

ABSTRACT

Toward Legitimacy
Building Government Legitimacy Amid Conflict
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Drawing on recently published papers for the Commission on Integrated Long Term Strategy and his own experience, the author discusses lessons he believes should be conveyed to any future President concerning the difficulties of establishing legitimacy for foreign governments or political movements his Administration may wish to support. Case examples cited, all falling under the Congressional rubric of "low intensity conflict", are supporting insurgencies in Afghanistan and Nicaragua, promoting reform in El Salvador, military interventions in Grenada and Libya, and ousting autocrats in the Philippines, Haiti, and Panama.

Toward Legitimacy

Building Government Support Amid Conflict

One of the last acts of the frayed survivors in President Reagan's Department of Defense was to mail out to some ill-defined constituency three papers which had been prepared earlier this year for the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy. One was an assessment of sources of change in the future security environment, and the other two dealt specifically with that genre of political violence known to the Administration, Congress, and the framers of this conference, as "Low Intensity Conflict."¹

I was one author of those latter two papers, and as such have had more occasion than ~~most~~ ^{some} to consider the implications for U.S. national strategy of the likelihood that a future President will support, as his or her predecessors have supported, a friendly government afflicted with politically motivated sabotage, terrorism, armed subversion, or more open forms of insurgency. I have thought about the possibility that said future President might see fit to support a foreign faction in arms against its government, through what is loosely referred to as covert action, or otherwise. And I have also considered the prospect of that President directing the limited use of U.S. armed forces abroad. Among the most challenging, and assuredly vexatious, tasks facing that President's Administration in acting upon such policy-choices will be to establish and to maintain the legitimacy of any foreign party the President chooses to support, both here in the United States and in the country of interest, or in justifying U.S. attack by deprecating the legitimacy of the target. U.S. policies which turn upon legitimacy are the subject of this paper.

In other fora I have urged my listeners to interpret the acronym "L.I.C." -- pronounced "lick" in Washington -- as "Lawyer Intensive Conflict", for I certainly found myself enmeshed by lawyers throughout my experience with it in Central America. But I

¹"Sources of Change in the Future Security Environment", a paper by the Future Environment Working Group, submitted to the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, April, 1988. "Commitment to Freedom - Security Assistance as a U.S. Policy Instrument in the Third World," a paper by the Regional Conflict Working Group, submitted to the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, May 1988. "Supporting U.S. Strategy for Third World Conflict," report by the Regional Conflict Working Group to the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, June 1988. These papers each bear this notation: "The Report of the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, **Discriminate Deterrence**, was published in January 1988 and is available for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402 for \$6.50.

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am no John Norton Moore, and I have construed for our purposes here "legitimacy" not as a legal, but as an operative term. I propose to discuss it as an element in executing national security policy.

My usage is close to that of the armed services. This past June, the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force collaborated in publishing a draft manual entitled Military Operations in Low-Intensity Conflict, which offered this definition:²

Legitimacy is the willing acceptance of the right of a government to govern or of a group or agency to make or enforce decisions. Legitimacy is not tangible, nor easily quantifiable. Popular votes do not always confer or reflect legitimacy. Legitimacy derives from the perception that authority is genuine and effective and uses proper agencies for reasonable purposes. No group or force can create legitimacy for itself, but it can encourage and sustain legitimacy by its actions. Legitimacy is the central concern of all parties directly involved in a conflict. It is also important to other parties who may be involved even indirectly.

I agree that the nub of this issue of "legitimacy" is *perception*, public opinion here, and public opinion abroad. There are those who suppose that, if this be the case, then the policy imperative for the President's men is to manipulate the media. I think that the record would indicate that more often than not, the media will do the manipulating. But I also believe that in recent years opinion has been influenced less by the media, or by what the Reagan Administration called "public diplomacy", than by realities. While media "hype", ill-conceived editorial policies, or reportorial amateurism might mislead public opinion in the short-run, the recourse to violence for political purposes we have under consideration is only rarely short-lived, and ultimately some approximation of the truth will become evident to the public. It would certainly be difficult, if not impossible, for any Administration to sustain over a long period of time claims of legitimacy for any government or group which lacked acceptance among its own people, or which persisted in practices abhorrent to the American public. It might be possible for an Administration to use U.S. forces for a quick, sharp military action, and even fence that from the media to some extent, but eventually the enduring issues of legitimacy will be fully vented.

Hence, the planners for any Administration would be well advised to appraise carefully their prospective protagonist or antagonist. Those we support must, as a matter of foremost importance, be patently legitimate, or agree to undertake measures to establish legitimacy as a condition for U.S. support. Those we attack must have truly forfeited

²Headquarters, Department of the Army, Department of the Air Force, Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict, FM 100-20, AFM 2-XY, Final Draft, 24 June 1988, pp.1-9,10. "Legitimacy" is cited as one of five imperatives for success in Low Intensity Conflict, together with "political dominance", "unity of effort", "adaptability", and "patience."

legitimacy. The foregoing phrases obscure immense difficulties, but the following eight examples from President Reagan's experience may help illuminate the future President's choices:

Nation	Legitimacy Issues	Legitimacy "Lessons"
Afghanistan	Kabul government; USSR invaders Pak, Chinese, U.S. support	•Higher principle: "containment" justifies all •International consensus pro
Nicaragua	Sandinista government; Contras; U.S. support	•Doomed by dollars
El Salvador	GOES; role of Sandinistas; U.S. support	•Reform breeds legitimacy •Centrality of military
Grenada	Grenadan government; Cuban role	•Allies can help; regional } threat forestalled
Libya	Libyan-sponsored terrorism	•Pariah dog should not bite
Philippines	Marcos' rigidity ; U.S. support for opposition	
Haiti	Duvalier's autocracy; U.S. support for opposition	•Corruption can foster } democratic revolution •Centrality of military
Panama	Noriega's venality ; U.S. support for opposition	

Afghanistan and Nicaragua

The first two cases both involve U.S. support for a foreign insurgency, with dramatically different outcomes. In both instances, the U.S. supported guerrilla forces attacking a government we recognized diplomatically, and with which we maintained relations. In the case of the Afghanistan Mujahadin, there was almost no attention paid to legitimacy in Washington. In the case of the Nicaraguan resistance, however, the rival claims to legitimacy of the Sandinista government and their opposition became matters of intense debate.

Conditioned as we Americans are to accepting the strategic doctrine of containment, few of us questioned the legitimacy of the Afghan resistance, or of American aid to it. President Reagan's characterization of the Mujahadin as "Freedom Fighters" went largely unchallenged, although most Americans sensed that the Afghan tribesmen probably entertained few political ideas close to Jeffersonian democracy, and that their notions of human rights probably do not jibe well with ours. For members of Congress, and for most of their constituents, it was enough to believe that the Soviets had invaded Afghanistan in 1979 on a flimsy pretext of protecting their Communist puppet government, and that the full weight of the Red Army had been exerted to crush primitive tribesmen fighting for their homes and families. Few knew of the years of training for Afghan guerrilla leaders in Pakistan during the 1970's, or of the aid from Pakistan and China for the guerrillas, or the extent to which the guerrillas controlled Afghanistan when the Soviets intervened. What mattered was that the Red Army had rolled beyond its Yalta-demarcated line for the first time since its invasion of Iran in 1945, and that any measures to force them back were therefore justified, rendered "legitimate."

Yet, many Americans did question President Reagan's belief that those who took up arms against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua were also ^{merely U.S. support.} Freedom Fighters. Some Congressional figures have held that, because the United States recognized the government in Managua, and maintained a U.S. Embassy there, the armed resistance (Contras) could therefore have no claim to legitimacy. I have heard statements in Congress that the Administration, if it wanted aid for the Contras to pressure the Sandinistas toward a negotiated settlement of regional and internal strife, should break diplomatic relations with Managua, and declare war. ^{call Congress to} ~~I have heard others~~ ^{Some Congressmen} deprecate the thousands of young men and women who rallied to one or another of the insurgent groups as remnants of Somoza's National Guard, although most of them must have been under ten years of age when Somoza was deposed, and many were Indians. ^{many don't} ~~As far as Speaker Wright was concerned,~~ the Sandinistas were the legitimate authority in Nicaragua, and the U.S. Administration had

no right to intervene in events there even to the extent of encouraging domestic political demonstrations against a repressive government.

What is important for this discussion is not who is right, the President or ^{his Congressmen,} ~~the Speaker of the House~~, but that this division over legitimacy at the highest levels of the United States government well illustrates the ambiguity which enfolds most internal wars, and our lack of consensus on what legitimacy is, or by what criteria to judge it. Since the Administration and the Congress were divided, the issue was resolved by well-publicized debates and votes in both bodies of Congress not over the issues of legitimacy, but over the amounts of money to be paid to the Nicaraguan rebels, and whether the sum could be spent for "lethal" or "non-lethal" purposes. By its actions, even when it did approve support, Congress stigmatized all who took up arms against the Sandinistas as mercenaries, and fatally detracted from their legitimacy among their own people, and within Central America.³

It is quite possible that the Administration would have found more understanding and support for its policies in Nicaragua if the insurgency had been better managed, and therefore more successful in pressuring the Sandinistas. Guerrillas who could stretch and test the Sandinista Army would have been perceptibly more legitimate than Director Casey's cross-border raiders. The bi-partisan Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, with both the success of the Afghanistan case and the fumbles in Central America in mind, concluded as follows:⁴

In carefully selected situations, where important U.S. objectives would be served and U.S. support might favorably affect outcomes, the United States should help anti-Communist [*sic.*] insurgencies, especially those against regimes threatening their neighbors.

Supporting such rebels is usually difficult and demanding. Many of those we support will be ill-trained, unlike their Soviet-supported enemies, and will be primitive in their strategies, inept in their tactics and logistics. They will badly need help with intelligence and strategy, and with tactics, communications, intelligence operations, and routine field operations.

If the U.S. support for these insurgents is a large and continuing effort, it is bound to be referred to in the press. Nevertheless, neighboring countries that provide access to or bases for the freedom fighters often prefer that the U.S. Government role not be officially acknowledged. By designating the U.S. support as a "Special Activity" (also known as a "covert action") the U.S. Government can maintain official silence. The laws governing "Special Activities" provide for a great

³One Central American President recently told the author that President Reagan had no right to expect support from any government in the region for policies which were being debated within the United States in terms of whether or not to continue financial support for armed mercenaries, and whether or not a judge in Florida should summon to trial the head of a foreign army.

⁴*Discriminate Deterrence, op.cit.*, pp. 16-17.

deal of flexibility. They make it possible to assign the task of supporting the insurgents to a military command, under cognizance of the commander-in-chief of the U.S. combatant command in whose region the insurgency is located.

Military management of this kind may have advantages if the support operation involves extensive training and supplies. In any event, the issue is not whether the operation can be kept secret, or whether the CIA should be involved. The President has the flexibility to have "Special Activities" managed by any government department, for example by the Departments of State or Defense. And the activity does not necessarily have to be kept secret in each and every aspect any more than other military operations that involve both classified and open matters. Given Congressional support, the organizational problems can readily be solved.

(I ~~strongly believe that~~ had USSOUTHCOM been assigned the mission of *aiding in* organizing, training, and equipping the Nicaraguan rebels, and had it brought to those tasks the techniques it applied successfully with the Salvadorans, discussed below, the rebellion *might* ~~would~~ have been significantly more influential politically. The reactions of the Sandinistas themselves would then have done much to establish *the* ~~its~~ legitimacy *of their opposition*. But that baton was not passed, and at the moment, the rebellion is at an end.)

Having deposed Somoza, the revolutionary government in Managua was accorded *occurred* legitimacy by most Americans, and that perception of legitimacy withstood doubts *not only* ~~over the origins and probity~~ *by* of the "Contras", but also *by* ~~over~~ the Sandinista role in supporting insurgencies in neighboring countries, and *in* intimidating the same neighbors with a regionally unprecedented military buildup, and with periodic brandishing of advanced *Secret* weapons.

Many members of Congress have hesitated to be critical of the Sandinista military extravaganzas; short of Nicaragua's providing bases for Soviet bombers or Cuban fighters, they acknowledge its legitimate right of self defense, and some have held that much of its buildup was an understandable reaction to new levels of American military activity in the region. However, almost all profess to believe that the Sandinistas have no right to intervene in the war in El Salvador, or to introduce arms into any other country. But in this respect, many disbelieve the Administration's contention that Managua has been broadly involved not only with command and control of Salvadoran guerrillas, but also in training, equipping and supplying them. They have demanded that the Administration "produce a smoking gun", that is, prove Sandinista complicity by *point to* ~~adducing~~ just one documented case of infiltrators from Nicaragua caught in the act, and ~~point~~ the absence of such conclusive evidence as proof of Sandinista innocence.

One influential Senator recently stated that it was his belief that the Reagan Administration had fabricated out of whole cloth the story that Nicaragua has been involved militarily outside its borders. He contended that the Administration did so to justify U.S. intervention in El Salvador and its support for the "Contras". Moreover, he maintained that

it was the United States, not the Sandinistas, who had shipped arms to the guerrillas: U.S. Security Assistance supplied the Salvadoran armed forces, who then sold arms and munitions to the insurgents, or abandoned same to them on the battlefields. He cited the Jesuit Rector of the University of San Salvador as his source for his information. Here is my reply:⁵

Both Ambassador Pickering and I resolved to test the thesis advanced by the rector of the university. In August, 1984, I presented to the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate the results of that investigation. We sent people into the countryside to buy arms. We made every effort through the El Salvadoran armed forces to collect documents which contained in them references to arms in possession of the guerrillas. We examined weapons taken from the battlefields. We collected in all over 500 (examples of) weapons which had serial numbers on them which could be traced. 70 percent of those weapons were shipped from the United States to the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam War, and in our view, could only have entered El Salvador via the communist infiltration system. Over 20 percent of the weapons we had no records of. We had very good records of the weapons we had shipped to El Salvador. So my conclusion at the time was that the rector was simply wrong.

Now he may have been right in the sense that in 1983 no weapons were coming in because weapons were already there, and what was coming in was cryptologic material, people who had been trained on the outside, ammunition, et cetera.

I did report to your Committee, you will recall, a specific instance where, while we did not get a smoking gun, we did come very close to doing so, and in the ensuing battle picked up on the battlefield three rocket launchers of Chinese manufacture, the serial numbers of which were identical, that is to say in the same series, as those found in a warehouse in Grenada in the previous months.

So my conclusion is quite contrary to yours, sir. I think the Nicaraguans were complicit in moving arms into El Salvador.

The rules of evidence for presenting the Administration's case in such issues are not clear, although it is plain that they are demanding. None of the several White Papers produced by the Department of State in the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations to document North Vietnamese aggression as justification for U.S. intervention in Southeast Asia met the test. ^{North's invasion of South Viet.} Scholars and the media demolished them at the time, although their ^{the} ^{all} ^{White Papers'} representations of North Vietnam's role were modest in comparison to the claims advanced in recent years by the North Vietnamese themselves. The State Department White Paper on El Salvador early in the Reagan years was similarly hooted down: the "evidence" of Nicaraguan malfeasance cited (largely based on watered-down intelligence reports) failed to meet court-room rigor, and was widely disbelieved. The fact is, of course, that the highly

⁵Testimony before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on International Narcotics Trafficking, 8 February 1988.

trained subversives who manage such forms of indirect aggression are masters at concealing their undertakings. Thirty years ago the Rockefeller Commission warned that "concealed wars" would be among the most serious strategic challenges of our era:

These conflicts raise issues with which in terms of our preconceptions and the structure of our forces we are least prepared to deal. The gradual subversion of a government by concealed foreign penetration is difficult to deal with from the outside, even though the fate of millions may depend upon it... Our security and that of the rest of the non-Communist world will hinge importantly on our willingness to support friendly governments in situations which fit neither the soldier's classic concept of war nor the diplomat's traditional concept of aggression.⁶

El Salvador

The U.S support for El Salvador was originally justified -- by State's White Paper, for example -- as a case of U.S. aid to a country in exactly the situation just described: a classic case of subversive aggression, in which with Soviet and Cuban backing, the Sandinistas actively sought to install a Leninist government in San Salvador compatible with their own. Subsequently, the Administration's emphasis shifted to depicting U.S. aid as shielding a nascent democracy from both internal and external foes, and the comparative visibility of that aid made the U.S. stance more credible. A concerted effort was made by both the United States and the Salvadoran government to make the latter legitimately a democracy in form and substance. Nothing less was involved than reforming the entire government, a reform -- more successful in the armed forces than in other branches -- which eventuated in two well-supervised, country-wide elections with excellent voter turnout, and the election of Jose Napoleon Duarte to the Presidency. Eventually, legitimacy came to rest on arguments over the nature and extent of the reform itself, and in particular over the role of the military, which Duarte always identified as wielding pivotal influence over the future of democracy in his country.

The fog of war settles over low intensity conflict no less than over classical battlefields. Both parties to efforts for reform-under-fire are often quite ill-informed, and U.S. advisors are almost certain to commend actions which are distasteful or painful to the advised, and perhaps actually dysfunctional in aiding the latter's legitimacy. Despite nearly a century of involvement in foreign domestic politics, the United States has only an

⁶Quoted in "Supporting U.S. Strategy for Third World Conflict," *op.cit.*, p. 6.

inchoate doctrine for responding to low intensity conflict.⁷ Usually neither side has much choice save to endure the other, and to proceed hopeful that over time the other will learn.

The foremost consideration for the American side will usually be the claim of the other to the right to govern, or to represent the people -- legitimacy. In the political turbulence of most countries, constitutionality is problematic, and political infrastructure immature. One government follows another more often by force or default than by any prescribed succession process. However, exposing American political and military advisors to scholarly recitations of the history of political turnovers in any country is less useful, given recent advances in media outreach, than imparting to them an appreciation of the current extent of popular awareness of the central government, and current popular expectations for it. In El Salvador, as is the case even in some of the most archaic and traditional societies of the world, there is evident a yearning for democracy. The U.S. advisor must make it clear that a popularly supported government, legitimated by honest elections, may be *sine qua non* for a coherent, long-term American aid program. Militarized government may be expedient amid conflict, but the repeated governmental failures of soldier-dominated regimes, and their severe disadvantages with the American Congress and the American public, will lead American spokesmen to press for genuinely civil rule, if not immediately, then at a date certain in the foreseeable future. The other side, for its part, will probably speak of a "state of emergency" or a "state of siege" which requires a suspension of "politics", and priority to achieving military objectives.

Each instance of such a dialog is certain to be so highly particularized as to negate much generalization from one country to another, but the Salvadoran example shows that the American side is likely to emphasize respect for human rights, the rule of law, and limits on the use of force, and the foreigners the kinds, amounts, and timing of American fiscal and material help. They are quite unlikely to understand any American reference to "low intensity conflict", for usually the conflict afflicting them is, in their view, already intolerably intense. They are probably predisposed to talk about "total war" rather than military restraint. They are likely to assert that there are compelling strategic priorities for military action, and that they must defer looking after human rights, and referring the perpetrators of violence to their courts, to the day when their armed forces have eliminated

⁷Cf., Bacevich, A.J., Hallums, J.D., White, R.H., and Young, T.F., American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador, Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, Pergammon-Brassey's, 1988. The authors, a group of U.S. Army lieutenant colonels at Harvard, characterize the Reagan Administration's policies in El Salvador as expedient for the short run, but unsuccessful for the long-term in that the insurgency persists, and the Salvadorans have no strategy for terminating it. They perceive a distinction between the military struggle and the "other war", possibly of itself an explanation for the failure of U.S.-Salvadoran planning.

armed opposition. The American side will have to convince them that no significant aid will flow unless they pursue all three goals simultaneously. Counterintuitive as that advice may be, whether U.S. aid flows or not, they would indeed be better off devising a strategy which served all three goals.

El Salvador was one of several instances of low intensity conflict with which I am personally familiar that have had in common a central role for native armed forces, and in all these legitimacy turned in large measure on the behavior of those forces. Regardless of the nature of the central authority, an armed force which isolates itself from its people, treats the recruits it draws from them with disdain, and acts toward the populace arrogantly and viciously, actually contributes to the insecurity of its sponsor, induces violent responses to its authority, and plays into the hands of subversives and professional revolutionaries. Conversely, an armed force which identifies itself with the populace, which sees itself as the protector of the people, and acts toward them judiciously, communicating good will and genuine respect, is likely to elicit reciprocal sentiments which are readily translated into internal security for the central government. Clearly the latter force is more likely than the former to be able to assess and to promote legitimacy. It is also in a much better position to perform its military mission, whether that be acting to foil saboteurs, terrorists, subversives, or insurgents, or to eject invaders.

Let me describe a syndrome of difficulties which beset armed forces absent legitimacy. Such forces have difficulty recruiting, and they often treat new members brutally. Little attention, and few resources are devoted to the welfare of anyone other than officers; for example, there are only the most rudimentary provisions for housing, clothing, morale, or medical care for lower ranks (even if wounded in battle). Military casualty rates are high, and mortality rates are exorbitant. Leadership and decision-making (and usually access to ill-gotten wealth) is held tightly by officers of the upper echelons. Little or no attention is paid to training junior leaders, and initiative among them is thoroughly discouraged. Senior officers are openly scornful of the people, regard them as part of the threat to national security, and negligently accept extensive collateral damage and casualties among civilians as a concomitant of military operations. Typically, the people hate or fear the armed forces, and within such forces members have as low an opinion of themselves and their units as do the people. Such forces can operate successfully only in large formations, and suffer often from ambushes, or from frequent attack on encampments and facilities.

There are cures for this syndrome. They involve, first and foremost, obtaining the commitment of both civil and military leaders of the top echelons to military reform, and to weeding out systematically any military officer, however prominent, who is not prepared to

agree that a lack of civic consciousness is militarily dysfunctional. The entire military hierarchy must be brought to demand strict adherence to high standards for conduct in the presence of civilians, particularly discrimination in the use of firepower, and to require subordinate commanders to build mutual respect between troop units and the communities within which they operate, to train junior leaders for independent tactical operations, and to encourage them to innovate, within the foregoing guidance. Commanders must learn to praise and reward successful tactical leaders, and to sanction poor performers. They must be led to review and critique operations as a training method, capitalizing on defeats to identify ameliorative action, and on victories to encourage emulation. For the force as a whole, troop information programs must aim at instilling pride of service, and of unit. Public information programs must convey the genuine resolve of the armed forces to act as the people's security shield. From outside the armed forces, the civil authorities must concert corresponding information programs promoting the image of the armed forces as the shield of the people, and foster, as best they can, civil-military cooperation. Beyond that, they must provide for sound public administration in areas secured by the military forces, and that administration must be judicious, caring, and patently beneficial.

To quote the judgement of the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, in El Salvador the U.S. prescriptions and aid worked:

The transformation in large measure reflects ideas that are applicable elsewhere. American technology gave the Salvadorans a new tactical intelligence capability, which became a prod to action for the military (while also giving it constant feedback on its operations). The war also became a model of sorts for cooperative efforts: under American leadership, other Latin American countries proved willing to offer military training and some economic aid of their own to El Salvador. Our security assistance program helped the Salvadorans to acquire weapon systems that made possible more discriminate attacks on enemy troops and reduced civilian casualties. We also did a lot for the morale of our allies by introducing medical programs that drastically reduced death rates among wounded Salvadoran troops (from around 45% to around 5%).⁸

Obviously, nothing like the foregoing changes is likely to occur in a matter of weeks or even months. As in El Salvador, reform probably will occur only under pressure, and then it is likely to progress slowly through stages of promises without performance, grudging moves under duress, and then creeping adaptation as civil and military leaders grasp the advantages of the new mandates. Often, as was the case there, the U.S. will have to undertake to train native trainers, or junior leaders, before tactical proficiency is possible. Sometimes modest U.S. aid can make major differences in military

⁸Discriminate Deterrence, p. 15.

morale and efficiency, such as help with tactical intelligence and communications, boots, rations, and medical services. Sometimes the U.S. can assist by providing more discriminate weapons and fire control instruments, and more responsive command and control. Usually U.S. aid will also be needed with public administration, especially with the system of criminal justice.

In any event, it helps when the U.S. can obtain the cooperation of friends and allies in its efforts to reform and upgrade, as was the case in El Salvador. A main contributor was Honduras, who set aside ancient enmity to become particularly helpful, and while its internal politics militated against its maintaining its support for much more than nine months, its providing training areas for entire Salvadoran battalions came at a crucial time in the combined U.S.-Salvadoran upgrade-undertaking.

However, international support for U.S. friends or allies is not always and everywhere helpful. I had to demur from suggestions from Washington that the United States inveigle an Asian or a Middle Eastern ally to take over primary responsibility for advising and assisting El Salvador with intelligence and other aspects of military training, both on the grounds that "they really know how to do that better than we Americans," and that their participation would help the legitimacy of the assisted nation. I am dubious on both counts. Asian or Middle Eastern ideas on counter-terrorism, intelligence and counterintelligence, and treatment of civilians are often markedly different from our own, and quite inconsistent with U.S. notions of "reasonable purpose." I have observed that their concepts can prompt clumsy thuggery by agents of a supported government which severely detract from its legitimacy. My criticism might properly be directed less to the advisors than to the recipients of their advice, who tend to proceed on their own to sorcerer's apprentice versions of recommended operational techniques. But the upshot has often been sordid media coverage, and a setback for perceptions of the aided government both in its own country and here.

Overall, the sheer tedium of reform occasions doubts of legitimacy. The length of time involved in bootstrapping, its unevenness, and its vulnerability to frequent setback is unlikely to evoke sympathetic treatment from "minute bite" U.S. media representatives or their editors, or from impatient officials in Washington. But the El Salvador experience shows that if the U.S. representatives on scene and the native authorities persist in their progress toward mutually agreed goals, legitimacy can be significantly advanced within a year or two even amid extensive conflict.

Grenada and Libya

Legitimacy is a two-edged concept, and within the highest councils of our government the violent involvement of the United States in Grenada and Libya was justified to some extent by perceptions that government leaders in both those countries had forfeited legitimacy. And it helps if foreigners share U.S. perceptions. Past U.S. Administrations have found it helpful with the Congress and the public to be able to point to support from other nations for its policies and its deeds, or for those of a government or group we have chosen to support. Jose Napoleon Duarte's well-received swing through Europe in 1984, appealing in particular to his fellow Christian Democrats, assuredly helped the Administration in mustering support for him politically. Similarly, President Reagan's cause against Grenada in 1983 gained legitimacy by condemnation of the Grenadan government by its island neighbors, and by their endorsement and support of the U.S. invasion. The subsequent detailing by the U.S. government of the captured material and documentary evidence of Grenadan-Cuban collusion for aggression helped resolve remaining doubts about the United States' overthrowing an established government

The U.S. premonitory attack on Libya was a case in which the U.S. acted without much support from Libya's neighbors -- the refusal of friends like France and Spain to allow overflight severely complicated the operation. But Libya was an international outcast, involved in a recent case of international terrorism, and the Administration acted with some confidence that its attack would be seen in a favorable light by the American people and by friends of the United States worldwide, and would have a powerfully deterrent effect on Libyans and other states who sponsored terrorism against Americans -- a judgement subsequently proved to be well founded.

The Philippines, Haiti, and Panama

There is at least one egregious error in the recent report of the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, **Discriminate Deterrence**.⁹ The Commissioners endorse selective U.S. support for "anti-Communist insurgencies", although I know they were thoroughly supportive of United States backing for democratic uprisings within Marcos' Philippines, Duvalier's Haiti, and Noriega's Panama.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.16. Quoted p. 5, *supra* .

The United States could scarcely have abstained from intervention in any of these three instances. The destiny of all three countries have been inextricably intertwined with that of our own. Throughout the twentieth century, of all Third World nations, Panama and the Philippines have been closest historically to the United States. Haiti, geographically an even closer neighbor, has extensive ties with us through immigration, and increasing commercial linkages. Corrupt and inept governments in all three eventually evoked popular revulsion, and in all three, the political opposition needed, and received, U.S. understanding and support. In all, the native military establishment became the arbiter of the political destiny of three governments which had lost their legitimacy: military cooperation with reformers led to the ejection of Marcos and Duvalier, and military opposition to the first genuine middle-class political movement in Panama's history has so far stymied attempts to unseat General Noriega. All three nations are in the midst of profound change, change in which the United States will be unavoidably involved. The next President faces tough decisions in all three.

In the instance of the Philippines, the apolitical stance of General Ramos deserves applause; the military performance of his officer corps or his troops does not. The Phillipine armed forces continue to be plagued with difficulties in their long struggle against armed communists, prominent among which are lack of popular confidence and trust. Reforms not unlike those undertaken with the El Salvadoran armed forces appear to be needed. The legitimacy of Madame Aquino's government hangs in the balance.

In Haiti, Duvalier's flight has precipitated a succession of military *coups d'etat*, punctuated by terrorism and riotous violence. But, in that pitifully impoverished and politically immature country, only the military seems to have the power, the organization, and the cohesion for public administration. The challenge for the United States, and other nations interested in the emergence of democratic civil rule, is to aid and guide the uniformed leaders into constructive and supportive roles, and above all to prevent the emergence of a Noriega-like general dominating an entrenched militarized government.

The frustration of American and Panamanian aspirations for legitimate democratic government in Panama can reasonably be described as a product of U.S. neglect as much as a failure of U.S. intelligence, for despite our years of living cheek by jowl with the Panamanian military establishment, its organizational dynamics, wiles and ways -- especially those rooted in corruption and venality -- were considered relatively unimportant, and were therefore largely ignored by senior U.S. commanders and Ambassadors. It is true also that they were largely uninvestigated by U.S. military intelligence. But both failings contributed to our standing by while the obdurate and amoral Noriega seized commanding political ground from which he could defy outraged public opinion in Panama and the

United States, the determined efforts of the Department of State and the CIA to unseat him, and an order for extradition handed down by a U.S. Federal Court. Noriega is both a nineteenth century *caudillo*, and a twenty first century political renegade, an unlettered and unprincipled opportunist prepared, in the name of Panamanian nationalism, to form league with narcotraffickers, with the Cubans, and with any other source of support for his perpetuation in power. He, and the political progress he has blocked, will assuredly be on the political agenda of the next President of the United States, and that of his successor. In my view, legitimacy depends upon stripping the Panamanian Defense Forces of their civil authorities -- which assuredly means removing *El Sapo*¹⁰ and his toadies -- and capitalizing upon the new political energy of the middle class to reform the Panamanian government. I am optimistic that the job can be done -- but I will readily admit it seems as daunting as did the task in El Salvador in 1983.

¹⁰ Manuel Antonio Noriega was known within the *Guardia Nacional* as "The Toad", a physiognomic reference to his propensity for laying back in the political weeds, his bulging, unblinking eyes watching for the opportune moment to strike.