilip Hiro, *The Longest War*. pps. 34-35.
- 38 John Stoessinger, *Why Nations Go To War*. p. 182.
- 39 Sepehr Zabih, *Iran Since the Revolution*. (Baltimore, MD.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), p. 176.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 John Stoessinger, *Why Nations Go To War*. p. 184.
- 42 Bill and Springborg, *The Politics of the Middle East*. p. 385.
- 43 John Stoessinger, *Why Nations Go To War*. p. 184.
- 44 Claudia Wright, "Religion and Strategy in the Gulf War," *Third World Quarterly* (Vol. 7, No. 4. October 1985), p. 843.
- 45 Ibid.

A Reassessment of U.S. Strategic Interests in the Post-Gulf War Middle East

by

W. Judd Peak

United States policy in the Middle East has developed a new sense of priorities since the fall of communism. The Persian Gulf War in 1991 highlighted a new regional order in the Middle East that has forced another assessment of strategic interests. The new focus of U.S. policy will place economic security above previous geopolitical concerns. Moreover, the recent Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Jordanian peace agreements have diminished the strategic importance of Israeli security, further highlighting economic issues.

During the Cold War, the purpose of United States policy in the Middle East was to counter a perceived Soviet threat to regional stability. This threat pushed Washington to use military might to protect the sources of petroleum and the oil shipping routes. In addition, military proxies were created with American allies to contain communism. Covert political operations¹ and the continued, almost unconditional support for Israel made outright association with the United States tenuous for Middle East political leaders.

The Cold War also propagated a security arrangement that relied on the United States for military support. This system's failure was showcased in Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Indeed, the ensuing Gulf War, coupled with the fall of communism and the elimination of the Soviet threat, has created the political circumstances for a new regional order to maintain stability and preserve the free flow of oil. It is in this context that the United States must reassess its strategic interests in the region. The recent peace accords have also proved catalytic in shuffling the regional security arrangement.

This paper will examine the change in U.S. interests and policy prescriptions for the Post-Cold War Middle East. Regional threats have shifted. This will create a new atmosphere and new focus for U.S. foreign policy. The two primary Cold War interests—the security of Israel and the protection of the flow of oil—still apply, but new geopolitical circumstances have shifted the ways the United States responds to them.

History of U.S. Policy Before 1979

Oil was the primary attraction to the Persian Gulf for the United States, unlike the imperial goals of Britain and France beforehand. However, the goal of U.S. involvement at the outset was deterrence of the perceived Soviet threat. The United States' involvement grew in the 1950s and 1960s as the British gradually withdrew from direct

action in the Middle East. The Truman Doctrine of containment held the Middle East as a strategic region from which the fight against communism could be based. Truman considered Turkey to be the focal point of the region's fight against communism². The Eisenhower Doctrine of the 1950s extrapolated this to the region as a whole. This foreign policy aim held for almost two decades.

There came, in U.S. policy-making, a steady trend of the importance of Middle East politics as the British withdrawal became more final. In contrast to this increased importance of Middle East geopolitics, the United States, throughout the 1960s, wished to rely on several Middle East allies to form a security alliance for the region³. This embodied the basis for the Nixon-Kissinger Doctrine, which sought to aid foreign governments in their fight against communist intrusion, but also relied on them to carry out the direct confrontation. The Nixon Doctrine relied on Saudi Arabia and Iran to stabilize the region against Soviet aggression.

In focusing on Saudi Arabia and Iran, the United States had to balance two competing rivalries for dominance in the Persian Gulf⁴.

The two were the two largest exporters of crude oil in the 1960s and 1970s. The dominant personalities of the Shah of Iran and King Faisal of Saudi Arabia both had unfulfilled territorial ambitions and large, delicate egos. In addition, there were significant differences between the two nations that made relations with both more complex. Iran was Shi'ite Muslim while Saudi Arabia was Wahabbi-Sunni Muslim. Iran was Persian while Saudi Arabia was Arab. Both nations wanted to be the leader in oil production. Concessions for American oil companies were at stake, and the U.S. did not want to appear to favor one country over the other for fear of losing that concession. The political situation depended on how oil production between the two nations was allocated. The leaders of the two nations often successfully played this dilemma to their advantage. Saudi Oil Minister Zaki Yamani expressed his feeling that the Americans favored Iranians personally, at the expense of Saudi oil production. The Shah, on the other hand, claimed that OPEC was an instrument of Arab domination, and subsequently made a petroleum agreement with the Soviet Union, and threatened to orient output towards the Eastern Bloc. Almost immediately, oil companies were besieged with urges from the State Department to do all they could to patch things up with Iran. In this political situation, the United States was often outwitted and its foreign policy was often manipulated.

U.S. Policy, 1979-1991

The Carter Doctrine was a response to a two-tiered dilemma involving security issues and a reassessment of strategic interests. The two oil shocks of the 1970s highlighted the U.S. dependence on oil imports and on the stability of the oil market. Oil reserves of the Persian Gulf grew in stature strategically due to their clearer and stronger economic muscle. On the side of security issues, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Iranian revolution showed the weakness of the Nixon Doctrine in providing a successful deterrence against aggression, and the absence of a response to internal crises.

The Carter Doctrine was outlined in President Carter's State of the Union address on January 23, 1980:

Let our position be absolutely clear: an attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force⁵.

This represented a departure from the Nixon Doctrine. Now, the United States assumed full responsibility for a response to outside aggression on the Persian Gulf states, and in effect was extrapolated to the Middle East as a whole. This clearly defined U.S. strategic interests in the region.

In the 1980s, this was the U.S. policy for the Middle East. With the loss of Iran as an ally, Saudi Arabia's strategic position grew in stature. Indeed, the specific importance of Saudi Arabia was detailed by the Reagan corollary to the Carter Doctrine⁶. The development of the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) and strategic lift capabilities contributed to the ability of the United States to follow through on this guarantee to Middle East states. This commitment existed through the Gulf War in 1991.

Historical Summary of U.S. Strategic Interests

U.S. historical interests in the Middle East focus on two enduring interests the security of Israel and the protection of a favorable relationship with Persian Gulf oil-producing states⁷. These interests have dominated U.S. thinking on the Middle East since the United States became actively engaged in the region.

Israel

The structural interest of Israel is perhaps best showcased in the Arab-Israeli wars of 1967 and 1973⁸. The unconditional U.S. support for Israel, and the continued supply of military weapons and other goods necessary to fight a war, outlined the issue of Israeli security to the American people. The Israeli political lobby in the United States showed remarkable influence in pushing the immediate and outright support for Israel's fight against its Arab neighbors.

U.S. foreign policy in the Arab-Israeli wars was also formed out of the commitment to contain communism and a perceived Soviet move into Middle Eastern affairs. The tradition of superpower confrontation through proxy was not lost on the Middle East. U.S. support of Israel, and Soviet support of Egypt and Syria, fueled a superpower race for dominance in the region. In these instances, two Cold War foreign policy objectives were parallel: the assurance of Israeli security and the containment of communism.

Oil shocks of 1973 and 1979

The second structural interests of the United States the protection of access to oil was underscored and solidified by the oil shocks of the 1970s. Western vulnerability to OPEC oil production was clearly outlined, and the Persian Gulf region gained immense importance in policy circles. The first oil shock, as a direct result of the 1973 Israeli war, raised the price of oil from \$2.90 in June 1973 to over \$11 per barrel in just a few months⁹. The realization of this dependency began an intense effort to strengthen

relations with the Persian Gulf states.

Henry Kissinger viewed the 1973 oil embargo as further evidence of the value of Iran as a regional ally¹⁰. Unlike King Faisal in Saudi Arabia, the Shah of Iran did not use his oil to place political pressure on the U.S., although he greatly increased its price. In addition, Iran allowed to United States to refuel ships at its ports and continued American antagonism of the Soviet Union¹¹. This furthered the acceptance of the Nixon-Kissinger Doctrine of reliance on foreign countries to continue the fight against communism. Iran became even more of a focal point in this foreign policy formula.

The 1979 oil crisis occurred in response to the Camp David accords between Egypt and Israel and due to the Iranian revolution. This further intensified the importance of oil in the foreign policy venue, and helped lead to the formulation of the Carter Doctrine. The United States would now assume a more active role in the security of its structural interests.

The oil shocks had a double impact on American foreign policy. First, the economic importance of the oil market was comprehended as oil imports became more expensive and economic inflation ensued. Secondly, the geopolitical importance of oil became apparent. The nations of OPEC derived oil policy from the political situations of the times. U.S. policy had to reflect this; it had to tie oil market security to geopolitical circumstances. Thus began a strengthening of economic and political ties with oil exporters. In addition, it began a reassessment of the Nixon Doctrine. Clearly, the United States could not place emphasis on allies in the region. A more active and visible U.S. policy began. The United States' Pacific Fleet began regular deployments in the Persian Gulf and neighboring Indian Ocean region, and the communications base at Diego Garcia was expanded to house military hardware and deployments¹².

Other Middle East events and their relationships with U.S. policy

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 signified the threat of extra-regional players in Middle East affairs. The Carter Doctrine, formulated soon after the invasion, outlined that further aggression in the oil-rich Persian Gulf would constitute a direct threat to the vital interests of the United States. In addition, military use was specifically spelled out for the first time. The invasion led to a more assertive role for the United States in regional affairs.

The 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon presented the United States with a complex dillimma. Was it, like the rest of the diplomatic world, to condemn Israel for the invasion, or was it to blindly continue its strict, unconditional support for Israel? This raised questions in policy debate because the United States had been trying to foster stronger ties with Arab nations, both as a response to a perceived Soviet threat and as a further protection for oil production. The United States ultimately aided the PLO in fleeing Lebanon to Tunisia. This example showed that while the security of Israel was a viable, structural concern, it was interpreted in the context of specific circumstances. The United States felt that Israel's security wasn't severely threatened¹³.

Perhaps the greatest show of American policy was the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. This served as the first real test of the Carter Doctrine and the U.S. commitment to protection of the Persian Gulf region. However, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and subsequent intimidation of Saudi Arabia was a new face on an old threat. Previous U.S. policy had concentrated on the threat of aggression from the Soviet Union, or another outside force,

and on containment of the Iran-Iraq conflict. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, however, signified a new focus on interregional threats to U.S. strategic interests. Stabilizing the area against threats from within the region was now the primary focus of foreign policy.

U.S. Policy Post-Gulf War Context

The events of 1991—the allied victory in the Gulf War and the demise of the Soviet Union—created a new geopolitical situation in the Middle East that has forced the United States to reexamine its strategic interests and foreign policy objectives. In this view, the structural interests to the United States are the same, but other historical interests have dissolved along with the Soviet Union. The United States must evaluate a new regional policy that incorporates with its new strategic interests.

The future of oil market security

The primary method the United States uses to control the free flow of oil out of the Persian Gulf is maintaining favorable relations with the Gulf countries. The main emphasis of this is on Saudi Arabia, the world's largest exporter of petroleum. Relations with Saudi Arabia have historically been good, starting with U.S. involvement in the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO). After the first oil shock in 1973, the United States became instrumental in Saudi Arabia's economic affairs, attempting to become a major player in their economy.

This objective was reached through increased investment and trade between the two countries. The United States established the Joint Commission for Economic Development in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, with the intent to foster economic diversification and encourage parastatals and joint ventures between American companies and Saudi nationals and the Saudi government. These relations also were important to Saudi Arabia, who required the advanced technology and economic stability that came with increased economic ties with the United States. The United States has also been instrumental in the development of the Saudi infrastructure. King Khalid Military City near the Iraqi border was built almost solely with American expertise, and American companies were also involved in the development of the industrial cities of Jubail and Yanbu, which rest on the shipping routes of the Persian Gulf and Red Sea, respectively.

Perhaps the most telling of U.S. economic relations has been the continual military funding of Saudi Arabia. Military sales to Saudi Arabia have surpassed non-military exports since the conclusion of the Gulf War. In the first two years after the war, \$25 billion in arms sales were made to Saudi Arabia from the United States¹⁴. Recent Saudi budget crunches have not reduced the amount spent on the military. Both Saudi Arabia and the United States see a stronger Saudi military force as a stabilizer in the region. Since the Gulf War, the nature of military procurements have changed. Through the 1980s, Saudi Arabia focused much of its military expenditures on building an infrastructure to support it. It was clearly successful in this endeavor, showcased in the ability to support over 500,000 allied forces in the fight against Iraq. Since the virtual elimination of the Iraqi forces, however, the composition of Saudi military purchases has changed. Recent purchases have concentrated on high technology arms and weapons, which it deems as vital to counter the relatively small Saudi manpower (compared to the

military size of Iraq and Iran).

The United States has courted the rest of the Gulf Cooperation Council in similar fashion. The U.S.GCC Economic Dialogue was established to promote greater economic and political ties between the United States and the members of the GCC. The end of the forum is to expand the open economic relations between the members of the GCC to the United States as well. The United States has also linked economic relations to the goal of regional stability. In a recent trip to Saudi Arabia, Commerce Secretary Ronald H. Brown outlined the U.S. position:

*In the United States we have come to recognize that national security is increasingly defined by economic security ... The Gulf Cooperation Council was founded in the face of a military threat. But you recognize as we do that national security arises from exports as well as armies, high technology as well as high explosives*¹⁵.

Last year's conference concentrated on increasing the number of U.S. businesses in GCC countries. It noted that there were, at that time, 59 U.S. companies involved in joint ventures in Saudi Arabia¹⁶. In addition, both the U.S. and the GCC noted that economic diversification of the Gulf countries was essential to a strong relationship, and GCC leaders noted that various incentive plans to encourage manufacturing investment were being implemented¹⁷. As these economic initiatives become more ingrained, the economic ties between the U.S. and the GCC should become more stabilized. Underlying U.S. policy is the belief that stable economic relations will lead to stable political relations.

This appearance of open economic relations for the Gulf countries is only one-sided, however. The United States is still unwilling to normalize relations with Iraq and Iran. This is attributable to the maintenance of a regional balance of power for the Persian Gulf. By upholding Saudi Arabia, destroying the Iraqi infrastructure in the Gulf War, and maintaining the international exclusion of Iran, the United States wishes to formulate a stable political scenario that minimizes the regional threats to oil. U.S. foreign policy certainly embraces favoritism.

With the demise of the Soviet Union and the subsequent end to the Cold War, future threats to Gulf oil will be from countries such as Iran and Iraq who wish to obtain regional hegemony and from nationalist and Islamic movements within oil exporting countries. The continued isolation of Iraq and Iran, and the elimination of their respective means to wage offensive attacks¹⁸, will subvert that possibility for security breaches in the near future. Threats from Islamic and nationalist movements will most likely threaten the elites who build close relations with the U.S. The United States sees economic stability and growth as the means to suppress nationalist tendencies in the Gulf sheikdoms. In addition, a less visible U.S. role in the region after the Gulf War will diminish the potential instigator for popular uprising.

The continuous dependence of the United States on the foreign oil supply will keep the notion of a regional security arrangement on the minds of policy-makers in Washington. The military cutbacks initiated by President Clinton will make it harder for the United States to consistently project a strong military presence in the region. Former Secretary of Defense Les Aspin proposed a scaled military the size of two Persian Gulf military machines, with enough might left over to handle a minor skirmish elsewhere in the world.

Although this military would be substantial enough to protect U.S. interests in dire cases, it is unreasonable to assume it would be able to continuously maintain the regional balance of power. This task will fall to others. As the United States becomes a less visible political and military player, a vacuum will have to be filled by a regional security alliance.

Developments in Israel and their implications for U.S. policy

Clearly, the major events in Israeli politics since the end of the Gulf War have been the peace accords with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and with Jordan. Because the Palestinian question has been the main issue that has galvanized Middle East politics for decades, it is understandable that a successful resolution of the problem would present a whole new political environment for the United States to respond to. The successful negotiating by the United States propelled its position in the Middle East to a nonpartisan basis. The move by President Bush to withhold loan guarantees to Israel gained stature for the United States in the eyes of the Arab world as a country who can be objective and resourceful in its dealings in the Middle East.

President Bush and Secretary of State James A. Baker successfully bargained with the Arab nations as the conflict with Iraq flamed in 1990. As the United States gained the support of the Arab nations in its confrontation with Iraq, it would focus attention to a fair resolution of the Palestinian dilemma at the end of the war. The success of this endeavor further propelled the regional status of the United States, and with respect came a more effective foreign policy.

The peace agreement between the PLO and Israel served U.S. interests in two ways. First, it eliminated a virtual state of war between two powers, which enhanced the security of Israel. Secondly, the U.S. feared that the Palestinian dilemma was a cauldron of instability that spilled over into the rest of the Middle East. Primarily, Washington worried that continual problems with the Palestinians could jeopardize the strategic position it enjoyed with the Persian Gulf monarchies. The successful peace agreement cleared that threat to regional stability.

The peace agreement with Jordan further expanded on the security of Israel. In the spirit of the Palestinian peace agreement, the Jordanian accord, up until the time of this writing, has expanded the stability of the region. The security of Israel is further maintained because its internal threat, the Palestinians, have recognized Israel's legitimacy, and its two strategic borders, along Jordan and Egypt, have been officially recognized. What remains to complete the effectuation of the security of Israel is to encourage a similar peace agreement with Syria at Israel's northern border. In his recent trip to the Middle East, President Clinton met with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, and discussed the possibility of a peace agreement with Israel. This demonstrates the continual strategic interest the United States places on Israel's security, and the importance to the United States of resolving it.

Proposals for regional security alliances

The United States will try to maintain the military imbalance between Iraq and the Gulf Shiekhdoms that resulted from the Gulf War¹⁹. This negates the perceived threats to

Middle East oil, and creates the circumstances for a new regional security arrangement without the United States or other outside powers. Realistically, the guarantee of U.S. military might in cases of need will help to strengthen a security alliance. Soon after the conclusion of the Gulf War, Saudi Arabia formed a coalition between the Gulf Cooperation Council, Egypt, and Syria (hence called GCC+2). This was brokered at the Damascus Declaration. The GCC states were to provide the financial support for a regional security pact, while Egypt and Syria were to provide the manpower to enforce stability. Unfortunately, Saudi Arabia became uneasy at the thought of housing Egyptian and Syrian troops on its soil, and asked them to leave soon after the alliance was formed. Still, if the countries pursued similar regional policies, which has been the case in the recent past, a solidified front can be assembled in future contingencies.

There is also the possibility of a security alliance formed with regional 'pillars' who have the resources to maintain the delicate balance of power. This would probably consist of Saudi Arabia in the Persian Gulf, Egypt in the Maghreb, and Turkey to sustain stability in the Levant²⁰. This appears to be similar to the Nixon-Kissinger Doctrine of regional powers to push the containment policy. However, in the future geopolitical situation, these regional players would be protecting the stability against aggression within the region, rather than from outside it. With U.S. backing, this could prove to be an easier task. Certainly Turkey and Egypt have the military hegemony, when properly backed by the United States, to properly maintain regional decorum. Saudi Arabia is another situation, but one the United States seems willing to count on. The Iraqi threat to dominance has temporarily vanished, and Iran is in no position to challenge, but these are only temporary situations. Iran has already been making overtures to Western Europe since the Gulf War²¹. However, Iran's economy is still weak, and it is unable to obtain the military hardware needed to challenge Saudi Arabia. Iraq is still unable to pose a threat as long as the United States and the United Nations is committed to maintaining economic and military sanctions against the country.

Other security arrangements have been proposed in diplomatic circles. The peace agreement between Israel and Jordan outlined their commitment to the creation of a Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Middle East (CSCME)²². James E. Akins, in his article "The New Arabia,"²³ argues that a unified Arabian peninsula, under the head of Saudi Arabia, could be able to effectively provide for regional stability by being a large enough adversary against Iraqi or Iranian hegemonic designs. Its manpower and military might approach that of the larger Arab states, and its financial resources would be totally unmatched.

Another proposal for regional security is a permanent U.S. presence in the Middle East. This would perhaps create more problems than it would solve. The United States already has enough of a military force that no regional player would dare challenge. The U.S. proved in the Persian Gulf war that it has the lift capabilities to quickly respond to threats to its strategic interests. In order to maintain stability, a permanent U.S. military contingency would have to be installed. No Arab leader would allow the troops to be based in his territory for fear of reprisal from the people. Even Saudi Arabia only invited American troops during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on the contingency that the troops would be removed when Iraq was removed from Kuwaiti territory. Such a visible presence would antagonize nationalist tendencies in the Arab nations, creating more

instability than before.

It is uncertain whether the American people would allow there to be a permanent presence of U.S. troops in the region. The American psyche has changed since the end of the Cold War. Political discourse in the United States has turned to domestic issues, with international issues taking more of a 'backseat'. The 1992 presidential debate contained only one question on international issues, with domestic policy taking the other ten²⁴. When questioned about the preeminence of foreign policy, UN Ambassador Thomas Pickering replied, "It's been put back on the shelf."²⁵

An American deployment would dismantle much of the influence the United States has built up in the Middle East. Popular resentment of the U.S. will grow with a visible military presence. Also, the American public wasn't supportive of U.S. troops in Somalia, and the same held true for U.S. troops in Haiti. These were only temporary deployments. A permanent deployment in the Middle East, which could become the target of Islamic radicals and nationalist fanatics, would probably garner even less support. The American Marines deployed in Lebanon proved they could not sustain a permanent presence, and they were only attempting to maintain stability in the city of Beirut. The deployment to secure stability in the entire region would have to be huge. In all probability, the American people would not allow it.

Conclusions

The most probable mode of ensuring regional stability will be a double reliance, first on Saudi Arabia and the GCC in the Persian Gulf, and secondly on the peace process and the regional powers of Egypt and Turkey near Israel. This will allow the United States to take a less visible role in Middle East affairs. It will also guarantee the authority of Saudi Arabia as the new regional stabilizer.

Foreign policy statements by President Clinton and senior cabinet officials indicate that the authority of Saudi Arabia and the other GCC nations would be enhanced through increased economic ties with the region. With increased economic activity, the U.S. will be able to maintain a low-key position in Middle East affairs while at the same time influencing regional geopolitics. Contrastingly, the security of Israel will be maintained through reliance on the peace process. The elimination of significant threats to Israel will allow the larger nations of Turkey and Egypt to create a stabilizing atmosphere around Israel. This twin-policy approach will address the continual structural interests of Israeli security and protection of oil production.

Other, less-enduring interests that arise will either have to be addressed independently or within the foreign policy initiatives outlined above. Such issues as the preservation of basic human rights, a final resolution of the debacle in Lebanon, and the prevention of terrorism will probably be dealt with through the above foreign policy. However, as new situations arise that cannot be adequately dealt with, the United States will have to form a new, ad-hoc policy to accommodate them.

Endnotes

1. The United States, using the CIA, was instrumental in regaining leadership of Iran for

the Shah, for example. The U.S. also placed diplomatic pressures to ensure the signing of the Camp David accords.

2. Helms, *The Persian Gulf Crisis*, p. 58.

3. Bruce Kuniholm, in the book *The Persian Gulf Crisis: Power in the Post-Cold War World*, (edited by Robert F. Helms and Robert H. Dorff) describes how the United States wished for a security pact involving Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. This would be in accordance with the Nixon-Kissinger Doctrine. However, by 1971, two years before the first oil crisis, the list had been narrowed to Saudi Arabia and Iran. This position was dismissed and direct U.S. involvement became the contingency after the Iranian revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

4. The following explanation of the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia is taken in large part from Daniel Yergin's *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power*, p. 532-536.

5. As quoted in Helms, Robert F. and Robert H. Dorff, *The Persian Gulf Crisis*, p. 65.

6. In the early 1980s, President Reagan clearly defined the U.S. interest in Saudi Arabia by stating it would not be permitted to undergo the same revolutionary upheaval that was suffered by Iran. See Helms, Dorff, *The Persian Gulf States*, p. 95.

7. Richard Falk, in his article "Can U.S. Policy Toward the Middle East Change Course?" (*Middle East Journal*, v.47, n.1, Winter, 1993), explains these two strategic interests as structural in nature. While other interests seem to vary according to political situations and leaders in power, these two have never altered in strategic importance since the United States became heavily involved in Middle East affairs. He argues that only the means to achieve these interests, and not the interests themselves, are debated in political circles.

8. Richard Falk, in "Can US Policy Toward the Middle East Change Course?", describes three tiers of U.S. strategic interests: structural interests, which are limited to the security of Israel and the protection of petroleum fields; situational interests, which vary according to the political situations of the times; and interests according to personal style.

9. Bill, *Politics in the Middle East*, p. 400.

10. Helms, Robert F. and Robert H. Dorff, *The Persian Gulf Crisis*. p. 63.

11. For instance, the Shah was the only country bordering the USSR that did not allow them to use its air space for aerospace flights. See *ibid.*, p. 63-64.

12. Diego Garcia, in the Indian Ocean near the Strait of Hormuz, was expanded to include facilities to support and house major naval deployments, as well as a base for possible air strikes against regional hostiles.

13. PLO leaders in Lebanon turned to United States mediators for a way out of besieged Beirut. The United States provided protection for their passage to Tunis, Tunisia. See Rubin, Barry, *Cauldron of Turmoil*, p. 127-128.

14. *Business Week*, Feb. 15, 1993.

15. January 16, 1993 remarks at the USGCC Economic Dialogue in Riyadh. Secretary Brown also declared that the GCC nations would best be able to maintain regional security through economic diversification, the only way to do so is "to combine petrodollars, the vast intellectual capital of this region, and your strategic location in ways that yield modern, varied, high-tech economies," implying a liberalizing of economic relations with the United States.

16. Clement, Claude, "U.S.GCC Business Conference Furthers Movement Toward Permanent and Common Interests.", p. 1.

17. *ibid.*, p.1-2.

18. Even so, Iran continues to be the main perceived threat to U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf. Even though Iran's military apparatus is negligible, it has demonstrated hostility to the West and other Gulf states in recent years. In 1992, for instance, Iran expelled UAE nationals from Abu Musa, an island in the Strait of Hormuz jointly administered with the UAE, and declared sovereignty over it and other neighboring islands. The islands have strategic importance in the Strait because oil tankers passing through the Gulf must pass within ten miles of either the islands or the Iranian border. Secondly, Iran in 1992 embarked on a massive rearmament program, gathering arms and weapons from the former Soviet bloc states. In addition, Western officials still have suspicion for Iran's nuclear program. Lastly, Iran has been linked to terrorist groups throughout the Middle East. Its 1992/93 budget allocates \$20 million for 'rejectionist' Palestinian groups opposed to the peace treaty, and the radical Palestinian group Hamas has officially opened an 'embassy' in Tehran. See "Ambitious Iran, Troubled Neighbors." *Foreign Affairs*, v72, n1, 1993, p. 126-127. See also Aspin, Les, Chairman, House Armed Services Committee, "Persian Gulf Policy Should be Containment of Iran," Committee News Release, Tuesday, October 13, 1987.

19. Herrman, "The Middle East and the New World Order," *International Security*. p. 58.

20. The Maghreb is primarily North Africa. Levant is comprised of Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, and Western Iraq.

21. See Herrman, "The Middle East and the New World Order," p. 56.

22. Text of Treaty of Peace between The State of Israel and The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Article 4 (security), 1a.

23. Akins, James E. "The New Arabia," *Foreign Affairs*, p. 40, 44-46.

24. Falk, "Can US Policy Toward the Middle East Change Course?", p. 11.
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State Repression and Violence in Argentina

by

Jason Githens

"As many people will die in Argentina as necessary to restore order, "
--General Jorge Videla¹

The repression and violent state terror that existed in Argentina from 1976 through 1983 contained some of the worst human rights abuses ever witnessed in modern history.² During this period, more than twelve thousand citizens were "sucked" off the streets, tortured for months and then killed.³ The "dirty war" has, by some accounts, claimed the lives of as many as fifteen thousand individuals.⁴

This violence and repression occurred under the military government that ascended to rule amidst the chaos that had come to plague the country under the ineffective government of Isabel Peron from 1973-1976.⁵ Upon assuming power, the military government faced much opposition, primarily from labor unions and the younger Peronistas, or Peron Youth, radicals espousing the ideals of Juan Peron. These were the same groups responsible for purporting the sense of chaos that existed before the military's seizure of power, through the guerilla activities directed at the paralyzed state under Isabel Peron.⁶ Therefore, military coercion, under the label of counterinsurgency and anti-Marxism, was seen by many as a welcome step away from the previous period of violence and disorder. Coercion by the military assumed a legitimate posture due to the fact that the disorder in Argentina seemed to be a reaction to these guerilla movements and the tactics they employed, including bombings, murders, and vandalism.⁷ By 1977, any organized guerilla movement, Peronist based or otherwise, had been abolished.⁸

Even after the defeat of any form of organized threat, government coercion persisted and even intensified.⁹ The worst forms of human rights abuses were not against these violent organizations, which, as mentioned before, had been defeated as a substantial guerilla force by 1977, but against civilians who had already acquiesced to the power of the state. These individuals, for the most part, had neither violated laws, nor participated in clandestine activities.¹⁰

People were arrested with no official criminal indictment, taken to secret prisons, beaten, and often killed.¹¹ The following, a brief excerpt from a prisoner in one of these clandestine prisons, helps to illustrate the fear perpetrated by the Argentine military and police:

I was arrested on 15 October 1976 by an army unit, which surrounded and raided my mother's house, where I was living. (My friend) was arrested with me. We were tied up and blindfolded, then I was suspended from a tree with my hands tied up behind me and

*beaten from noon till evening. I could hear my mother's screams as she begged them not to kill me.'*²

This report, from *Nunca Mas*, contains other accounts of terror tactics that were carried out against Argentine citizens, including electric shock treatments and other inhumane practices.¹³ The excerpt presented above, though it is only one individual case, clearly illustrates the extremity of abuses that occurred throughout the Argentine state. The purpose of this paper is to examine the fundamental circumstances that surround a government's decision to use force, and a society's willingness to accept it. What was the basis for the decision to utilize repression and why was it seen as "necessary" by some elements of society? Why did this repression continue, and evolve into state terrorism even after the guerilla "threat" had been eliminated? What effect did this terrorism have on the general population of Argentina at that time, and how might that induce the democratic "will" of Argentina in present day?

Looking at Argentine government policy and doctrine during this period, primarily the Doctrine of National Security, a key element in Argentina's counter-insurgency ideology, and *el Proceso de Reorganizacion Nacional*, which complemented Argentina's stringent economic policy, this paper will attempt to explain how the repression of guerilla groups was transformed into state terror against the entire population. Using the findings of the socio-psychological studies conducted by Cecillia Galli and Guillermo O'Donnell, the effect of state terrorism on the Argentine population and on Argentina's contemporary democratic system will also be examined.

The Study of Repression

The study of repression in contemporary Latin America has typically been a neglected field of political analysis. The military governments in the region were viewed by the U.S., in pragmatic Cold War terms, as much more desirable than a radical left wing movement and, therefore, their repressive policies went relatively unchecked during the Reagan administration. However, the importance of political repression stands in sharp contrast to the comparatively little attention it has received in either popular or scholarly writing.¹⁴ Fear has become a salient political phenomenon, but it has not particularly drawn the attention of the social sciences.¹⁵ In fact, political repression might have remained invisible if it were not for the human rights activists who have documented the abuses, often at considerable risks to their own lives and freedoms.¹⁶ It is interesting that the violent repression in Argentina has been so readily disregarded, especially when one considers the amount of intellectual stimulation that the Latin American bureaucratic authoritarian regimes have purported over the past two decades.¹⁷

Within the past ten years, it has become evident that the phenomenon of state terror has deep roots and is tied to the increasingly sophisticated and continuously expanding bureaucratic and technical capabilities for violence of states around the globe. However, despite this increased awareness, there is little theoretical knowledge available about the nature and sources of state organized terror.¹⁸ The first time the phenomenon was explored in depth and put into a socio-political focus was at the Social Science Research Council Seminar in 1981-1982.¹⁹

Why were the reasons behind violent political repression neglected as a focus of study?

Perhaps one of the most basic reasons is that there was an assumption of progress, on the part of scholars, in the Latin American region; an assumption of democratic trends, which promoted optimism among Latin American scholars, down-playing the need for a study of the repression that occurred under the military governments. This idea, however, may be somewhat of an oversimplified explanation.

Perhaps more realistic and pragmatic are the following four factors. First, information on violent internal repression is extremely scarce since most of the relevant documents have been either destroyed or kept secret, and any attempts at journalistic investigation are restricted.²⁰ Also, victims of the violent terror often disappear or refuse to bear witness to events for fear of their lives.²¹ Second, outside investigation of a state's terroristic exercise of power over its own population has been viewed as interference with state sovereignty. Third, predominant theoretical frameworks have failed to identify repressive state violence and terror as political necessity in many modern states which, therefore, require further explaining.²² Finally, the neglect of the subject has been compounded by the fact that although many theoretical insights on state terror have been gained through descriptive studies of individual cases, there have been very few efforts to link the insights together.²³ Political scientists have thus failed not only to predict the extent that repression would affect Latin America in the 1970s, but have only recently begun to look closely at the problem.²⁴

Repression and State Terror: Conceptual Clarifications

"Repression," wrote one scholar, "like oppression and suppression, involves pressure, which can be exerted either physically against the members of a class of subjects, or in a psychological form, affecting the emotional, mental or spiritual well being of target groups."²⁵ Repression is also characterized as one of the three reactions of a non-democratic government when challenged by groups attempting to increase their power position. Facilitation, or toleration, the other two options, occur mostly in democracies or weak regimes, respectively.²⁶ On a scale, repression comes after oppression, which is the denial of social and economic privileges, and before state terrorism, which can be defined as the use or threat of violence.²⁷ State terror can be distinguished from repression because it is meant to deter potential dissenters whereas repression is only directed towards actual dissenters. What began as, and is often referred to as repression in Argentina, appears, according to this definition, to have evolved into an ideology of state terror.

The New Military Government and the Rise of Repression in Argentina

During the brief period of rule under Isabel Peron, from 1973-1976, there existed a growing degree of chaos in Argentina. There was unrest within the radical Peron youth and the labor unions; Peronism was revitalizing. Political expression from these groups assumed a violent and radical stance in the face of the paralyzed and ineffective government; they pressed for systematic changes through guerilla movements and other violent uprisings.²⁸ It was a dangerous combination: the homogenous mass of wage-earners, with its growing social power, which had been rising since Peron utilized them as a support base during his first period of presidency, was strengthened further by its

political alliance with the Peronist party and by the active presence of a radicalized youth sector.²⁹

The military stood by and watched the Isabel Peron government disintegrate in the face of growing social pressure, knowing that they would be required to step in to restore order. Through a bloodless coup, in March of 1976, the military stepped to the forefront and assumed control in the name of order.³⁰ In a 1979 study on socio-political fear in Argentina the reasons for the acceptance and even desire by some for a military coup and, to a degree, the repression that came with it. This study showed that people preferred order to the primordial chaos they felt during the previous government of Isabel Peron. Even coercive order was preferred over the sense of chaos and economic disaster that prevailed under the previous civilian rule.³¹

This claim can be supported by pointing out that early military political success stemmed from their promise to restore political and economic order and from their ability to reduce the situation to a dichotomy of friend and foe: the state being the "friend" and any anti state movement the "foe."³² The present (order) was immensely preferred to the past (chaos), and the price of maintaining that order demanded "friendship" and cooperation with the regime and vigilance against actual or potential foes.³³ In Argentina, the repression was aimed at anyone who, according to the regime, "opposed the Argentine way of life."³⁴

In examining the effective organization of the military, it is clear that the junta was well prepared. It had drawn up lists of both people to promote to cabinet positions within the regime, and those to eliminate. The name of the government's initial political plan for restoring order and economic stabilization was el Proceso de Reorganizacion Nacional. The Proceso was designed, "to build and promote economic development for different sectors, along with the aim to assure the future installation of a republican representative, and federal democracy. . ."³⁵ They claimed legitimate control based on the premise that they had seized power to fill a vacuum left by civilian governments that had taken the country to the verge of dissolution and anarchy.³⁶

Once the military assumed control, and justified its rightful claim to be in power, it had to develop policies, based on their belief that repression would be necessary, which promoted social fear in order to prevent unrest as their economic and political programs were put into place. These policies were the promotion of war, of all against all (trusting no one), the myth of efficacy of "purifying violence," acceptance of death as a political currency of everyday life, para-institutional practices spreading to many sectors of social life, and violence and authoritarianism towards opposition groups. These are, according to O'Donnell, the most vital doctrinal or ideological factors purported by the military, which led to the increasing use of repression throughout the military's hold on power.³⁷

From the preceding explanation it is therefore clear that, under the auspices of order, many of the Argentine people, particularly those with business and financial interests, welcomed the military when it stepped in and replaced, once again, the "failed civilian experiment. " In essence they took control of a country that had become, under the Isabel Peron government, full of insidious terrorism and rampant inflation and was also lacking in few international or domestic supporters.³⁸ The feeling of chaos that had prevailed throughout Argentina under civilian rule, was offered a new found sense of order by the conservative military government. Certain levels of coercion were accepted, and were purported by the military under the auspices of the Proceso, which was in part a doctrine

designed to "cleanse Argentina of immorality."³⁹ However, this "organized repression" soon evolved from a stabilization doctrine, into more violent and indiscriminate acts of terror by the military under the directives of the National Security Doctrine.

The Foundations of State Repression in Argentina

Three factors were characteristic of violent repression in Argentina in particular and should be noted. First, these assaults on human freedom were neither unintentional, nor were they miscalculations. Elaborate state security apparatuses were purposely devised to repeatedly and systematically brutalize political opponents. Second, there was no clear racial, ethnic or religious lines drawn. Third, terror in the Argentine case was rarely selective and had no specific target populations, especially after the small militant guerilla groups were eliminated.⁴⁰

Historical precedence played a key role in the Argentine military's employment of terror tactics. General Videla, who led the coup and assumed executive control, looked back at General Onganía's failure in 1969, to adequately deal with the groundswell of opposition, as the primary reason for the demise of the Onganía regime and the subsequent return of Juan Perón from exile and re-assumption of the presidency in 1973. Videla did not believe that Onganía had reacted strongly enough against the *Cordobazo* riots, an uprising of students and workers in the city of Córdoba. He believed that Onganía's inaction sent a message that the military would not involve themselves in shows of opposition and thus he purporting the loss of military rule to Perón. Videla and his military government simply would not allow military power to be subverted again, and thus repression was seen by them as a primary way to prevent oppositional demonstrations from usurping military power, while the military attempted to right the wrongs created by the inept civilian government of Isabel Perón.

As will be explained later, the Videla regime utilized two fundamental ideological and political instruments (El Proceso and the National Security Doctrine) that would help to "legitimate" the use of state terror.

Based on these fundamental beliefs that coercion would indeed be necessary, the probability estimate of Argentina to employ force against society rested in five assumptions; (1) that it had ample resources with which to assault the opposition; (2) those resources could be marshaled effectively and efficiently; (3) the opposition is vulnerable, meaning it lacks resources and organizationally fragmented or marginalized in society; (4) the absolute costs of employing can be minimized, and; (5) the opportunity costs are low, meaning that alternative strategies would be much harder to accomplish. With all of these requirements satisfied in the eyes of the Videla regime, and with the assumption, based on the historical mistake of Onganía, that repression would indeed be necessary, the decision to employ force was made.⁴¹

State directed terrorism was, thus, a rational decision in the case of Argentina's military government, not insofar that it was entirely reasonable, but that they were "goal oriented acts in the eyes of the Argentine military government."⁴² Policy makers with strong ideological predispositions may logically take terror to be the most sensible instrument of policy for the achievement of desired ends.⁴³ Therefore, the regime begins to develop an ideology that is based on the enormity of the potential dangers facing the nation and of the overriding importance of achieving security. It is so convinced of these perceived

dangers it unleashes a wreckless and uncontrollable fury of political violence. Uncertainties of action, wherever they may exist are overridden by the regime's desire to fulfill the ideological final objectives of their policy.⁴⁴ The Argentine military had made the decision that force was necessary but an ideological framework or doctrine was needed to "legitimate" the use of force by the military. The Doctrine of National Security the Process of Reorganization were the two primary political principles on which the use of repression would be justified by the Videla regime and the importance of the Doctrine of National Security as an instrument of repression is explained in the following section.

The Doctrine of National Security

Now that it is clear why the Videla regime felt a level of repression is needed, it important to look at the ideological basis that they used for the terrorist policies. It essential to examine the ideology behind the military's motives in order to understand further the harsh realities of the Proceso and how the state terror reached the levels it did in Argentina. The Argentine generals subscribed to a fundamental ideology, the National Security Doctrine (NSD), which promoted the greatest national security threat to be internal insurgency, not foreign attack. Therefore it provided the authorization for the unmitigated state violence and guided the creation of an elaborate and highly suspicious security network.⁴⁵ Threat perception was the motivating factor for the employment of the NSD.⁴⁶ This threat perception will be discussed first, followed by an examination of the vital role of the NSD in combating this perceived threat.

The use, or intended use of coercion indicates that a government anticipates opposition and the level of coercion to be utilized is determined by the perceived level of threat by the government.⁴⁷ Therefore, perception of threat, real or artificial, determines the level with which the regime will use force to keep order.⁴⁸ Authoritative bodies with questionable roots of legitimacy usually assume the worst, that opponents will choose aggression, violence and other generally destructive forms of behavior. They must also assume that these reactions are imminent and thus require immediate and harsh reaction.⁴⁹

This all leads up to the implementation of the NSD as an ideology to deal with subversive elements in society. Scholars concur that most Latin American armed forces in the 1 960s were heavily influenced by doctrines such as Argentina's NSD. ⁵⁰ The NSD has been called, "the doctrine behind violent repression in Argentina."⁵¹ The doctrine represents a set of ideas and principles about achieving national security, ideas which all states are interested in, but the NSD pushed the idea of national security to extraordinary proportions.⁵² The geo-political aspect of the NSD suggests that the state, as the central institution ruling over society, is the agent that must guarantee internal and external security from subversive elements. A triple identification is then made among the state, the nation, and the government: the military reifies itself as the only depository of the interests and values of the nation by virtue of its retention of state power; all dissent and denunciations of the military regime are viewed as attacks on the nation itself; conversely, attack on the nation are considered to be direct challenges to the regime.⁵³ The NSD focused on the identification of threats to national security and urged state leaders to engage in a form of permanent warfare against such threats. It was also a legitimating ideology, which glorified the "internal" war to make safe and "purify"

Argentina.⁵⁴ This ideology, in one form or another, was shared by many institutionalized military governments or bureaucratic authoritarian regimes in Latin America during this period and provided a discourse or language that served temporarily to disguise their illegitimacy. It was, however, incapable of generating a new and permanent source of legitimacy for these regimes.⁵⁵

The NSD relied heavily on French and U.S. counter-insurgency (CI) doctrines developed in the 60s for Algeria and Vietnam respectively. At the time of President Johnson's swearing in, Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara made this statement to congress:

*Our primary objective in Latin America is to aid, wherever necessary, the continual growth for the military and paramilitary forces, so that together with the police and other security forces, they may provide the necessary internal security.*⁵⁶

The NSD was the means through which this was accomplished.⁵⁷ Doctrinally, according to the NSD, internal wars would persist along and in coordination with wars between states, and domestic subversion and international communism were two sides of the same coin.⁵⁸ These ideas were quite appealing to the new military government with their obsessive fear of insurgency stemming from the examples set by Castro and Guevara. The Argentine military's instruction on counter insurgency, which began as early as 1950 with the arrival of French advisors and their purporting of the doctrine as a necessity to combatting communist subversion, was taken very seriously by these future heads of Argentina's government. The French, entrenched in CI in both Algeria and Vietnam, were speaking from experience.⁵⁹ The doctrine's anti-communism strengthened its appeal to the armed forces by convincing them that the public had become so infected with the communist curse that there was no choice but to launch a general offensive, via the NSD, against the entire population.⁶⁰ The NSD appeared to be the tool with which the military could weed out the insurgent "rebels." In 1964 Argentine Colonel was quoted as saying, ". . .the hardline French views of CI have thoroughly penetrated the Argentine armed forces at every rank."⁶¹

The NSD was, thus, ingrained in military thought, and would be a vital factor in the evolution of the junta's perception of threat and obsession with national security, eventually evolving into repression and violent state terror. In a 1964 speech at the Fifth Conference of American Armies held at West Point, General Onganía stated that the lack of power in the current government, its lack of teeth, was the reason for the lack of morals and ethical behavior in Argentina. This speech projected the military as the last bulwark of morality against the ethical decline of civilian power and he pointed out that the NSD justified his claims.⁶²

One major problem and a primary reason that the repressive violence was so severe and so widespread was that the Argentine military leaders took the CI doctrine, which played a major role in their justification for repression, and swallowed it whole as it was-- an antiquated colonial minded doctrine designed by the First World for far off places.⁶³ They changed little of what was passed on to them by France and the U.S. in CI tactics to adapt to their own needs and it was incongruent with Argentine needs and realities.⁶⁴ Reading the military journals of the time and examining the direction and force of the NSD, one would have thought that Argentina was on the threshold of a revolution. Nothing could have been further from the truth. This fallacy of a revolutionary threat

entered the minds of the military and the NSD was the doctrine utilized in combatting the threat.

Borrowing a page from Mao-Tse-tung's *Strategies of War*, the armed forces were convinced that the "guerilla forces" were simply in a tactical retreat.⁶⁵ They purged the enemy, which they could not find, by terrorizing people they could find-- the general population. The Argentine citizenry had become the enemy.⁶⁶ Borrowed ideologies, distorted threat perceptions, new economic programs, and a narrow legitimacy base, forced the military to adopt widespread coercive policies. What began as an ideology of order over chaos, quickly turned into the "dirty war," which targeted anyone of remote suspicion with little discrimination, most of which were done under the authority of the premises laid out in the NSD.

Repercussions of Political Terrorism in Argentina

The Argentine regime, unable to continue its early economic success and unwilling or unable to increase violent repressive policies in the name of national security, eventually ran its course. Like so many other military based Latin American governments, it fell victim to its own contradictions and errors, rather than a groundswell of civil revulsion.⁶⁷ In 1983, the Argentine military turned its focus to external war, in a last hour attempt to spread the flames of nationalism and reconstruct its rapidly collapsing support base. They challenged the British claim to the islands and which proved the catalyst for the end of that period of military rule in Argentina.⁶⁸ After the bitter and quick loss to Britain, the military was immediately rendered an irrelevant political factor, as the terrorism of the regime still bore heavy costs on the minds of the population. The military was in no position to negotiate its retreat from the barracks the way that the Brazilian military was, and the manner in which Pinochet did in the late 80s. For the first time, the Argentines were free from living in fear and under suspicion. What political ramifications did that have at the time and does it still have today?

In the Argentine case, the years of repression rested on two fundamental principles. They were carried out as a counter insurgency doctrine under the principles of national security outlined in the NSD and as a complement to the regime's economic doctrine, which had to keep labor unrest quelled to attract investment and carry out their other economic programs. The multinational corporations, a major part of Argentina's import substitution economy, may have had to eventually close or pull out under the rampant chaos and inflation that was taking place under Isabel Peron. Thus, the military was forced to restore order to encourage investment, but also to prevent such a pullout.⁶⁹

Fundamentally this requires a suppression of labor demands and necessitates repression and even violence.⁷⁰ The effects of this "required" repression, however, did not disappear with the military's return to the barracks.

The most important effects that repression had on the Argentine population were the depoliticization of all aspects of society, especially within labor unions; a significant reduction of associational activities; development of a "passion for ignorance" or desire to keep quiet among groups targeted by the NSD and Proceso; and a fostering of a "bad neighbor" sentiment and general distrust of any one and everyone.⁷¹ The more brutal the regime became, the more it seemed to unleash that brutality in micro-settings. Public cruelty and mistrust was replicated by everyday cruelty in schools, work places, and on

the streets.⁷²

However, there were some positive political ramifications that emerged out of the years of repression. Subdued populations learn to be very resourceful and attain an enhanced sense of creativity in order to make political statements.⁷³ Also, groups were forced to rely upon one another, rather than the government, which served to strengthen the civil relationship, and provide democracy a civil society with a fervent desire to maintain their new democratic status. The groups attacked by the government became closer knit.⁷⁴ The manner in which the military vacated power, also serves to further Argentina's chance to maintain civilian rule. They proved just as inept at running the economy as did the civilian government they overthrew. The methods they utilized to maintain power will not soon be forgotten by the Argentine population and offer a further incentive to hold tightly onto democratic power. For the first time in Argentine history, the military was literally forced out, rather than stepping down. This, combined with the repression, corruption and mismanagement with which they ruled, put them in a truly non negotiable position of subordination to civilians for the first time in Argentina's sometimes violent political history. The state violence in Argentina was horrible exhibition of human rights abuses and could be the spark to create a viable and working democracy in Argentina.

Conclusion

The Argentine military relied heavily on the use of repression to move out of the chaotic period that existed under the government of Isabel Peron basing many of their political acts of violence and repression on the justifications that they claimed under the NSD. The ideology of national security that was presented in the Doctrine of National Security perpetuated the military's insecurity about anti-military acts. A counterinsurgency doctrine designed by foreign countries and for different conditions was transposed onto a case for which it was not designed. This coupled with Maoist ideas that the guerilla never disappears, but simply goes into hiding brought about a paranoia in the military against the very society they claimed power to free from chaos.

National Security soon evolved into the sole purpose of the military regime and every aspect of governing rested on its strong belief in the principles of the NSD. The economic program was one that disassociated labor and attempted to move away from the rapid industrialization that the military believed to be the root cause of the country's problems. The unrest amongst labor that the economic program caused and the necessity for labor to be controlled in order for international investment to come in, heightened further the military's preparedness to utilize repression and state terrorism.

All acts of violence that the military committed were justified by the ideologies in the NSD, which purported the notion that the greatest threat was from internal insurrection rather than outside invasion. The military, thus, turned inward in its search for an enemy and utilized this doctrine to legitimate the necessity of coercion and repression.

At the root level, however, it was a combination of several factors that promoted the use of military coercion and terror tactics. Threat perception, the NSD, the economic plan, and the counter- insurgency doctrine that was offered to the Argentine military through the U.S. and France, all played vital roles in the determination by the military, of the necessity for internal repression. Argentina's democratic future may have been, in fact, dealt a paradoxical boost by the violent repression that the military utilized. Since the

military was not le~ in a position to negotiate power transfer after the devastating loss to Britain in the Malvinas, they had no bargaining chip in the transfer of power. In essence, they were completely subordinated to the authority of the civilian leadership for the first time in Argentine history. This, coupled with the bad impression that the military made on the population, with their indiscriminate repression, and failed economic policy, serves to enhance optimism as to the possibility of Argentina developing a viable democratic system, which will no longer fall prey to the cyclical military-civilian cycle of rule that has characterized Argentine political history.

Endnotes

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A Persistent but Unconsolidated Democracy: The Case of Peru

by

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Introduction-Challenges to Democracy in Latin America

The wave of democratization that began sweeping across Latin America in the 1980s has been confronted with a host of challenges, some of which have plagued the region since its independence in the nineteenth century. Structural economic, social, and political impediments threaten to rollback the democratic strides that Latin American countries have taken because they undermine the legitimacy of already weak democratic institutions and young civil societies. The economic problems include Latin America's traditional dilemma of, on the one hand, attaining real economic growth and, on the other hand, providing for the basic social needs of its people. One goal is usually sacrificed for the other. This situation is compounded by the lingering problem of the debt. The debt crisis of the 1980s threw Latin America into a depression where per capita income fell by more than 25 percent in some countries. Latin American countries were paying about 25 billion dollars a year in interest, almost a quarter of their export earnings. During this "lost decade," wages fell and unemployment rose.[1] The austerity measures that were imposed on Latin American governments as they sought to address the debt problem has come at a social cost which exacerbates existing inequalities of wealth and dismal standard of living. Yet, these measures are necessary if Latin American countries want to attract much needed foreign investment. Adding to the complexity are the important political consequences of stabilization policies on young, fragile democracies.

The success of the austerity policies that are being pursued take time and patience, and as one observer asserts, time is a precious commodity many of these Latin American countries cannot afford, particularly when people demand the impossible or want quick results, and also, when leaders cater to these illusions. People, then, become easily disillusioned and are susceptible to populist and even authoritarian leaders.[2]

The lack of viable political institutions also constitutes a threat to democracy, as it encourages the long-standing Latin American traditions of personalism, populism, and caudillismo, which prove unable to provide real solutions to Latin America's political, social, and economic crises. Weak political institutions, i.e., political parties, the civil service, and the judicial system, suffer from a lack of confianza, or confidence. This lack of trust is reinforced by the continued autonomy of the military, the issue of political corruption, and the inability of governments to address problems of the economy, violence, drug trafficking, social inequality, corruption, and the ineffective administration of justice. Democratic governments in Latin America are increasingly threatened by institutional gridlock during crucial periods of economic reform and social conflict. Peruvian President, Alberto Fujimori and former president of Guatemala, Jorge Serrano justified their self-coups (or attempted coups in the case of the latter) on the grounds of "institutional gridlock amidst public urgency." [3] Without strong democratic institutions and, even more importantly, a respect for such institutions, Latin American countries will

find it more difficult to deal with the abovementioned problems. Formal democratic practices and procedures provide a framework in which people learn about the workings of democracy until, as one scholar suggests, "people truly regard citizenship as a normal feature of life", meaning that democracy has become consolidated.[4] Unless democratic institutions are strengthened, Latin American political life will be susceptible to methods of dealing with problems that undermine democracy, not only by further weakening democratic institutions, but also by continuing to encourage the public to expect short term answers to long-term problems.

In this way, the future of democracy in Latin America is relegated to what Schmitter has identified as two possible sub-types, which are democratic to some extent, yet contain very undemocratic overtones. These two alternatives to consolidated democracy are: a "hybrid" system that incorporates elements of authoritarianism and democracy or simply an unconsolidated but continued democratic experiment.[5]

However, neither alternative bodes well for democratic institutions. Democracy involves, as Lowenthal and Dominguez insist, "a process of responding to . . . new problems." [6] The democratic process necessitates the building of strong and viable institutions to address problems and demands. Elements of authoritarianism and unconsolidated democracies only serve to undermine the institutions and processes whereby problems can be hashed out and a consensus formed.

Peru offers itself as a good case study of the challenges to democratic consolidation resulting from weak and fragile institutions. The country's socioeconomic problems and its traditional weak institutional framework have culminated in what can be termed "delegative democracy." [7] Delegative democracy entails the strengthening of the executive institutions above all others and upholds the president as the sole embodiment of the interests of the nation. Given Latin America's fragile political and economic environment, delegative democracy presents itself as a serious threat to the consolidation of democracy in the region.

This paper seeks to analyze and criticize such concepts as delegative democracy in the particular case of Peru. President Alberto Fujimori succeeded in staging a coup which he justified on the grounds that Congress, the political parties, and the courts impeded his efforts and abilities to effectively respond to the social and economic crises of the country. The implications of his actions for consolidated democracy in Peru and in Latin America in general are weakened institutions and practices which ultimately hinder effective long-term responses to social and economic problems.

Fujimori's Autogolpe

Within the context of these formidable challenges to democracy, the rise of what has been called "Fujimorismo" can be understood. "Fujimorismo" refers to the action undertaken by Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori in April 1992 when he suspended the Constitution, dissolved the Congress, dismantled the judiciary, and arrested several opposition leaders--all in the name of "functional democracy." Citing what he perceived as democratic barriers to his ability to solve the most pressing problems of the Peruvian political economy, that is, inflation and violence, Fujimori maneuvered an autogolpe, or self-coup, just twenty months after his election. He announced that the growing insurgency of Sendero Luminoso, corruption in politics, and difficulties with the

Peruvian Congress necessitated the temporary suspension of democracy.[8] Fujimori's move highlights the debate over whether democracy is attainable, not only in Peru, but in other Latin American countries as well whose leaders struggle with their own fragile democracies, crippled with corruption, inefficiency, and violence and look to Peru's brand of "benevolent authoritarianism." [9] Elected civilian governments have survived military coup attempts in Argentina, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Venezuela. Political parties, in Peru and in the Dominican Republic, for example, are not strong and do not adequately represent and channel public demands, thereby provoking social tensions, manifested in strikes, crime, and general disillusionment. "Institutional voids", resulting from the lack of effective institutions, and legislative gridlock impede the government's capacity to function and pursue economic and social reform. The absence of strong institutions also hinders a working relationship between different branches of government and enhances levels of polarization that fuel an impetus to resort to authoritarian measures, such as Fujimori's self-coup.[10]

The self-coup echoed the Latin American tradition of strong-man personalistic rule, an obvious impediment to the formation and consolidation of democratic institutions. Yet, the coup itself is indicative of limited state capabilities that have always existed in Peru as a result of weak institutions.[11] Furthermore, Fujimori's actions, and the overwhelming support that he has received within his own country allude to the discussion of a new type of democracy, one which would address long-term historical factors of Latin American politics, as well as the degree of severity of the socioeconomic problems that Latin American governments face. The issue, however, remains one of institution-building as a condition for the consolidation of democracy in the region. This paper seeks to analyze the implications of such actions as Fujimori's autogolpe for the consolidation of democracy in Peru.

To understand the motivations behind the April 5, 1992 self-coup, it is necessary to be aware of the extreme social and economic turmoil that strangled the Peruvian governments under Fernando Belaúnde Terry (1980-1985) and Alan García Pérez (1985-1990) and on a deeper level to acknowledge the historical existence of weak and ineffective political institutions in Peru. Peru, as Alma Guillermoprieto put it, had "gone broke in a way few societies ever experience." [12] Furthermore, Fujimori's actions in April 1992 were a result of the inability of Peruvian elites to build strong institutions that would complement an organized civil society and encourage the continuance of democratic practices and procedures, not merely as an alternative to authoritarianism, but as a structural imperative.[13]

Peru's democratic experiment under Belaúnde resulted in frustration and legislative stalemate due to a lack of institution-building. Institutions were weak and ineffective. Political parties in Congress continued to be a mere vehicle for winning elections and for distributing patronage, and the executive remained weak and incompetent. This environment facilitated the intervention of the armed forces in 1968. Belaúnde's return to power in 1980 after twelve years of military rule changed very little. The traditional political parties began to dominate Congress once again, while heavy borrowing continued to place heavy strains on the economy. In addition, poverty and inequality remained rampant.[14]

Peruvian daily life under the García administration underwent an "impoverishment" that basically wore patience thin; blackouts were a daily occurrence, food prices remained

ridiculously high, while 4 out of 5 Peruvians were unemployed.[15] In addition, curfews were imposed as soldiers with .45s drawn patrolled the streets, yet this did not curb over 25,000 lives that were lost in terrorist violence over the 12 year guerilla war waged by the Sendero Luminoso, led by Abimael Guzman ("El Presidente Gonzalo"). With telephones seldom working, millions went without electricity or running water at least eight hours a day.[16] Meanwhile, the last two years of García's government saw hyperinflation reach 2.777 percent and the GNP contracted an average of 10 percent per year. Consequently, by the time Fujimori was elected, on a promise to ease the economic and social pain of the country, he had inherited an economic disaster brought about by fiscal mismanagement and macroeconomic imbalances and a structurally bankrupt state apparatus, which had harsh effects on democratic institutions. The situation was made worse by political violence.[17]

When Fujimori campaigned in 1990 as a virtual unknown, he promised to institute a moderate program of gradual economic stabilization, a promise which was instrumental in his electoral victory over his opponent, author Mario Vargas Llosas. His movement, Cambio 90, wanted to modernize Peru by reversing the country's economic pariah image reinsert the country into the international economic community. Campaigning on an expansionist platform that boasted the slogan, "Alberto Fujimori: Honesty, Technology, and Work," this son of Japanese immigrants won over a population weary of violence and hungry for order. Fujimori's electoral victory can be attributed in part to the fact that he was not considered part of the traditional ruling elite whom most Peruvians perceived as the source of many of their social and economic problems. As Fujimori campaigned, he echoed the desire of almost all Peruvians when he wished for "modern, efficient, honest Peru." [18]

However, upon taking office, Fujimori reversed his promise and moved quickly to establish a stabilization program of classic orthodoxy in August 1990.[19] His paquetazo, or violent austerity package, was considered a "tourniquet for Peru's economic hemorrhage." The economic reform program consisted of "shocks" the aim of which it was to reduce inflation by drastically cutting public expenditures and increasing the revenue of the state.[20]

Fujimori immediately felt frustrated by institutional gridlock and rampant corruption of the Congress. Fujimori felt that partidocracia, or the constraints and control policy of elites, was blocking his plans for the modernization of Peru, including his economic program. According to Fujimori, his inability to act decisively and right the economic wrongs in Peru was a direct result of partidocracia, that is, democratic inefficiency. Therefore, on April 5, 1992, President Fujimori, with the support from the military, pulled off a self-coup. The coup was a direct response to the institutional paralysis of Peruvian democracy and reflected the absence of institution building in the previous democratic governments. He at once announced the dissolution of the national parliament and regional governments and a reorganization of the judiciary system, threw several opposition leaders and senators in jail or put them under house arrest, and suspended the Constitution. As head of an Emergency and National Reconstruction Government, he ruled by decree until the election of a Constituent Democratic Congress (CCD), which would frame a new constitution. Eventually, he said, the country would return to democracy, but that in a context of a worsening economic situation and growing Sendero Luminoso violence, this was a necessary evil required to put the country back on

track.[21] Democracy, according to Fujimori, as well as to the over 65 percent of the population that supported the coup, had proven inadequate in handling the problems of corruption, drugs, terrorism, the economy, and ineffective government. Furthermore, his neoliberal program was supported by a coalition of interests, including the military, civilian technocrats, international financial agencies, and domestic business groups. The underlying consensus among these interests was that neoliberal policies had to be adopted and that such an action required a "strengthened state apparatus to be effective." Thus, this coalition supported the coup as well.[22]

Fujimori's main achievement during this time was the fact that he delivered in the short term on the promises that he made after the coup, that is, eliminating the terrorist threat and decreasing inflation. He achieved drastic decline in the rate of inflation from 40 percent a month to 3-5 percent per month by the end of 1992.[23] Fujimori's moves were popular with people who felt, as Fujimori did, that political and economic order and stability, as well as economic progress, had to precede democracy given the distinct Peruvian situation. Fujimori's open contempt for democratic practices goes hand in hand with a national psyche that feels that Fujimori did the right thing by shutting down a system which no longer worked. "It was at that moment," writes one Peruvian journalist, "Peruvians started to give up on democracy and started to believe in miracles." [24] The fact is that Peruvians gave up on democracy because they had never really known democracy. Again this mentality reflects the failure of institutions to foster a democratic imperative within society. Institutions can promote a democratic imperative because by nature of its duties and responsibilities, it negates the propensity to equate merely the lack of authoritarianism and the existence of elections with consolidated democracy.

Strong support for *la mano dura* continued in Peru, especially in September 1992 when the founder and leader of the Shining Path, Abimael Guzman, was captured along with other Sendero leaders. Fujimori also shored up additional support by advocating a more hard-line approach to terrorist and drug trafficking criminals. Fujimori's solution of imposing the death penalty and life sentences to criminals after trials that can be as short as three hours (and which has raised questions about his commitment to due process and exhibits again his open dislike for democratic practices) is hailed as a direct reason for the decline in terrorist violence by many Peruvians.[25]

Opposition leaders, journalists, and politicians in Peru condemned Fujimori's actions, citing the new laws that he introduced as repressive. Within the international community as well, Fujimori's coup was viewed as a threat to democratization. Many have claimed that the base for political freedom is narrower than it had been when democracy was restored ten years before Fujimori. Habeas corpus has been abrogated, while some say that the anti-terrorist laws are so broad that they could include anyone. In addition, Fujimori's government has been needled with its own corruption charges, beginning with his wife, who alleges that members of Fujimori's family sold the best used clothing donated as charity from Japan. His closest advisor, Vladmiro Montesinos, was slapped with corruption charges connecting him with drug trafficking and a death squad that was involved in the controversial killing of nine students in 1993.[26] There have also been reports of connections between officers that Fujimori has promoted and drug traffickers.[27] In addition, Americas Watch, a human rights groups, has criticized Fujimori for a lack of concern for human rights, reporting that he has closed prisons to international human rights observers and that hundreds of innocent Peruvians are now

jailed. In response, President Fujimori says his authoritarian measures are "rapidly pacifying Peru and setting the stage for a free-market boom" in the 1990s. In addition, polls that gave Mr. Fujimori approval ratings of 62-67 percent illustrated his strong support even amidst the criticisms of human rights abuses.[28]

As promised, Fujimori called a Constituent Democratic Congress in 1993 to draft a new Constitution, which was approved on October 31, 1993. The new constitution strengthened Fujimori's authority and allows him to run for re-election in 1995. The vote was seen by many to be a referendum on Mr. Fujimori's three-year rule as well as a vote of confidence for his actions of April 1992.[29]

Implications of the Autogolpe

In an interview, a Peruvian journalist, Gustavo Gorriti, who was arrested by Fujimori after the coup, commented on the future of democracy in Peru as a result of Fujimori's actions, ". . . democracy is not the same thing as the momentary response to a poll; it requires the rule of law and minimal conditions of fair competition among different candidates and parties." [30] Fujimori's undemocratic actions, according to most scholars, has resulted in a setback for democratic government in Peru because they defy constitutional means and the rule of law. They also set a bad precedent for future governments who find themselves and their political institutions in dire straits, such as Guatemala where political parties fail to adequately represent their constituencies and where democracy does not extend beyond periodic elections. Yet, the conditions that surround the Peruvian politico-economic situation are extremely complex and have led many other scholars to ask if democracy is possible under such circumstances. First, it is necessary to ask what are the preconditions for democracy? Democracy has been defined as "a particular system of processing and terminating intergroup conflicts." The system also has a number of characteristics that include: 1) conflict and competing interests as a permanent feature of politics; 2) the process of resolving conflicts according to explicit and set rules; 3) the idea that [31] a democracy entails struggles, compromises, and losses; and 4) outcomes are uncertain, but the uncertainties are absorbed by the democratic structure itself. [32] When these characteristics are not understood, then misconceptions about democracy can arise. Viable democracy also contains democratically-committed elites, legitimate institutional arrangements, and a civil society. Genuine democrats are those who lead the way in the democratizing and consolidation efforts; they are committed to building democratic institutions and organizations that are capable of channeling public discontent and arriving at a compromise. Fujimori is not an institution builder. As one of his top advisors has commented, " [His] historic role is destroying institutions that don't work . . . This is dangerous as hell but an opportunity for moving into modernity. . . He has made himself, not institutions stronger." [33] Yet, it is important to remember that even before Fujimori, institutions were weak with corruption and a lack of legitimacy. Thus, Fujimori is a product of traditionally weak democratic processes and procedures, while at the same time, he perpetuates a system of weak institutions. State-directed attempts to reorder the social and political system from above without a political party or without a means of channeling demands of mobilized groups have often failed. Initiations of change are difficult for a state with a historically weak capacity for dealing with society, particularly

a society that has undergone a significant degree of mobilization and self organization without adequate institutions.[34] Thus, Fujimori's coup did little to improve the situation, and his methods may ultimately undermine his objectives, particularly in light of his inability to adequately address social problems, such as unemployment and inequality. Fujimori has only continued the tradition of personalism and caudillo rule, echoing populist leaders who found broad appeal among the masses and encouraging "Fujimorazos" in other countries, such as Guatemala, and to a lesser extent, Venezuela. The emergence of a "new breed of strongmen" like Fujimori in Peru are popular because "of what they get done." The new brand of authoritarianism that Fujimori endorses, however, appears to be acceptable to the people so long as it fosters economic progress and insures law and order. [35]

Yet, the problems confronting Peruvian democracy cannot be adequately addressed by authoritarian methods. Although Fujimori's actions allowed him to achieve his stated objectives, which were to lower inflation and curb terrorist violence, these were only short term results. In addition, one cannot necessarily point to democratic processes and procedures as the source of Fujimori's inability to effectively address Peru's problems. Such problems extend much deeper than a quick fix. Even before the coup Peru's parties had not been able to build a solid base of support and legitimacy among the people so as to provide a legitimate, regularized mechanism for channeling discontent. Instead, political parties merely represented self-interested traditional elites and concerned themselves with electoral politics. As one politician from Bolivia remarked, "We need a [legislative] body to perfect so there will be no need to eliminate it." [36] In other words, some consider it wise to strengthen institutions such as the legislative body, so as to prevent a "Fujimorazo" from occurring.

Tensions between the legislature and the executive have always been high enough to prevent an "agreement to disagree" from becoming ingrained in the political psyche of the government.[37] Viable institutions include a consensus making, "give-and-take" process of decision-making; this aspect of democracy has obviously been ignored and negated by Fujimori. While institutional gridlock can provide obstacles to effective policy-making and implementation, the establishment of governing coalitions can overcome stalemate as the cases of Chile and Bolivia exhibit.[38] The rules of the democratic game are a result of deliberative arrangements, and ruling by decree stunts this evolution. Instead, the caudillo mentality relies on the individual leader to make decisions and rule effectively. Problems thus arise when the leader dies or leaves office, leaving behind a vacuum of power and legitimacy.

Even more dangerous is that Fujimori has included the military as a primary component of his coalition. The president surrounds himself with only a small group of technocratic and military advisors. Fujimori has succeeded in politicizing the armed forces through an array of personnel changes and political promotions. In his desire to achieve and maintain order, Fujimori has also militarized state authority by using the military for tasks normally reserved for the police.[39] To achieve his neoliberal reform program, Fujimori has made the military his ally in strengthening state authority. In order to realize his objectives, Fujimori recognizes the need for greater stability. Unfortunately, Fujimori believes that stability is better obtained by strengthening the powers and resources of the military rather than institutions and processes. In 1991, even before the coup, Fujimori used his decree powers to enact 120 new laws, a significant number of which pertained to

the military. Fujimori argues that in order to combat insurgency, the military must have extensive powers over civil society. For this reason, Fujimori has granted the military authority to tighten restrictions on the press, to create special courts to try terrorist suspects, and furthermore to make sure that military officials cannot be tried in civilian courts for violating human rights.[40] By placing much of the southern region of the country under a state of emergency, Fujimori is using the military to address problems whose solutions lie elsewhere and may be found through other institutions.

It is interesting to note that along with the military, the other groups that comprise Fujimori's coalition were quick to rally around the president after the coup. This only reflects the need for a stronger party system. The various mobilized and organized groups have no where else to express themselves. Civil society, (taking the form of these interest groups) is ripe for expression, but such activity is not being transferred to political society, where organized efforts at the grassroots level are being hindered by lack of adequate party structure and a forum for political expression. Even though violence due to terrorism has subsided, particularly after the capture of Guzman (for which Fujimori takes credit), this has been achieved at the expense of the subordination of civilian institutions to military or personalist authority, which can have an extremely debilitating effect on any unconsolidated democracy.[41]

The most important factor in a democracy is a civil society, on which the previous two preconditions rely. Democracy needs a strong social component with a resonance within society. Civil society can safeguard the system by developing mechanisms which allow it to self organize toward political ends and demand accountability. By relying on a caudillo to fix problems in the short run, as the Peruvian people have done in relation to Fujimori, a true civil society, although created, cannot germinate and be maintained. A strong and viable civil society exists in Peru in the form of grassroots organizations, interest groups, and various civic institutions, yet without effective political parties and meaningful institutions in which to play out the politics of "give and take," these groups have no means of expression. Fujimori's high approval ratings after the coup were merely a reflection of a society undergoing a crisis of faith in the democratic experiment. Democracy must receive legitimacy from values and beliefs-- a democratic creed.[42] Fujimori justified his actions on the grounds of economic and political problems. Yet, while economic and social problems can be obstacles to democracy, they do not have to impede it if a populace is confident that difficulties do not equal destruction, nor does hardship result in disillusionment about democracy. A country can prevent this type of mentality by establishing institutions that routinize constant and positive interaction between state and society and thus are able to work through difficulties. However, institutions are the mechanisms by which interaction is regulated, and the absence of strong institutions therefore constitutes a noticeable void between state and society. Granted, Peruvian institutions were not strong to begin with, but Fujimori certainly did not help to rebuild them or reform them. Instead, he only manipulated public skepticism and cynicism, while his actions served to weaken the institutional links between state and civil society:

It was the weakness of these links [between state and civil society] that permitted President Fujimori to exercise such a high degree of autonomy and to determine, on his own initiative, the direction of the country's economic program.[43]

Fujimori was able to capitalize on this crisis of faith and the lack of a democratic creed in society and combines la mano dura with a populist touch. Fujimori travels three days of the week to villages dancing the traditional dances, like the huaynos, and accepting paper slips of requests and personal pleas which he enters into a lap top computer everyday. He opens schools and factories, builds hospitals, and distributes shoes and clothes. Fujimori, although tough, "has an undeniable common touch." [44] Yet, this is dangerous in that it only perpetuates society's dependence on a leader who can only deliver in the short run, while society never learns how to organize itself democratically within an institutional framework, for instance through effective political parties.

Fujimori has embarked on an authoritarian political project in conjunction with a neoliberal economic strategy. Although this has been successful in terms of lowering inflation and curbing violence, he has failed to give the same importance to the reconstruction of a modern democratic state and a viable civil society. Although Fujimori feels that economic growth must precede true democracy, some have asserted that democracy (meaning something more than merely voting) may be a condition for development.

The greatest gamble of those who support Fujimori is the traditional supposition that one person, the caudillo, can become the axis of a stable regime and society--rather than the building of institutions that survive and outlive individual leaders. [45]

In other words, Fujimori's excuse that economic growth must be the first priority may produce economic growth, but at the expense of democratic ideals and practices. It is feasible to say that democracy and economic growth go hand in hand. The intense social changes that neoliberal economic policies produce can be diffused and offset through institutions that can establish strong links with society.

Was the coup a "necessary detour" as Fujimori has insisted? Francisco Sagasti, a respected commentator, argues that Fujimori's self coup was unjustified because the laws needed to fight terrorism and inflation were already in place. [46] Another observer commented that the Congress, in order to demonstrate its confidence in the Fujimori's new government in 1990, had already granted him extraordinary legislative powers which enabled him to launch his Fujishock, or stabilization program. [47]

Fujimori had found democratic institutions, such as the Congress, a hindrance, and showed obvious disdain for democratic procedures; yet, due to international pressure, divisions within his own coalition, and the failure to solve pressing social and economic problems, he has also discovered that developing "formal authoritarian structures" are limited. [48] Pressured into creating a new constitution, Fujimori nonetheless oriented the new constitution to further solidify his power. The new constitution strengthened the powers of the executive, created a unicameral legislature that can be dismissed by the president, increased executive control over the judiciary, included a clause allowing presidential reelection, and also, implemented all of Fujimori's decrees that had not been passed by the former congress. [49] In other words, Fujimori created an "institutional void" by destroying democratic institutions yet built nothing in its place, leaving the underlying causes for poverty, unequal distribution of income, and other social problems unaddressed. [50] In fact, some scholars argue that even evaluated in strictly economic terms, Fujimori's program has largely failed to achieve its stated goals: "Fujimori's

economic program and political strategy do not adequately deal with the causes of violence: poverty and inequality have worsened. . . the state is weaker (even though Fujimori is stronger)." Meanwhile political institutions are rendered incapable of helping the situation.[51] These problems have further stimulated the debate over whether it is even possible to speak of a truly democratic government in Latin America.

Ideal versus Reality: Delegative Democracy

Many scholars and Peruvians themselves have argued that democracy, as it is known in the United States, is an ideal that does not fit the political reality of Latin America. A constitutional ideal, based on checks and balances and the division of power is a living memory for most North Americans, yet the personalist tradition, constant economic uncertainty, and violence is the Latin American experience. While few people would assert the viability of a return to a formal authoritarian system, the consolidation of democracy is seriously challenged in Latin American nations today. Many countries, including Fujimori's Peru, meet certain minimal conditions prescribed to democracy, such as fair and competitive elections and a constitution guaranteeing certain freedoms and rights. However, as Schmitter and Karl have asserted, there are many types of democracy, and the specific form that a democracy takes depends upon a country's socioeconomic conditions and state structure. Guillermo O'Donnell goes further to distinguish between representative democracies and what he terms delegative democracies. Unlike representative democracies, delegative democracies are not institutionalized or consolidated.[52] Instead:

There is an important interaction effect: the deep social and economic crisis that most of these countries inherited from their authoritarian predecessors reinforces certain practices and conceptions about the proper exercise of political authority. . .[53]

Delegative democracy has at its core the premise that elections are the primary component, and that once elected into office, the president is entitled to govern as he or she deems best without having to be constrained by congressional gridlock, opposition resistance, or pressure from interest groups and lobbyists. Delegative democracy alludes to the Hobbesian notion that order, above all else, must be maintained, and that only a strong ruler, who is considered the "main custodian" and the "paternal figure," can maintain it.[54]

Others, such as Elliott Abrams, former assistant secretary of state for Inter-American Affairs, have also asserted that events in Peru force the question: "Might an obstinate insistence on democratic forms work against what we prize in democracy?" He goes on further to say that weak, democratic, corrupt institutions are simply unable to cope with the crisis facing Peru. "Let the punishment fit the crime," he says.[55] Compromising democracy is less blameworthy given the circumstances. Others have made the remark, "If [democracy] merely legitimizes a system of rotating theft. . . it is worse than useless.[56]

In another essay, Schmitter sees delegative democracy as an alternative given the fact that there is no legitimate way to return to formal authoritarianism, it is also difficult to progress towards democracy. What he sees as a "persistent but unconsolidated

democracy" is compatible with O'Donnell's ideas about delegative democracy.[57] There are many of what Jonathan Hartlyn, in his discussion of the Dominican Republic, calls "imperfect democracies" in Latin America. According to him, imperfect democracies do not meet the conditions of inclusiveness, contestation, and constitutional order "as specified in common, procedural definitions of democracy." [58] Delegative democracy, as defined by O'Donnell, shares many characteristics with "neopatrimonial democracy." Neopatrimonialism incorporates at least one central characteristic of patrimonialism: a centralization of power in the hands of the ruler. As such, neopatrimonial regimes are distinguished from democracies that are based on the rule of law, institutions, and rational legal authority.[59] Furthermore, countries whose socioeconomic situation is marked by a high level of inequality and a low level of formal democratic institutionalization, are prone to neopatrimonial systems. In Peru, and other countries like the Dominican Republic, a system of strong presidential rule, the absence of strong political parties, and weak institutions, coupled with socio-economic crisis, reinforces a "likelihood" of neopatrimonialism.[60] Schmitter analyzes the dilemmas that face new democracies and suggests that it comes as a shock to people when they realize that democracies do not always work perfectly. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that leaders of new democracies must settle on rules and practices for solving dilemmas.[61] New democracies are under a great deal of scrutiny and expectations run high, particularly within strong, viable, and vocal societies. One problem with new democracies is that people sometimes consider democracy to be a panacea. The relationship between economics and politics, for instance, has much to do with political representation and the sharing of responsibility. When institutions that uphold and honor accountability are weak, disillusionment sets in and paves the way for leaders like Fujimori in Peru, Serrano in Venezuela, and Balaguer in the Dominican Republic. Fujimori played on several misconceptions about democracy in order to bring about his self-coup. Fujimori's perception of democracy involves tangible results. Yet, democracies do not promise certainty and by nature involve conflict. The purpose of democracy is to attempt to formulate consensus out of conflict. This naturally involves coalitions and compromise.[62] Calling democracies inefficient and corrupt, Fujimori and society both misunderstood that democracies do not promise to be more economically efficient than any other system. Instead, democracies allow for the realization of long-term effects upon productivity, creativity, income distribution, etc.[63] But as with all improvements, this takes time. Over time, democracy can be more conducive to economic growth. Democracies are considered more stable than authoritarian governments because although an authoritarian leader can bring about rapid economic growth, sustainable growth is illusory. The authoritarian leader cannot promise that the benefits of his policy will continue, partly because he, or another authoritarian leader, can suspend them at any time, and also because external events may delegitimize the ruler's regime or policies.[64] Fluctuations in the Peruvian business sector, for instance, depends now not only on external conditions, but also on the will of the president himself.[65] In contrast, democracies are flexible enough to withstand future economic downturns in the long-run. Democracies will be administratively slower because more actors are involved in the decision-making process.[66] Inherently though, democracy entails:

the emergence of political institutions that can formulate and implement public policy, that can channel social and economic conflicts through regular procedures, and that have sufficient linkages to civil society to represent their constituencies and commit them to collective courses of action.[67]

The problem with delegative democracy is that, in the long run, it results in a weak and fragile government. It bases legitimacy on the ability of the leader to deliver his promises to save the country. In order to make good on their promises, leaders will scramble for narrow, short term advantage. This "prisoner's dilemma", as O'Donnell describes the situation, has a counterproductive effect because not only does it weaken democratic institutions, but in doing so, undermines effective means of dealing with pressing national problems. It also bases the success or the failure of a policy or program on one person. However, as O'Donnell sees it, "The longer and deeper the crisis and the less confidence the government has to solve it, the more rational it becomes for everyone to act." [68] For instance, although Fujimori's economic program has been successful in controlling inflation, GNP remains stagnant, unemployment continues to be high, and social inequality abounds. Fujimori's stabilization program has not been able to translate short-term goals to long-term growth and development. He has also failed to formulate any social program to provide relief from the economic shocks his program provokes. [69] Fujimori cannot possibly placate everyone, nor can he accomplish everything, but democratic institutions would offer a means in which of diffusing and sharing responsibility and establishing a forum for formulating solutions to problems. Otherwise, there is a danger that when Fujimori's political capital expires in the midst of an external event, such as a war or an economic downturn, the country could find itself in a deeper political crisis. The recent war with Ecuador, and the uncertainty and cynicism it has produced toward the government, illustrates how, in the absence of institutional frameworks, external, unexpected events can easily undermine or weaken delegative democracies. Due to their "institutional weaknesses and erratic patterns of policy making", delegative democracies, as O'Donnell suggests are more prone to interruption and breakdown than representative democracies. [70]

Representative democracy, in and of itself implies a routinization and institutionalization of channeling outbursts of public sentiment. Instead, moves such as those of Fujimori, tend to personalize politics, further reducing politics to an individual leader's ability to find a quick fix to complex and profound economic and social problems. During an era of economic hardship, for example, the president himself becomes responsible for the successes and failures of economic reform. Given the military's increased role under the Fujimori administration, this becomes even more dangerous.

Fujimori's deliberate weakening of political parties and the Congress is counterproductive. Although Congress had created many obstacles to reform and policy implementation in the past, a swing to an overstrengthening of the executive does not necessarily solve Peru's problems, and in fact, creates additional problems for democratic governance. By weakening Congress, Fujimori has made it more difficult to achieve a socioeconomic pact that could act as a buffer in the case his own economic package fails. [71]

In contrast, contestation, compromise, and consensus teaches people that demands cannot be easily met and that there are no quick fixes. A situation where the executive is granted

greater powers can encourage a return to the caudillo rule and populist practices of the past. This creates a subsequent situation where, in the absence of institutional "safety valves," the efficiency of the president becomes identified and confused with the legitimacy of democracy.[72] Effective democratic procedures require structural and dependable institutions and accepted, routinized rules of the game. The evidence of Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay attest to the possibility of strengthening institutions when there is a concerted effort to do so.[73]

The situation in Peru is extremely complicated and fragile. It is very difficult to speak of democratic institutions during a time when such slogans are plastered all over Latin America which read: "Democracia 'sí', Hambre 'no.'"[74] The situation has been compared in Peru to a medical emergency: If a doctor has a very sick patient, he must operate quickly; there is no time to wait. Nonetheless, democracy does not claim to cure all ills. Rather, it sees itself as the most effective long-term means of serving the whole society, and having as many demands met as possible. The problem with Peru and with Latin America is that time and patience do not come easy to a country plagued with inflation, eight hour blackouts, unemployment, and violence on a daily basis. It is difficult to uphold democratic institutions, because then one must deal with politics, and politics involves conflict. Yet, ultimately, in the long run, out of this conflict can emerge a consensus (resulting from strengthened democratic institutions) and thereby fully consolidate democracy in the region.

Fujimori faces re-election in April 1995. Opposing him is former Secretary General of the United Nations, Javier Perez de Cuellar. Fujimori is likely to call upon his successful efforts at transforming Peru into "an emerging economic star." [75] Yet, de Cuellar is expected to present himself as a "democratic alternative" to Fujimorismo. Given that, plus the fact that Fujimori has failed to adequately address the issues of poverty and social inequalities (jobs, for example, have become an important electoral issue), Fujimori has had to resort to further populist measures. Fujimori's proposed new constitution only narrowly survived a referendum in October 1993 with 53 percent, being rejected in many rural areas.

Nonetheless, Fujimori is favored to win the elections. What then are the implications for democracy in Peru? Perhaps, there will be the continuance of O'Donnell's delegative democracy. The question remains: Can this really be a viable alternative to true democracy? Given the preconditions mentioned above (democratically committed elites, democratic institutions, and mechanisms for political discourse between state and civil society), the prospects for consolidated democracy in Fujimori's Peru seem rather dim. Peru's previous inability to establish strong institutions and effective state capabilities resulted in frustrations that gave rise to Fujimori's election and the emergence of his neoliberal-authoritarian program. Mauceri concludes that "the democratic breakdown that took place in Peru in April 1992 resulted from extraordinary conjunctions of structural and institutional factors." More importantly, though, the coup stands as a warning of the "dangers accompanying economic reform and democratization in a context of institutional fragmentation and inefficacy." [76] Fujimori has only perpetuated this crisis. Even though a new constitution is in effect and elections will take place, a dangerous precedent has been set. Although Fujimori may now be ready to assume leadership over a democratic nation, unless he can build up democratic institutions and have respect for

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