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**MILITARY HUMANITARIAN/CIVIC ACTION: THE RESERVE
COMPONENT AS AN INSTRUMENT OF UNITED STATES
STRATEGY IN LATIN AMERICA**

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

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Military civic action can be important in buttressing Latin American democracies against the pressures of economic depression. Not only can the application of military civic action give underprivileged citizens confidence in their government, it also can create an environment in which the education, discipline, and experience of the Reserve Components can be put to use in building the infrastructure that these citizens need if they are to help themselves out of poverty. The citizen soldier is the unique military force, having both civilian and military skills to accomplish this strategic mission.

This paper analyzes the value of an enhanced relationship between the United States Reserve Components (United States Army Reserve and National Guard) and Latin America. The main focus is centered around the Joint Chief of Staff (JCS) exercises. The first half of this paper discusses the background and history of humanitarian and civic action (H/CA) in relation to the military as a whole. The second half concentrates on the background and recent developments of the Reserve Component involvement in the H/CA exercises. Also included are the criticisms and advantages of employing the Reserve Component in planning and conducting JCS exercises. The

JCS exercises. The final part is conclusions and recommendations for continued use of Reserve Components for this strategic mission in Latin America.

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INTRODUCTION

This paper analyzes the value of an enhanced partnership between the United States Reserve Components (United States Army Reserve and Army National Guard) and Latin American civil and military organizations and civilians on projects that promote stability and economic development in Latin America. This study examines projects in which the Reserve Components have assisted in host-nation military and civilian projects such as building schools, roads, clinics and bridges; digging water wells; and treating the sick and its ability for promoting democracy in the future. It will focus on identifying and discussing the historical background of humanitarian and civic action (H/CA), propose seven points for continued use of the Reserve Components for H/CA, and conclude with recommendations to future employment.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Throughout history, military organizations have been used for road-building and other non-military construction efforts. Among the military forces of the past that engaged in developmental activities were the Nubians of ancient Egypt, who built monuments; the Eurasians, whose army built water supply aqueducts around Rome; and the military forces of Alexander the Great, who developed specialized medical and engineering systems.¹

In more recent times, nation building activities endeavors played a major role in the empire building activities of Great Britain and the Soviet Union. The British Corps of Engineers pioneered in building the water supply and communication systems in India, Egypt, the Sudan, and Palestine. In the early 1960's the Soviet Union was using its military forces in military civic action exemplified by the statement that "soldiers" of the construction units, of the engineering and railroad forces take direct part in general production: they build houses, bridges, and roads.²

The experience of the United States in military civic action dates from the establishment of the Military Academy at West Point. This national institution emphasized engineering subjects in its curriculum. Its graduates, in addition to pursuing military careers, have also been sought as professors in civilian engineering institutions. During nineteenth century expansion, the U.S. government also designated officers to command and staff exploration parties to compile data on the flora and fauna of the western regions.³ The American West was opened primarily by United States Army Corps of Engineers following nineteenth-century explorations undertaken by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, Zebulon Pike, Stephen H. Long, and Stephen W. Kearney.⁴

By 1820, these efforts caused Zachary Taylor to state that “the ox, pick, saw, and trowel have become more the implement of the American soldier than the cannon, musket, or sword.” Indeed, “the Army blazed the first clearly marked trail from the Mississippi to the Pacific.”⁵ These national development efforts by the United States military have continued into the twentieth century. Such U.S. Army missions have established a tradition that continued in flood control and the maintenance of some of the country’s major river transportation systems. This type of activity in the Western Hemisphere was not unique to the United States. The use of military forces in some aspects of socio-economic development had a lengthy history in Latin America.⁶ The earliest of such activities supported construction of the road and irrigation systems of the Incas. The Spanish military helped to build roads to mining areas, and “The Mexican military under Porfirio Diaz (1876-1911) built roads that made later modernization possible.”⁷

The U.S. military has played a major role in the emergence of democratic governments in Latin America. The concept of "Humanitarian/Civic Action" (H/CA) formalizes activities that for some time have been carried out in an informal manner. H/CA triggers the process that enables the military to contribute to the social and economical development of a society. Most important, this process of aiding civilians in any Third World country can increase popular support for the established government and the United States military, while contributing in a significant way to the strategic development of that country.

Military Civic Action (MCA) and Humanitarian and Civic Assistance (H/CA), still popularly called "civic action" by U.S. soldiers, are not normally topics that inflame hearts and minds, but they should. With tumultuous events presaging change in much of the world, and with shrinking U.S. military budgets, generic civic action and humanitarian and civic assistance by U.S. military personnel ideally hold the promise of meaningful training opportunities in promoting democracy. Moreover, civic assistance projects can advance the interests of the United States while assisting Third World countries teetering on bankruptcy. These opportunities are opening at a time when civic action projects by the U.S. military are severely constrained by law and misunderstood by the public.⁸

Cumulatively, the history of civic action, with its linkage to counter-insurgency and low-intensity conflict doctrine, has tarnished the idealistic qualities of the concept and has led some civilian governments to avoid working with the U.S. Army in Latin America. The removal of the U.S. Southern Command from Panama by the year 2000 offers a splendid opportunity for the U.S. Army to promote a joint-service reorientation of U.S. doctrine and strategy, not only for Latin America but for most of the Third World as well. The thesis of this paper is that such an

effort, if it is to avoid the political and doctrinal pitfalls that have marked the history of the civic action concept, should be delinked from counter-insurgency (CI) and low-intensity conflict (LIC).⁹

Humanitarian/civic action exercises during the 1980s and 1990s are an offshoot of the military civic action programs sponsored by the Kennedy Administration in the early 1960s. H/Cs reflect changing United States strategy to meet the challenge of wars of national liberation, insurgencies, and revolutions.¹⁰

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Even before President Kennedy definitively linked MCA to internal security and counterinsurgency, congressional debates showed that Congress voiced appreciation for the role civic action could play in development--as long as MCA was not linked overtly to "internal security" policies in Latin America. By 1957 the framework for future congressional debates on MCA and H/CA and their negative linkage with internal security doctrine in Latin America was being set. Congressional discussion on aid to the U.S. -supported military regime in Guatemala in the aftermath of the 1954 overthrow of the Communist Arbenz government indicated that congressional interest in promoting developmental civic action by indigenous forces was linked to growing concern about Latin American economic conditions and their relationship to the possibilities of Communist expansion from within. Until the threat of internal subversion rose to the fore, the U.S. rationale for military aid to Latin America was stated as the need for hemispheric defense against external aggression. The external aggression rationale was to be maintained sporadically into the Kennedy administration because it avoided criticism in

Congress that U.S. aid to Latin American militaries was being used to suppress popular opposition within Latin American countries.¹¹

In line with Congress's more development-oriented thinking, economic aid to Bolivia was quintupled by 1956 and was quickly followed by the proffering of military aid. Both types of aid promoted military civic action programs by Bolivian troops that were deemed so successful by Senator George D. (R., VT) in 1960 that he likened them to the U.S. Civilian Conservation Corps and recommended these efforts be encouraged elsewhere.¹²

Reserve Components have performed H/CA missions in Third World countries since the early 1980s. The primary purpose of this overseas deployment training (ODT) is to support the CAPSTONE program. ODTs, in concert with Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS)-sponsored training/exercises, have enhanced the Reserve Components ability to go to war. These exercises provide realistic training and offer excellent tests of Reserve Component readiness. This training also benefits the host nation by improving its infrastructure.¹³ It should be emphasized, however, that such training is also intended to provide additional tangible benefits for the host nation, such as the construction of roads and the provision of health care. In many cases, H/CA and military civic action (MCA) have been side benefits of these exercises.

The coupling of ODT and H/CA evolves from the type of units that need training. Within the Army, 67 percent of combat engineers, 64 percent of water supply units, 77 percent of bridge companies, 77 percent of hospitals, and 64 percent of medical units are in the National Guard or Reserves.¹⁴

These types of units are also the ones most likely to have the skills that are most needed in underdeveloped countries (e.g., minor constructions, disease control, veterinary services, basic

medical services, water system engineering). As stated by Lieutenant General Emmett H. Walker, Jr., former Chief, National Guard Bureau, "Bottom line - the facts are simple. We are there to train, nothing more." Since the RC has global missions in event of mobilization, ODT becomes essential if overall operational readiness is to be improved. If, in the process, the host country receives other benefits, there are also benefits to the Commander-in-Chief's (CINC's) mission of H/CA.¹⁵

CONCERNS

While the advantages are many, some voices, both within and outside the United States, disagree with the concept of ODT, especially in Latin America. In an important test of the role of the relationship between state and federal control of the National Guard, four governors attempted to stay the deployment of their troops on ODT in Central America.¹⁶ The legal basis for the governor's case was that the "training" was actually a preparation for war. There have also been environmental concerns. For example, a Honduran citizen touring the United States with a disarmament program, was quoted as saying, "We were once rich in woods. Now Honduras could become a desert as entire forests are razed to make room for joint maneuvers, training exercises, air strips."

Other critics of Latin American H/CA include Dr. Philip Sheperd of Florida International University and Dr. Mark Rosenberg, Director of that institution's Latin American and Caribbean Center. These critics basically fault U.S. military involvement in any form in the area.¹⁷

Irrespective of these concerns the U.S. military recognized the value of ODT in Central America as demonstrated by its recent shift from an emphasis exclusively on training to an

explicit acknowledgment of the importance of H/CA. The mission statement from Task Force Bravo in Honduras for Fuertas Caminos '89 included a goal to "in conjunction with Honduran armed forces: plan, coordinate, and execute humanitarian/civic action (H/CA) programs in the southwestern region of the Aguan Valley."

THE STEVENS AMENDMENT

The Stevens Amendment to Title 10, U.S.C. lifted some of the congressional limitations on providing H/CA to host nations. Now civic action projects may be conducted incidental to JCS exercises, but they are still restricted to the vicinity of the exercises and must be within established cost limits and the capabilities of troops assigned to the exercise. The 1986 revision of Title 10, enhanced the military's capability to plan and coordinate the H/CA activities to be conducted during the training exercise with the host nation. The result is greater tactical success, but, as suggested by the criticism, strategic uncertainty.¹⁸

Within the auspices of the revised law, US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) formulated a policy that requires civic action will be conducted as an integral part of all JCS directed or coordinated exercises taking place in the theater. In all cases, civic action is a combined US and HN effort from the initial area site survey to the actual execution of a project. The developing civic-action doctrine of USSOUTHCOM seeks to make certain that projects associated with exercises are balanced between engineering and medical activity. Although projects fall into the mitigating category of civic action, CA planners seek to integrate projects in existing national development plans. The evolving doctrine calls for close coordination with USAID and the relevant HN ministries from the inception of civic-action planning.¹⁹

JUSTIFICATION

In spite of the opposition, there are many reasons that argue in favor of both continued ODT and H/CA. First, it is important to recognize that the opposition to ODT and H/CA seems to focus not on the activities themselves, but on U.S. policy toward Latin America in general. While it is true that ODT in Central and South America has been conducted by National Guard units in increasing numbers since 1983 (over 100,000 members participating), this was merely an extension of the policy of enhanced peacetime engagement and conflict prevention.²⁰ The Guard is not only training in Latin America but in over forty countries worldwide. While its efforts are evident in training exercises from the Pacific rim to Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean are an economy of force theater, where the RC can make meaningful contributions in promoting democracy, while serving our allies in solidifying their infrastructure and improving the quality of life.

Second, the degree of bureaucratic oversight is so great that all parties can be assured that H/CA will continue to take place within the training context. In reviewing the Department of Defense's (DOD's) MCA projects in Honduras, the Government Accounting Office (GAO) stated "we agree with SOUTHCOM that no funding violation results from bona fide training activities that result in a concurrent civic or humanitarian benefit," so long as activities of a "type and amount which fall within the scope of other appropriation categories are paid for from those other sources." Because ODT involves Reserve Component men and women from all over the United States, it is hardly a mechanism within which to conduct covert operations and unauthorized projects.²¹

Third, ODT cannot be duplicated within the United States. Overseas deployment training in remote, austere conditions allows RC units to exercise their support systems much as would be required in combat. Units train under tougher conditions than normally encountered during stateside annual training, boosting readiness and making them a credible force. According to one observer, the deployment alone is a great learning experience.²² Colonel Frank N. Sefton III, Commander of Task Force 1169, during JTX "Abriendo Rutas '87", stated that "training opportunities on an exercise of this type simply cannot be compared to those present in a normal CONUS (Continental United States) annual training period. Everything is real. Nothing is canned; nothing can be taken for granted. It is truly the closest to real campaigning the troops will get short of war." Colonel Sefton concluded that there should be no doubt that the series of engineer training exercises that have been done in Latin America has improved the ability of the total force to perform its many missions. The opportunity to plan and execute deployments and re-deployments gives the leadership of the units involved a feel for the problems they will encounter in a real mobilization. This kind of understanding cannot be gained any other way. Colonel Sefton summed up the value of the exercise when he said, "I wouldn't take all the money in the world for this operation."²³

Brigadier General Terrence D. Mulcahy, Task Force Commander, JTX "Blazing Trails '87," echoed the same opinion on the training conducted during exercises in Latin America, stating that this type of training could not be duplicated in the United States in the area available for training and conducting that the experience makes better soldiers and greatly improves their combat readiness.²⁴

Road-building exercises in Panama, Honduras, and Ecuador with accompanying medical training have been the bulk of RC training activity in Latin America. However, support units such as military police, supply, maintenance, transportation, communication, aviation, and public affairs have also received invaluable training in these JCS-sponsored exercises. Armor and artillery units have also conducted joint exercises with Honduran armed forces in the AHUAS TARA exercise. Additionally, there is an ongoing program of stand-alone training deployments, involving military police (MPs), engineers, medical and civil affairs units. These deployments have the same legislative constraints as the above programs.²⁵

Fourth, U.S. H/CA really does help people who need it. In the exercise areas, such as these, Guardsmen see needs or are requested to assist local residents performing tasks such as repairing furnishings in schools and churches. The Guardsmen and Reservists secure materials and supplies through donations from their hometown communities; then, during their time free from training, they will work in local communities assisting with humanitarian aid. During JTX "Fuertes Caminos '88," the task force constructed three school houses, basketball courts, and soccer fields and painted and cleaned a church.²⁶ Medical readiness training exercises (MEDRETS) conducted in Latin America have added a measure to the health care in many communities throughout the exercise areas. Although the training mission of these exercises is to expose military medical personnel to field tropical medicine, they have a lasting effect through the treatment provided and the preventive medicine classes given to local residents in the vicinity of exercise areas. According to one qualified observer, the community benefits of such exercises in 1989 included providing medical assistance to 8,000 Hondurans, treating 8,000 animals, and performing some 5,000 tooth extractions.²⁷

Of all the assistance provided by RC troops, road-building and repair are the most valuable. New roads improve the transportation in rural areas, giving farmers a better means of getting their produce to markets and opening areas for more commerce. Most of the people see this as a benefit, but it also raises some concerns. For instance, as one local citizen in Panama close to the exercise "Costa Abajo '86" put it, "The road is good. We may have trouble. Everybody will be coming in. The first thing I'll have to do is get iron bars for the windows."²⁸

Fifth, H/CA and MCA build esprit de corps within the RC units. The H/CA activities not only benefit the host nation but also have a lasting effect on U.S. RC troops. From the programmed H/CA activities to the self-initiated humanitarian assistance projects, individual Guard and Reserve personnel feel a sense of accomplishment in improving their skills and providing assistance to host-nation citizens. As our nation moves to execute a capabilities based strategy with the absence of a clearly defined threat, the esprit de corps gained through helping the less fortunate could become an important factor in recruitment and retention in the reserves-- a matter of no small import.²⁹

The sixth point is that exercises allow RC personnel to be role models. The use of citizen soldiers as key exercise participants with emerging democracies, once led by totalitarian regimes, provides an alternate model for restructuring and remissioning the armed forces along democratic lines. The cross section of American society represented in the RC by the citizen-soldier gives the host nation's military a first-hand view of democracy working in the form of U.S. military carrying out the directions of the U.S. civilian-controlled government. Although our nation has been able to convey this message to foreign students through the training given in our various military institutions, the opportunity is limited to relatively few military personnel. Through

ODT, we reach a broader cross section of the host-nation military. General Fredrick Woerner, the former Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Southern Command, points out that "exercises and service-funded deployments for training (often engineer and medical units) are our primary means for achieving a constructive force presence throughout the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility. These JCS exercises and deployments for training are, at times, our only effective medium for working with host nation militaries." General Woerner goes on to say that "In view of scarce or absent security assistance, humanitarian and civic assistance can be a powerful supplement to our efforts."³⁰

Finally, H/CA and MCA contribute to the stability and support operations(SSO). Using Reserve Component forces in SSO conflicts is already a matter of fact--as they are currently being employed in many Third World countries in a military civic action role during JCS deployments. Lieutenant Colonel Wayne Gosnell position, states that:

"U.S. Reserve forces operating in Latin America have received valuable, real-world training in often environmentally austere foreign environments under austere conditions emphasizing competence and self-reliance and leaving behind them tangible improvements in the daily lives of thousands of rural campesinos--just the kind of thing of which SSO victories are made."³¹

RC forces are employed on a short-term basis, in the peacetime engagement and conflict prevention, eliminating the fear of the host country that they will be a long-term military presence with which they have to deal. Furthermore, a large portion of RCs have units uniquely suited to military civic action. The Guard and Reserve soldiers possess skills from their civilian employment that give them an edge over their active-component counterpart, and allow them to contribute to SSO in Third World countries much more as a civilian than as a soldier. They convey an image of democracy few Latin Americans have experienced.³²

Major General Michael W. Davidson, The former Adjutant General of Kentucky (TAG, KY), now Special Assistant to CJCS for RC in discussing the significance of RC forces in furthering American national security through ODT in Latin America, has said, "When we provide medical and dental care and the construction of schools and roads--the specific results of Guard and Reserve training in Latin America--we are nation-building."

JOINT CHIEF OF STAFF (JCS) EXERCISES

The success of RC unit in JCS exercises cannot be overestimated as a means of employing RC force as future force packages. The Reserve Component exercise program was initiated in 1984. The initial exercise, JTX "Minuteman I," was a small engineer exercise conducted as a test in the Azuero Peninsula of the Republic of Panama. COL William A. Navas Jr., now a Major General and Director of the Army National Guard, commanded the task force during the period Feb 84 - May 84. Fifteen hundred soldiers from the Puerto Rico and Louisiana National Guard received training during Minuteman I.³³ Because of the tremendous success of this exercise, the RC exercise program grew in January 85 with the first Blazing Trails Engineer Exercise, an extension of Minuteman I 1984, Blazing Trails 85 was conducted in Panama with base camps located in three areas. This exercise involved two major engineer task forces from Louisiana and Missouri, and a Logistical Support Element (LSE) from Alabama was developed to support this major exercise. Blazing Trails 85 was the largest RC exercise ever conducted in the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility; more than 12,000 soldiers trained in a six month period. The two task forces built 25 km of new road, upgraded 22 km, and constructed 13 bridges. I 1984 exercise.

Since 1984, at least two Joint Chiefs of Staff Exercises have been conducted each year in Latin America. Over 120,000 National Guard soldiers have been deployed and trained during the period 1984-1996.³⁴

The value of these exercises is evident. SOUTHCOM is an economy of force theater and without the support of the Reserve Components, the United States Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) would be hard pressed to do their mission. That sounds rather blunt; however, when one considers that of the 3,000 deployments that occur annually throughout the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility (AOR) over 40 percent are composed of Reserve or National Guard forces. The numbers speak for themselves.³⁵

IMPACT ON SOUTHCOM

The United States Southern Command is one of five regional unified combatant commands. It has responsibility for overseeing U. S. military operations throughout Central and South America and their adjacent waters. As a result of President Clinton's December 1995 decision to change the Unified Command Plan and realign responsibilities of the combatant commanders, on 1 June 1997 SOUTHCOM assumed responsibility for U.S. military operations in the Caribbean.³⁶

Through regional collaboration with the militaries of the nations of the Americas, SOUTHCOM helps build cooperative relations and promotes security partnerships. By promoting and protecting U.S. interests, SOUTHCOM serves as well to deter threats to U.S. citizens and property. If necessary, SOUTHCOM will actively defend our strategic interests within the area of responsibility (AOR).³⁷

Each of the service components that support SOUTHCOM from bases in the United States (CONUS) have forward elements located in Panama. They provide the bulk of the services' operational support for accomplishing their assigned missions, including H/CA activities. So SOUTHCOM assigns approximately 7,500 active-duty service members to this support group in Panama. This small force thus assumes immediate responsibility for protecting our national interest over more than one-sixth of the land surface of the world.³⁸

As to the future, the National Guard plans to continue training units and personnel through exercises in Latin America. They have become an integral part of USSOUTHCOM forces that exert a U.S. military influence in the theater. The Army National Guard (ARNG) has become more than just a deployable force to meet U.S. National strategic interests. It is the on-ground force in a number of areas. In 1989 in Latin America, RC units conducted two road-building projects in Honduras. Plans for 1998 indicate a continuation of RC projects in Panama and Ecuador, and in 1999 two more road-building projects are planned.³⁹

In addition to the engineer projects, field medical training is conducted throughout Latin America, primary through twelve rotations of forty-five-man elements that trained in various Latin American countries during FY97. Plans for out-years call for continuation of medical training in Latin America. Deployment training for public affairs detachments, military police units, artillery batteries, and infantry companies is also currently ongoing and planned in the future.⁴⁰

ACTIONS TO ADDRESS

Although the seven points presented in this paper argue for "full speed ahead" on delivering H/CA or MCA during ODT, future tactical and strategic success could be hindered if past criticisms are not addressed. A careful analysis of the situation suggest five potential areas, which if adequately addressed, would assist in correcting or easing many of the perceived problems:

a. **Coordination with the Agency for International Development (AID).** State Department officials in Honduras were either critical of military medical civic action projects or mute, at least in writing. The common attitude of State toward DOD conduct of civic actions in Honduras reflected their philosophy about long-term health care development. They tended to see military health care programs as short-term, temporary, and, at times, obstructive to State's charter for long-term development of Honduras' health care system.⁴¹ Does this opinion come out disputes? Without further data, there is no way to decide. In any case, RC task force commanders, along with project officers, have a management responsibility to ensure staff coordination, which is always difficult. The problem is compounded when the staffs are in different countries and within different bureaucracies. Nevertheless, the Agency for International Development (AID) and the RC are part of the same national strategy, and a total-quality management approach implies coordination and consensus on the MCA projects.⁴²

b. **Coordination on the environment.** With growing emphasis on protecting Third World ecosystems, criticisms such as the Hondurian citizen's, the question of environmental impact must be addressed during the planning stage. For example, a CONUS training unit cannot legally cut down trees, alter a stream, or build a road without approval from the

installation environmental office. Although trainers sometimes see such regulations as a hindrance, it provides them a protection that is not available to RC units already obliged to assess the environmental impacts of engineering projects abroad. Army Regulation 200-2 states: "In accordance with Executive Order 12114, DOD Directive 6050.7 and Chapter 8 of this regulation, an environmental planning and evaluation process will be incorporated in Army actions that may significantly affect environments of other nations, or any protected or ecological resource of global importance."⁴³ Having the necessary documentation prior to beginning the exercise will provide the RC commander with the ammunition he or she needs to counter critics. Staff responsibility for ensuring the proper documentation resides in the U.S. Army Forces Command Environmental Office for Reserve units and the ARNG Environmental office for National Guard units.

c. **Cultural and language training.** Major Bernard E. Harvey, USAF, a staff officer at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, referencing a conversation with Mr. Steve Johnson, a former Assistant Air Attaché to Honduras during the early period of the U.S. military buildup, discussed troubles arising from the rapid increase in the size of the U.S. troop contingent. Mr. Johnson described cases of socially offensive behavior among U.S. soldiers, lack of proper respect for Honduran military personnel, and coordination problems between State and DOD agencies in Honduras. He emphasized MCA was absolutely essential in limiting the damage done by U.S. troops and government employees not sensitized to the Honduran culture. While primarily an argument in favor of MCA, the issue of cultural sensitivity applies to future H/CA and MCA as well. One way of fostering cultural sensitivity would be to increase the emphasis on language training for all personnel or using soldiers from other states familiar with the language and

culture as liaisons with the local populace rather than just for those in Civil Affairs or in other specialized units.⁴⁴

d. **Distancing HCA from combat operations.** MCA or H/CA projects that can be interpreted as augmenting the ability of U.S. troops to invade a host country should be avoided. Airfields and other facilities built in Honduras are examples of projects that are viewed with suspicion.⁴⁵ A good public information program with clearly articulated goals and objectives that can be understood by the local population is absolutely necessary to preclude mistaken perceptions and ease public concerns.

e. **Expanded press coverage.** Americans feel good about helping others, and there is every reason for RC components to tell their fellow citizens about the good that they are doing during ODT. There is also a need to foster good press coverage within the host nation. Harvey quoted one State Department Desk Officer as emphasizing, "It's really, really important. We shouldn't be hiding our candle under a basket. We're always unwilling to commit ourselves to civic action because of the subject's political sensitivity in the U.S. This is disturbing to the Hondurans who very much want civic action."⁴⁶ A good public affairs program can enhance the image of the effort both at home and abroad.

ANALYSIS

Throughout the 1990's, the U.S. military and its Latin American counterparts have shared similar experiences in down-sizing and restructuring. They have faced tough questions on future roles and missions appropriate to their unique national situations. Through this process of self-

examination, they have identified common interests in supporting humanitarian and civic action operations.⁴⁷

Our Reserve component forces now play an important role in SOUTHCOM. In all probability, they will play an even more important role in the future. On any given day in SOUTHCOM AOR, there are approximately 150 deployments involving over 4,000 servicemembers deployed throughout the region. Approximately 40 percent of these deployments are comprised of Reserve and National Guard soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and, Coast Guard members.⁴⁸

The use of the Reserve Components for H/CA in Latin America is more valuable now than ever. With the reduction of our defense budget, H/CAs have become the most economical way to train RC soldiers. These RC soldiers are the WAYS we carry out SOUTHCOM H/CA missions. Training dollars provide the MEANS for deploying them. Their conduct of H/CA missions justifies specific goals or ENDS of our national strategy: they enhance regional stability and strengthen the regional economy. Additionally, these missions improve Reserve Component readiness.

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, I see a myriad of reasons for continued funding of overseas deployment training (ODT) for the Reserve Component (RC), with an emphasis on humanitarian and civic assistance (H/CA) and military civic action (MCA). Points that argue for increased use include its developing-nation applicability, the increased adequacy of bureaucratic oversight, the importance of training in unusual environments, the benefits to the host-nation citizens, esprit de

corps, the opportunity to serve as military role models, and successfully waging low-intensity conflict (LIC). There is every reason to believe that these efforts will make an increasing contribution to the strengthening of emerging democracies, and, in turn, to our national strategic goals.

In summary, the Humanitarian/Civic Action program in Latin America has enjoyed continued success throughout the past few years. The Joint Chiefs of Staff exercises in Latin America have created a win-win situation for the host nation and the United States military. The Department of Defense should continue this strategy in Latin America. Further, Latin America should serve as a model for U.S. military commitments in other global regions and help reduce the OPTEMPO of the U.S. active military forces. Working as an integral part of the Total Force Reserve Component soldiers can effectively be employed as a reliable tool to promote democracy, while adding value to a region that promises to be a true and worthwhile partner in global security.

ENDNOTES

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