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THE MISSING LINK: CANADIAN SECURITY  
INTERESTS AND THE CENTRAL AMERICAN CRISIS

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Introduction: A Dialogue of the Deaf

The Central American crisis has occasioned a great deal of discussion in Canada over the past half-decade, and there is no cause for assuming that the coming years will see any abating of the public interest in the region and its problems. If anything, one can foresee an increase in concern over Central American issues--for reasons other than that the proportion of the Canadian population with Central American roots or affinities is likely to continue to grow. It is revealing that the Hockin-Simard Committee on Canada's international relations discovered that more Canadians wanted to talk more often about Central American issues than about problems in any other single region of the world,<sup>1</sup> and this notwithstanding Canada's very real and expensive alliance commitments to Western Europe and the United States---commitments that presumably should have betokened a vibrant public attentiveness, at least to Western Europe, as a region of "vital" Canadian interest.

Yet despite the demonstrably high level of public concern with Central America, the contemporary debate within Canada both over the causes and implications of the current crisis and the logic of our policy toward the region has been characterized by a near-total lack of discussion regarding the Canadian security interests that might be said to be affected as a result of the ongoing turmoil in the region, and in particular the response to that turmoil on the part of third parties, the United States above all. Illustrative of this absence of a national-security focus is the recently

tabled White Paper on defence, Challenge and Commitment, which contains not a single direct reference to Central America in its 89 pages, although what might be construed as an oblique reference to the area appears in the document's brief section on peacekeeping.<sup>2</sup> Much has been made of the ostensible "continentalization" of Canadian defence policy, a trend some observers discern on the basis of their reading of the controversial nuclear-submarines purchase proposal--a project these observers tend (mistakenly, in my view) to link almost exclusively to the issue of sovereignty and security in the Arctic.<sup>3</sup> But whether or not the White Paper portends a greater attentiveness to North America than in the past, it is clear that little is to be found therein relating to the southernmost reaches of the continent, which extends after all to the Panama Canal, and includes the entirety of Central America.<sup>4</sup>

Nor is the White Paper's slighting of Central America an oversight: historically, Latin America as a whole has not figured prominently among Canadian foreign-policy interests, for a variety of reasons.<sup>5</sup> And if it can be said that Latin American issues, at least until the start of this decade, have not warranted much attention at the Department of External Affairs, the same judgement can apply, a fortiori, to the Department of National Defence, where one gets the impression that were the analyst of strategic affairs to profess an abiding interest in Latin American security matters, he or she would probably be deemed to be long overdue for a holiday. Although there have been a few exceptions, it is clear that the vast majority of the studies, whether in-house or commissioned, undertaken in connection with strategic-analytical research at DND have been as far removed from things Latin American as Paris is from Patagonia.<sup>6</sup>

Strikingly parallel to the security community's absence of focus upon Latin and Central America has been the lack of consideration, on the part of the Canadian "attentive public" most passionate about Central America, to the possibility that there might be some legitimate security stakes, for Canada, in the current Central American conflict. For reasons perhaps not difficult to understand, the focus of this public has been typically on issues other than those relating to security--or, at least, national security--and among the primary considerations that animate those who wish to see a Canadian policy in Central America that is at once more forceful and more distanced from U.S. policy has been the question of human rights. It is this question, and the related issue of development, that has inspired much of the contemporary debate over Canada's policy toward the region; and that most of those who take part in this debate come from walks of life (e.g. the religious community) or academic fields to which the discipline of international relations stands in sharp--and not necessarily favourable--contradistinction, further supports the tendency of these critics to downplay the possibility that there might be genuine Canadian security interests worth analyzing and even defending issuing from the regional crisis. To many, both inside and outside the scholarly community, there appears to be something profoundly immoral (or, at best, amoral) about the brand of international relations theory, often classed under the rubric of "realism," that stresses the centrality of security as an interest of states.<sup>7</sup>

Related to the above, and further helping to explain why those who criticize Canadian Central American policy rarely pay much heed to national security, is the strong conviction that because the Reagan administration so constantly sounds the security theme in its own policy approach to

Central America, that theme must ex hypothesi be spurious. It has become close to a truism in Canada (and in Western Europe) to argue that the Central American crisis is, in its origins, a "North-South" question, and not, as the White House and whoever happens to be speaking for it continually declaim, an "East-West" one.<sup>8</sup> There may indeed be ample reason for not taking too seriously the Reagan administration's interpretation of the origins of conflict in Central America; nonetheless, it does seem less than logical for critics of that policy to adopt a reflexive, a contrario understanding of the regional crisis--an understanding that simply leaves very little room for a sustained critical analysis of Canada's arguably valid security interests. There is something ironic in the tendency of those who decry what they take to be a Canadian approach to Central America that displays too much timidity and too little independence themselves letting their own agenda regarding the region be set in terms of a mirror image of the prevailing interpretation in Washington.

In many ways, the question of whether the Central American crisis is "fundamentally" a North-South or an East-West one is misleading if not pointless. In reality, there are elements of both dichotomies at play in Central America, and though there may be little factual basis to the perception, so strongly held by the current U.S. administration, that Central American woes are nearly entirely explicable in terms of Soviet (or Cuban) malfeasance, the perception itself seems to have taken on an existence of its own in the context of policy, and this does inject a powerful East-West element into any discussion of the regional crisis--regardless of what the "objective" reality may be. Nor is it only in the context of East versus West that the contemplation of security interests

must be rooted; for some time, students of revolution have theorized about the manner by which aspects of socio-economic development may and do get translated into violent social upheaval aimed at altering the domestic and, in many cases, international status quo.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to social revolution as a potential security issue, and also falling somewhat outside of the East-West polarity, is another security matter: namely, the degree to which Central American strife constitutes an irritant, both within the NATO alliance and in the bilateral Canada-U.S. relationship (that is, as a "West-West" issue). Indeed, it might be argued that the primary challenge to Canadian security interests arising from the Central American crisis inheres more in the West-West than in the East-West dimension, a prospect to which I shall return in a later section. But before considering more carefully the extent to which Canadian security interests are affected by Central American developments, it would be helpful to spend some time discussing those interests, usually (but not exclusively) situated in a non-security context, that to date have drawn the most attention on the part of those who study and debate Canadian foreign policy toward Central America. It is not my intention, in this article, to argue that security is or should be the sole Canadian interest in the region; rather, I seek to redress what I hold to be a surprising, and disturbing, tendency on the part of those who do write about Central America and Canada as if the national-security factor were nonexistent.

#### Assessing Interests: A Question of Perspective

It would be as silly to maintain that Canada has only security interests to contemplate in Central America as it would be to deny that

there are any Canadian security interests involved in the regional turmoil. Similarly, it would be footless to attempt to elevate Central America, or for that matter the whole of Latin America, into a region of centrality to the identification and prosecution of important Canadian "national interests." It may well be that the trends in international politics point toward an increasing fragmentation of the post-World War II economic and security order, with the world becoming more and more regionalized; if so, it is quite possible that in some future year Latin American affairs might indeed occupy a higher place on the Canadian foreign and defence policy agenda.<sup>10</sup> But notwithstanding such evidence as that produced by the Hockin-Simard investigators, the current reality is that Canada's most important interests--in economic, political, and strategic terms--remain concentrated in regions outside of Latin America. Still, to claim that the most important, not to say "vital," of Canada's national interests are situated in Western Europe and North America (above the Rio Grande) is not the same as claiming that there are no Canadian interests in Central America worth examining.

There are a set of interests that Canada does or should identify as being worthy of pursuing in Central America. How one interprets the salience of these interests, of course, depends in no small measure upon how one interprets international political reality. It is prudent in discussions such as this for political scientists and others to reveal their analytical and conceptual biases, and to state, apologetically or not, that their interpretation of complex reality will do an unavoidable injustice to that reality by forcing it into a rather austere simplifying apparatus. My own Procrustean tendencies run, in the contemplation of

international relations, along the lines of realism. This means that my preference in endeavours such as this is to stipulate that something called a "national interest" does have utility; that states, far from being disembodied and incoherent gangs of petty mandarins, tend to be aggregated ensembles that constitute a sentient, rational entity capable of articulating and defending interests; and that among the values deemed to be most worthy of defending none is more important than the survival of the state, its people, and its territory.<sup>11</sup> In other words, I am one whose vision of foreign-policy making stresses most of the staples of classical realism: that states are rational actors; that the state can and does prevail over the wishes of private societal interests; and that security interests constitute the "core" value of states (which is not to say that they constitute the only interest).

It might be objected that realism, because of the significance it accords to "power" in the allocation of values internationally, has little to say about the foreign policy of those countries that are not among the ranks of the Great Powers--that is, of most countries on earth, including Canada. There is some merit to this view, but the stricture applies more properly to the modified version of realism known as "structural realism," and will not be pursued further here.<sup>12</sup> Analysts of Canadian foreign policy have been debating of late whether Canada does rank among the most (or least) important of states, but whether a principal, middle, or peripheral power, it seems that Canada can conform as much to "statist" formulations as can such larger powers as the United States.<sup>13</sup> I say all this because in the ensuing sections I shall analyze interests that Canada might be said to have in Central America, listing them in an order of importance that not all would agree with. Specifically, I present, in

order of increasing importance to Canada, the following interests: economic, political, and security.

#### Canadian Economic and Political Interests in Central America

Until very recently it was not unusual to encounter arguments to the effect that given the lack of any other substantive concerns in Latin America, Canada's foreign policy toward the region had, almost by default, a pronounced commercial tinge to it.<sup>14</sup> One would think that Canadian economic interests would continue to undergo close scrutiny, on the part of analysts intent upon explaining why Canada should be involved in Central America in the first place. After all, there is a powerful current of opinion among those whose academic speciality is Canadian political economy that interprets political outcomes in terms of economic (usually class) forces. Moreover, there is a long-standing tendency, among many who specialize in international political economy, to equate imperialism with the assumed needs of capitalism, typically defined as being the requirement for markets in which to dispose of surplus goods and capital, and for sources of raw materials.<sup>15</sup> In the United States, the equation of presumed economic necessity with political outcomes came close to being a dominant perspective, at least among academics interested in American foreign policy, during the Vietnam era.<sup>16</sup> It is true that there has been declining popularity for economic, or "radical revisionist," interpretations of U.S. foreign policy in recent years, but one can still find the occasional book that seeks to explain Washington's Central American policy in a way that makes of capitalism more than an incidental variable.<sup>17</sup>

In Canada, by contrast, few today seem to argue that Ottawa's initiatives toward the Central American region are framed within a context that pays much explicit attention to the presumed needs of capitalism. Why is there so little attempt to link economics with foreign policy when, as previously noted, the political economy approach remains so vibrant insofar as domestic politics is concerned? Part of the answer lies precisely in the strength of the domestic political economy tradition, for contained within the set of assumptions cherished by those who work in this vein is the postulate that Canada has no independent foreign policy. Thus, it is no surprise that few attempt to locate the "roots" of Canadian policy toward Central America in economics; for few who subscribe to the "dependency" perspective would or could concede that Canada's Central American policy, to the extent there is one, is made anywhere but in Washington.<sup>18</sup>

More importantly, however, is the tendency of many contemporary critics of U.S. foreign policy--critics who in an earlier period might have been busily tracing the economic origins of such events as the Vietnam intervention--to situate their analysis in a context that can only with the broadest of construe be labeled an economic one. In a word, many seem to have been neglecting economic formulations, whether of an instrumental or a structural Marxian nature, in accounting for the American reaction to turmoil in Central America. It is hardly noteworthy that the conventional critique of U.S. foreign policy should stress non-economic factors as being primarily responsible for that policy.<sup>19</sup> But it is interesting to see more radical analysts explain the Reagan approach by resorting to some of the core concepts of realism, especially to "geopolitics."<sup>20</sup>

In truth, it would be difficult to make a compelling case that U.S. policy toward Central America is driven by capitalist necessity--at least in a narrow view. Nor would it be necessary to resort to a broader, structural interpretation of capitalist necessity to account for Washington's obsession with the region. The reality is that so little really does seem to be at stake for the U.S. in an economic sense; and even the stoutest defenders of the Nicaraguan revolution are quick to stress the economic pluralism of the Sandinista regime--a regime that may not be seeking to make the world safe for capitalism, but by the same token is lauded by its supporters (including the Soviets and the Cubans) for its willingness to tolerate, and attempt to encourage, the continued existence of a sizable private sector.<sup>21</sup> In any event, whatever the ultimate vision of social engineering aspired to by the Sandinistas, what is not in dispute is the rather trivial direct economic stake that both the United States, and Canada, have in the entire Central American region. Neither country does as much as 2 percent of its total trade with, or has much more than 1 percent of its foreign direct investment in, the five countries.<sup>22</sup> In Canada's case, this amounts to a total two-way trade with Central America of perhaps some \$200 million a year, and direct investment of about \$250 million.<sup>23</sup>

Ranking much higher on any scale of interest that Canada can be said to have in Central America are the related political problems of development, human rights, and refugees. For some years, development advocacy has formed an important part of Canadian policy toward the Third World, and Ottawa prides itself in the relative levels of assistance given, at least in comparison with some far bigger countries.<sup>24</sup> Most official development assistance is accorded in the form of bilateral aid, the bulk

of which goes to Asia and Africa. However, since 1981 there has been a tripling of Canadian aid to Central America, on the assumption that economic assistance and development were the only long-term recipes for political harmony and regional security.<sup>25</sup> Total bilateral disbursements to Central America in Fiscal Year (FY) 1986/87 were approximately \$21 million; and are expected to be between \$22 and \$23 million for FY 1987/88. As one aid official explained it to me: "It's still peanuts by a lot of countries' standards, but by ours it's fairly significant." All five Central American countries currently receive assistance from Canada, although one of them, Guatemala, has had its official development assistance suspended, and receives only relatively small amounts (less than \$500,000) in Mission Administered Funds, as well as at least an equal amount distributed through non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Of the five countries, Honduras has been the largest recipient over the past half-decade, followed by Nicaragua, Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Guatemala. Overall, only about 2 percent of Canada's official development assistance has been directed toward the region during the past few years.<sup>26</sup>

The case of the suspension of bilateral assistance to Guatemala is instructive, for it points up the extent to which Canadian Central American policy has been focused---at least on the part of that attentive public noted earlier in this article--upon the human rights and refugee issue. To the extent that Canada's policy can be said to be influenced by domestic pressure groups, it is in the area of human rights and refugees that this effort seems to have borne the most fruit. As I mentioned above, for many who participate in the debate over Canada's Central America policy human rights is the issue most worth discussing; in this context, Guatemala has

been the worst violator of human rights in the region for the past decade (or more), followed closely by El Salvador. One U.S.-based specialist on Guatemala put it aptly: "compared with the Guatemalan leaders of recent memory, Somoza was nothing, Pinochet is a baby."<sup>27</sup> Although exact figures are obviously difficult to come by, estimates of the numbers killed in politically inspired violence (including some deaths attributable to guerrillas) between 1966 and 1985 range from a conservative 20,000 to a high of 100,000, by any reckoning the largest such death toll in Central America.<sup>28</sup>

Guatemala not only has perpetrated numerous human-rights abuses over the past 20 years (and in this category it is, sadly, not alone in the region); it has also stimulated a massive exodus of refugees. Indeed, after El Salvador, it constitutes the major source of refugee generation in Central America (although Nicaragua has in the past two years been challenging Guatemala as the region's second-largest creator of refugees).<sup>29</sup> Some of Central America's refugees have been finding their way to Canada, and have been doing so in increasing numbers since the start of the decade. Recent events, such as the arrival of the 174 Sikhs in Nova Scotia in July 1987, have served to illustrate the degree of chaos that has befallen Canada's refugee system--a system that nearly all agree is in dire need of reform. In 1986 the announced quota for refugees who would be admitted to Canada through normal channels was 12,000 worldwide, with 3,200 from Latin America (nearly all of whom would be from Central America). In addition to the official figure, another 20,000 or so refugee claimants were in Canada awaiting resolution of their cases--and a significant share of them were also from Central America.<sup>30</sup> By the end of 1986, changes in U.S. immigration policy triggered an exodus of Central Americans into

Canada; and during the first half of 1987, more than 4,000 refugee claimants from El Salvador alone had arrived in this country, a figure that constituted slightly more than 25 percent of all refugee claimants for the period January to June 1987.

Thus it is clear that human rights and refugee issues can and do have a direct impact on Canada, and in this sense they indeed rank as important Canadian interests in the region.<sup>31</sup> It may not be the case that the refugee flow does now or will ever constitute a security problem for Canada, much less a strategic one (as some analysts in the United States are wont to argue in respect of their own, vastly greater, influx of Latin immigrants).<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, it is obvious that the Central American crisis has had repercussions for Canadian refugee and immigration policy--repercussions that in and of themselves constitute, in the words of a former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador, "a legitimate interest in [Canada's] trying to change the course of a policy that is opposed by the majority of the American people" [viz. the administration's current Central American policy].<sup>33</sup> The sizable Central American community in Canada has been reflected in the growth of solidarity groups able and willing to pressure Ottawa on Central America policy; and this pressure will no doubt continue to grow concomitant with the swelling of the country's Central American population. Moreover, one senses that for the first time with the appearance of this domestic pressure, Canadian policy toward Latin and Central America began to be viewed in a manner distinctly different from the earlier tendency to construe that policy nearly exclusively in commercial terms.<sup>34</sup>

### The Need for a National-Security Focus

If the human rights/refugee crisis has set in motion an overdue transition from an earlier tendency to view Canadian interests in Central America in a unidimensional mercantile context, that transition itself is incomplete, and threatens to remain so unless and until the process of identifying Canadian interests gets filled out by a critical and sustained inquiry into the country's legitimate security interests. Indeed, unless one can substantiate some compelling reasons, from the point of view of national security, for a greater attentiveness to the crisis in Central America, it is difficult to see how the area can ever get elevated into the "region of concentration" for Canada that the Parliamentary Subcommittee on Canada's Relations with Latin America and the Caribbean recommended five years ago that it become.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, there remains the possibility that an overriding concentration on the human-rights issue--however important it may be--might have the effect of jeopardizing not only certain Canadian interests, but also the prospects for a resolution of the regional crisis itself.

Statements like the latter might appear paradoxical; if so perhaps the case of Guatemala can again be invoked to illustrate a point. One of the questions with which policy makers in Ottawa are currently wrestling is whether to resume official bilateral assistance to Guatemala. Such assistance was cut off in 1981, in response to violations of human rights--violations that by the first half of this decade had made Guatemala the hemisphere's premier pariah state. In December 1985 a popular Christian Democrat, and quondam target of right-wing death squads, Vinicio Cerezo Arevalo, was elected president, ending three decades of virtually uninterrupted military rule. The argument frequently advanced against the

resumption of official bilateral assistance is that such aid would serve to buttress a regime that, whoever might temporarily occupy the presidential palace, is still run by and for the military. There is much to be said for this argument, since Cerezo is severely constrained by his need to keep the military from stepping in and overthrowing him, something few observers doubt it would refrain from doing if it sensed its institutional interests were being profoundly challenged by the incipient democracy.<sup>36</sup>

The argument in favour of resuming aid is that it would indicate a show of support for Cerezo, and that if his rule is ever to achieve a break from the dismal record of recent Guatemalan politics, he needs the support of Western democracies, some of which (for instance, the Federal Republic of Germany) already have been increasing their economic assistance to Guatemala. The reason why a preoccupation with the human-rights performance of Guatemala should be linked with a rigorous analysis of the security dimension is that under Cerezo, Guatemala has emerged as the most imaginative and energetic of the diplomatic actors working for a comprehensive Central American peace plan. The proposal agreed to in August 1987 at the Guatemalan summit of the five Central American presidents reflects not only the efforts of the Costa Rican president, Oscar Arias, but also the determination of the Guatemalan leader; for Guatemala has been, over the past year and a half, the closest thing to an ally that Nicaragua has had in Central American diplomatic circles. It is possible, but doubtful, that the Sandinistas would have been as willing to accept the basic principles set down at Guatemala City without the intervention of Cerezo.<sup>37</sup> Nor is it even certain that there would have been any Central American summits in the past two years in the absence of Guatemalan initiatives directed toward two

abiding foreign-policy goals of Cerezo: a Guatemalan stance of "active neutrality," and the formation of a Central American parliament.<sup>38</sup>

Thus, an argument can be made that resuming aid to Guatemala will strengthen Cerezo vis-à-vis his own military, and that this will facilitate not only the process of domestic reform, but also of regional peace. And since Ottawa has on numerous occasions stressed that a negotiated solution to the Central American crisis is the only proper solution, such aid could be seen as being consistent with broader Canadian goals. But, ironically perhaps, very little of this kind of analysis seems to be taking place among those involved in the debate over Canadian Guatemala policy: the church groups and others involved with human-rights issues continue to insist that any aid given to Guatemala be channeled through NGOs, so as not to constitute a show of support for Cerezo; and the Department of External Affairs, displaying greater tenacity than logical consistency on this issue, continues to argue that in giving aid, Canada does not make a show of support for anyone, but rather acts solely with regard to the well-being of the ultimate recipients of that aid, namely those individuals most in need of economic assistance. Meanwhile, External looks long and hard for any evidence it can find of a trend-line indicating that political violence is on the decline in Guatemala. To date, it has not found the evidence it apparently wants and needs.

The case of the church groups' position on Guatemala, and the response of External Affairs, shows more than that the best, yet again, might be the enemy of the good. It also shows the extent to which an articulation of Canadian security needs has been absent from the debate over Central America policy. It may be that resumption of bilateral aid to Guatemala is unwise at the moment; but whether wise or not, the resumption of aid to

Guatemala should be examined with more critical attention to the manner in which the Central American crisis has a bearing on Canadian security. What that bearing might be I address in the following sections, dedicated to an examination of a set of Canadian security interests in Central America that are grouped into the following categories: regional conflict and superpower hostility; regional conflict resolution; and the effect of the Central American crisis on the NATO alliance.

#### Central America and the Question of East-West Conflict

Canadian security policy seeks above all to avert war between the NATO allies and the Warsaw Pact; accordingly, the major thrust of Canada's defence efforts is and has been directed at preserving stability in the region that constitutes the core of the country's security interests: the Central Front in Europe. It is true that issues on the periphery, to the extent that they portend potential conflict between the superpowers, do become relevant to this core security interest, given that they might constitute the breeding ground for the escalation of conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. Thus one could, in principle, adduce a potential security problem for Canada in Central America: the risk of escalation of conflict. But despite the fact that reduction of tensions on the periphery might be said to be one of the pillars of Canada's security policy, there really has been very little worry emanating from the Department of National Defence about the likelihood of Central American misunderstandings carrying the risk of a broader conflict between the U.S. and the USSR. To the extent that escalation in Central America looms as an anxiety to any analysts, they do not seem to be found at National Defence

Headquarters. Be that as it may, there is no shortage--in Canada and elsewhere--of speculation to the effect that if another world war is to occur, it will be because of conflict not in Central Europe, but in some part of the Third World.<sup>39</sup> Of late, most such speculation has focused on the Persian Gulf, the so-called "arc of crisis" that is said to be pregnant with the potential for global destruction. Not so long ago, southern Africa was seen by many, at least in the U.S., as the likely if not actual venue of conflict (in the event, a "resource war") between East and West. And one occasionally encounters the view that Central America might yet become the tinderbox that sets the rest of the planet ablaze.

Whatever the prospects might be of the next world war breaking out in some part of the Third World, as far as Central America is concerned the most sober and persuasive interpretation of current regional reality would be one that de-emphasizes its potential for escalation of superpower conflict, and this for a variety of reasons. Perhaps the most compelling reason for dismissing the worry that a future global conflict is brewing south of the Rio Grande inheres in the proposition that nothing in recent Soviet behaviour or doctrine would indicate that the USSR would be willing to court the risk of war in a part of the world where the preponderance of force is so much against it. It is, of course, anything but easy to infer Soviet intentions; but a good case can be made, on the basis of their experience in the Western Hemisphere, that the Soviets' policy is exceedingly cautious--and has been ever since the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962.

It may well be, as one analyst notes, that "Moscow's use of force in the Third World has ... been constrained by the danger that superpower confrontation could escalate to world war. The Soviets' dread of war is

genuine and deep-seated."<sup>40</sup> But even if one's taste in Soviet-watchers inclined toward those who see the USSR as more bent on forcible revision of the international status quo than the above quote would indicate, it is clear that there are better parts of the Third World for Moscow to be pitting itself against the U.S. than in America's strategic backyard. A few years ago, it used to be fashionable for analysts in the West to argue that Soviet analysts were impressed with the way that the "correlation of forces" was shifting in favour of world socialism; today, the Soviets seem to be much less convinced that the tide of history is--if it ever was--running strongly in their direction.<sup>41</sup> At least this would appear to be a logical inference to draw from recent developments in Central America, a region that at the start of this decade looked to be highly susceptible to the triumph of socialist revolutionaries, but that now gives every indication that the victory of the Sandinistas will not soon or easily be duplicated elsewhere.<sup>42</sup>

The risk simply seems too high, and the pay-off too low, for the Soviets to engage in adventuristic behaviour in Central America that might plunge them into war.<sup>43</sup> For those, then, inclined to worry that a superpower conflict might emerge from the current regional crisis, the best advice that can be offered is: don't. Does this mean that there is no Canadian security interest, in an East-West context, that could be said to be potentially affected by events in Central America? Not at all; for the Central American region, and the other parts of the Caribbean Basin, do not take on potential East/West security implications only as a source of conflict; they also possess security significance in the event a conflict erupts between the superpowers for reasons completely unrelated to the area

immediately to the south of Mexico.

Obviously, the outbreak of war between the United States and the Soviet Union remains a possibility, if not a probability. To the extent a direct armed struggle between the two superpowers is imaginable, it is not necessary that it should take the form of a short and rather complete nuclear exchange. Indeed, it is ever more conceivable that such a conflict might end up looking not terribly unlike either of the two world wars that preceded it.<sup>44</sup> Were this the case, it is hardly imaginable that Canada could escape involvement in the fighting, for reasons similar to those that led it into the previous global contests. And in the likely event that the major theatre of operations were the Central Front in Europe, success for NATO would depend critically upon the ability of the Alliance to sustain and resupply its forces in that theatre. To do this would require drawing heavily upon the resources of the North American defence industrial base, and this in turn would entail thousands of sailings of troops and equipment from U.S. and Canadian ports. It is estimated that fully half of the U.S. resupply effort would depart from southern ports in the Gulf of Mexico, which would first have to transit the "choke point" of the Straits of Florida before heading out into the open Atlantic, bound for Europe.<sup>45</sup>

It is in the context of an apprehended protracted war in Europe that some analysts have taken recently to desecrating a rising importance of Central America to American security interests.<sup>46</sup> While one could not gainsay the strategic importance of the Caribbean in the midst of a global war, it does not necessarily follow that Central America per se must loom as a major factor for either U.S. or Canadian security; it is quite possible that the United States could limit itself to neutralizing the Cuban air force, and eliminating the possibility of Soviet submarine opera-

tions out of Cuban facilities, with the clear aim of safeguarding the Caribbean sea lines of communication (SLOC) to Europe. Indeed, unless Nicaragua were dramatically to improve the capability of its air force, say by acquiring sophisticated fighter aircraft (something that has been mooted for the past few years), or extend basing rights to Soviet ships and planes, there might be no strategic rationale at all for a military strike against Nicaragua.<sup>47</sup> But there would be every strategic reason for the U.S., in the event of hostilities in Europe, to move militarily against Cuba, notwithstanding likely Cuban protestations of neutrality in a U.S./Soviet conflict. What in peacetime would constitute, to Canadian and other Western publics (and to not a few Americans as well), an egregious violation of both international law and common sense--namely, an armed intervention against Cuba (and/or Nicaragua)--would look entirely different to a Canadian public in wartime, for such an intervention would be seen as being an indispensable contribution to Allied, and therefore Canadian, security.

#### Canadian Security and the Central American Peace Process

It should not be assumed that it is only in the context of superpower conflict that Canada has a security rationale for concerning itself with the Central American crisis. Ironically, given the low (one hopes) probability of American-Soviet armed struggle, there is a greater likelihood that at least some Canadian troops would see duty in Central America in the event of peace, not war, breaking out. For nearly five years the Central American conflict has summoned forth laudable diplomatic efforts on the part of a small group of Latin American countries eager but,

ultimately, unable to achieve a negotiated settlement to both the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran conflicts. Called the Contadora Group, after a Panamanian island where an initial attempt was made in January 1983 to develop a workable peace plan, the governments of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, and Panama have, with intermittent spurts of energy, sought a negotiated end to the fighting in Central America.<sup>48</sup> For the past year and a half, the Contadora process has loomed close to the verge of expiration, notwithstanding some strong diplomatic backing on the part of four South American states (Peru, Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay) who became known as the Lima support group. Although Contadora itself never did produce a pact that all five Central American countries could bring themselves to accept, the recently signed Arias plan bears most of the hallmarks of the revised Contadora Acta, and as such can be seen as the legitimate fruit of that process.<sup>49</sup>

Canada has been a consistent supporter of the Contadora process, almost since its inception. The reasons are not hard to understand, but there is one element of Contadora that has often been overlooked, not only by many American observers, but also by analysts outside the U.S. Sometimes seen in Washington as a deliberate and insulting attempt to constrain U.S. foreign policy in Central America on the part of an officious gaggle of diplomatic upstarts, the Contadora process has always had within it a strong emphasis upon containing the spread of Cuban and Soviet involvement in the region. To be sure, the Contadora countries and their supporters have sought to lessen American involvement as well; but as Bruce Bagley explains, "the Contadora leaders, anti-communists to a man, were just as concerned as Washington with preventing the spread of Soviet-Cuban influence in the region."<sup>50</sup>

That there are differences between American and Canadian policies toward Central America is clear; but while the divergences often get noted, at least in this country, not so apparent are the similarities.<sup>51</sup> As far as the goal of minimizing Soviet and Cuban activity in Central America is concerned, Canada shares the position that such activity should be checked, although it does not always agree with the U.S. means toward achieving that end.<sup>52</sup> Thus, Canadian security interests can and do get facilitated by our support of Contadora, however much this may go unremarked in the academic and popular journals.

Apart from this, there is yet another link between the Central American peace process and Canadian security interests: it inheres in the possibility that should a negotiated settlement, perhaps along the lines of the Guatemala City accord, actually show signs of holding, it would give rise to some kind of international peacekeeping effort. And should this occur, it is to be expected that Canada, given its lengthy and (on the whole) distinguished record in international peacekeeping, would form part of whatever commission did get created to verify that the various parties to the accord were fulfilling their commitments.<sup>53</sup> It is in the context of a possible peacekeeping role for the Canadian Forces that there has arisen, within the Department of National Defence, whatever glimmer of institutional interest seems to have been aroused over the security implications of Central America, and for good reason, for as one senior officer in the CF phrased it in discussing a potential peacekeeping assignment for the Forces: "If asked, we will obviously consider it. We always seem to do this kind of thing, and usually we're the first to go. The chances of our being asked appear to be excellent."<sup>54</sup>

It would be wrong to imagine that the Canadian Forces are brimming over with enthusiasm to tackle a peacekeeping role in Central America, or anywhere else, for that matter: notwithstanding the degree to which the peacekeeping function seems at times to have taken on mythological proportions elsewhere in Canadian consciousness, at National Defence Headquarters there appears at best to be a quiet resignation to the prospect of making a troop commitment, however small, to yet another thankless (as the military often sees it) task. But should the International Verification and Follow-Up Commission mentioned in the Guatemala accord become a reality, Canadian participation in it would be contingent upon certain conditions being fulfilled--conditions that reflect a growing disquiet at DND and elsewhere that careful heed must be paid to the "lessons of peacekeeping," as these can be gleaned from previous such experiences. Among the requirements that would probably be necessary to secure Canadian participation are the following: a clear set of guidelines binding on all parties in the region's disputes; a competent continuing political authority, to which appeal can be made in the case of disputes; acceptance of the major parties (i.e. the U.S. and Nicaragua) to the presence of the peacekeeping force; adequate financing (something that gets little attention, except at NDHQ, where the regnant perspective is that the defence budget is already stretched too far trying to make existing capabilities match existing commitments); impartiality of the participants in the operation; and freedom of movement and expression for the peacekeeping mission.<sup>55</sup>

It is still too early to do other than speculate upon the chances of an international commission being created, or upon the organizational context (UN? OAS?) within which it would be situated.<sup>56</sup> As for a possible

Canadian role, the most likely outcome would be one that saw us participating, if asked to. Indeed, Canada had already been actively advising Contadora on matters relating to a possible control and verification commission, over the course of the past two years. Should Canadian military personnel get sent on a Central American assignment, it is highly unlikely that there would be, at any one time, more than 300 Canadian troops in all of Central America. (Indeed, the contingent would probably be of more modest size, perhaps of the same dimensions--50 or so--as the one that served as part of the first Indochina peacekeeping effort.)<sup>57</sup> But whatever the ultimate size of the Canadian contingent, the mere fact that Canadian military and civilian personnel were involved in the regional peace process would constitute a legitimate Canadian security interest in Central America.

#### Central America and the Question of West-West Tension

There is a final sense in which the Central American crisis can be said to be of relevance to Canadian security interests, and it is potentially the most interesting and important of all the security-related dimensions of the regional conflict. Although hardly ever discussed in the Canadian context, it is possible that the most lasting impact of Central American turmoil would be the effect it could have upon the relationship between the United States and its NATO allies. Admittedly, the potential of Central American issues injecting a discordant note in Alliance politics seems less apparent today than, say, four or five years ago. Indeed, compared with the situation in the first few years of the Reagan presidency, the significance of Central America as a source of tension

within the Alliance has lessened considerably. During the earlier part of the decade, observers from a variety of political positions, who could rarely come to agreement on anything, all accepted the postulate that transatlantic differences over Central America were driving a further wedge between the U.S. and its Western European allies.

On the left, observers were noting--and applauding--the development of "deep schisms" among the Western allies.<sup>58</sup> On the right, a growing readiness on the part of the Western European countries to criticize American policy toward El Salvador and Nicaragua was being ascribed to social-democratic influence, both on a national level and internationally, through the efforts of the Socialist International.<sup>59</sup> And to moderates in Europe, the U.S. attentiveness to Central America looked as if it could prove inimical to European (and therefore Alliance) security, either because it courted the risk of an escalation of tension with the Soviets, or--and this was held to be more likely --it threatened to distract Washington from the real challenge it was facing. One prominent German Christian Democrat explained: "Were Central America to distract the United States psychologically, politically or militarily from the focal point of the Soviet threat and of Western security--namely Europe--the consequences for the cohesion of the Atlantic Alliance would be incalculable."<sup>60</sup>

Today, the potential of Central American issues to inject further stresses and strains into an Alliance that has been growing more and more fractious seems less than a half-decade ago. Take, for example, the case of France: in the first blush of electoral victory, the new Mitterand government had staked out positions on the regional crisis that were quite at variance with, and extremely irritating to, Washington. Not only did France, along with Mexico, issue a declaration in 1981 recognizing the

Salvadoran opposition alliance, the FDR/FMLN, as a "representative political force," but France became the first and, to date, only Western country to sell arms to the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Moreover, in 1984 France offered to help Managua clear the mines laid in Nicaraguan waters by the Central Intelligence Agency--an offer that was conditional upon at least one other Western European country joining in the endeavour, which none did. All of this could well prompt analysts to note that of all the European countries, France was following the most active policy in Central America, as well as the one most opposed to that of the U.S.<sup>61</sup>

But France over the past three years has been pursuing a more subdued approach to Central America, and has made fewer departures, even rhetorical ones, from Washington's policy toward the region.<sup>62</sup> Not only has France been less of a factor in Central American affairs, but so too have other Western European states.<sup>63</sup> Symptomatic of the recent cooling of relations between Western Europe and the Sandinistas has been the growth in tension between Managua and the Socialist International: although the latter organization does on balance remain supportive of the FSLN, there can be no question that a "marked deterioration" in the relationship between it and the Sandinistas has occurred over the past five years.<sup>64</sup> Does all of this mean, then, that the West-West dimension of the Central American conflict has become nugatory, given that there now seems to be less overt divisiveness within the Alliance as a result of U.S. policy in the region?

I think not. To begin with, there is the prospect--admittedly one that appears improbable, given the current optimism regarding the Guatemala City accord--that the United States might eventually feel itself left with no choice but to invade Nicaragua, if it can find no other way to

secure a modification of Sandinista rule.<sup>65</sup> Such a dramatic flouting of international law would have profound repercussions within Allied countries, where it would give rise to a new and virulent wave of anti-Americanism that could either imperil continued membership in the Alliance for some countries (e.g. Spain) or, at the most extreme form, threaten the continuation of the Alliance itself. Irving Kristol raises, but does not answer, the question of the potential impact a U.S. military intervention in Nicaragua might have on the Alliance: "Under some circumstances it may become necessary for the United States to intervene militarily in Central America. Should such an intervention occur, what will our West European allies say and do? That will be the critical moment for the Western Alliance as the very existence of NATO itself may be at stake."<sup>66</sup> Kristol doubts that Western Europe would support any U.S. intervention, a position shared by Fernando Morán, who believes that "massive intervention would strengthen neutralist and pacifist movements to such an extent that it could jeopardize the continued participation in NATO of some of its members, especially Spain."<sup>67</sup>

But even in the absence of this worst-case situation of direct armed intervention, it is possible to interpret Central American conflict as potentially corrosive of Alliance solidarity. It may well be that the European Allies have eased up on their criticism of Washington's Central American policy; but it does not appear that the neo-conservatives in the U.S. have moderated their own criticism of Western Europe, and by extension, NATO. It is true that not all American critics of NATO express an animus against Europe over Central America--or any other issue, for that matter. To some in the U.S., NATO has become increasingly untenable simply because of the economic strain it puts on the U.S.<sup>68</sup> But to others, NATO

has become a burden because it is identified as a political constraint. Such in particular is the view of the neo-conservatives, who tend to regard the Alliance as an encumbrance that does not enhance American security, but detracts from it. Consider the following comment made by a researcher with the Hoover Institution: "No one who reads communist literature can fail to notice that the Soviet Union's main message to its followers in Europe is not to 'decouple' the U.S. from Europe, but to use the coupling to Soviet advantage. Since NATO's importance to the U.S. has long been axiomatic, the U.S. government, for NATO's sake, has again and again weakened itself militarily, pulled its punches in the Nicaraguas of this world, and worst of all, confused its own policy making."<sup>69</sup>

The recent travails of the Atlantic Alliance remind one of Mark Twain's famous cable from London to the Associated Press, noting that reports of his death had been exaggerated; and it is salutary to recall, for those inclined to write NATO's obituary, that some have been hearing its death rattle for almost as long as the Alliance has been in existence.<sup>70</sup> Nevertheless, it does appear that the current round of anxiety among Atlanticists--anxiety occasioned by developments in nearly all realms of Alliance affairs, covering the gamut from the strategic through the economic--does perhaps prefigure impending alterations in the security structure that has prevailed throughout the postwar decades.<sup>71</sup> NATO is unlikely to disappear soon, but it is conceivable that we are witnessing what German parliamentarian Volker R  he has termed "the end of one strategic era and the beginning of another."<sup>72</sup> On the psychological level, one often detects, among the American public and media, a sense of consternation with the dependability of the Allies, and recent events in

the Persian Gulf give yet another fillip to those in the United States, particularly on the right, who are wont to raise the cry that America is being "betrayed" by the Allies.<sup>73</sup>

It may be alarmist to claim that Central American differences will necessarily add to the already heavy burden facing those who seek to shore up Alliance unity; but it would be foolish to overlook the very real damage that anything so dramatic as a U.S. military involvement in Nicaragua could do to transatlantic harmony. And in this sense, the Central American crisis, because of its consequences for the Alliance, does constitute a Canadian security interest.

#### Conclusion: The Canadian Security-Policy Debate and Central America

It has been the thesis of this article that minimal attention has been accorded, to date, to the nexus between Canadian security policy and the crisis in Central America. This lack of concern has been evidenced both within the strategic-analytical community, and among those elements of the concerned public who closely follow developments in Central America. Illustrative of this ongoing neglect is the rather curious way in which many of those who are most opposed to American policy toward Nicaragua also tend to be opposed to continued Canadian membership in NATO---itself the target of the American neo-conservatives' abiding wrath. This is not the place to discuss the important and controversial issue of whether Canada should or should not remain in NATO; but it is worth noting that among those who wish us out of NATO few seem to recognize the possibility that if the Alliance might be a constraint upon Canadian freedom of action, so too might it be one upon American; and it is also worth pointing out that, to many in the U.S. at least, it seems as if Alliance considerations have

played a part in having stayed the impulse of the current administration toward a more forceful approach to Nicaragua. Strange partnerships are, of course, nothing new in politics. Nevertheless, the current convergence of positions of both the Canadian left and the American right on the NATO question does warrant more discussion than it has hitherto received.

Defence policy, its Alliance aspects in particular, looks likely to emerge as a major issue in the next federal election. And if the recent British election is any guide, it is more likely that NATO will undo the electoral prospects of the NDP than that the latter will undo NATO. The Alliance may not unravel, but it will evolve. One of the structural changes that is likely to transpire will be the gradual reduction of American military presence in Europe and a relative increase in that presence elsewhere, which in NATO parlance refers to "out-of-area" regions.<sup>74</sup> The dispute between Washington and its European allies over the relative responsibilities of each for security in parts of the world distant from Western Europe will likely grow more intense; and this dispute will also have implications for Canadian security--implications that will force a greater attentiveness to Central America and other parts of the Third World.

Apart from this prospect, Central America is important in the NATO context because of the extent to which Washington sees itself as obliged to pursue certain policy options--which in the current Central American context appear to be focused on the goal of "rolling back" the Sandinista revolution--precisely out of a desire not to lose "credibility" in the global arena. While not the only source of America's current policy toward Nicaragua, the credibility argument does hold more than a little sway in

Washington policy circles, where it is often argued that if the U.S. cannot prevail in Central (or the rest of Latin) America, it cannot hope to prevail elsewhere. Nor can it hope to assuage the anxieties of its allies in distant parts if it will not safeguard its most immediate security interests in its "own" hemisphere.<sup>75</sup> The credibility argument has a way of ultimately being invoked to justify American policy undertakings that cannot be supported, much less explained, in any other manner, as the experience of Vietnam came to show.<sup>76</sup> Because the Allies are the object, willy-nilly, of American efforts to establish credibility, there is another reason for them to involve themselves more, rather than less, with Central American and other "out-of-area" matters.

The Alliance relationship aside, Canada has, I have argued, other security concerns in Central America--concerns that should occasion considerably more attention than has been so far accorded by Ottawa. One need not advocate swinging the axis of Canadian security policy away from Europe and toward the Western Hemisphere to make the modest suggestion that a greater sensitivity to the security dimension of the Central American crisis should be manifested by the organs of the state. The sempiternal muddle over whether or not Canada should join the OAS will, for instance, continue to persist, and of some consideration to this policy issue will be the kinds of security arrangements that any OAS membership might entail. For should the Central American peace process ever culminate in the staging of an international peacekeeping effort, it is likely that the OAS would be involved, something that would add further cogency to the membership question from the standpoint of Canadian security, given the likelihood that the Canadian Forces would be among the peacekeepers sent to the region.

To the oft-posed question, then, of why the Allies should concern themselves with Central America, must be framed this response: because it is a legitimate security interest of the Alliance, and particularly of Canada. That one so rarely hears this reply from policy makers at External Affairs is, perhaps, surprising, but not so surprising or disturbing as the Defence White Paper's utter neglect of Central America.

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Government of Canada, Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons, Independence and Internationalism (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, June 1986), p. lll.

<sup>2</sup>Government of Canada, Department of National Defence, Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy for Canada (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1987).

<sup>3</sup>For examples of this tendency to situate the submarines purchase within a predominantly North American context, see Edgar J. Dosman, "Arctic Issue Puts Chill on U.S., Canada," Los Angeles Times, 24 June 1987; and David Buchan, "Fortress Canada Toughens Up," Financial Times, 5 August 1987.

<sup>4</sup>For the purposes of this article, I shall follow the common practice among students of Latin America and confine the Central American category to the following five countries: Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica.

<sup>5</sup>See John W. Holmes, The Better Part of Valour: Essays on Canadian Diplomacy (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1970), p. 11: "Canadians, never having shared the Washington-Bolívar mystique and the revolutionary Republican tradition, have not taken very seriously the idea that they have special links with peoples of vastly different political traditions merely because they happen to be linked by an almost intraversable neck of land. History has bound Canada across traversable oceans to the northern hemisphere."

<sup>6</sup>For some exceptions, see two studies commissioned by DND's Operational Research and Analysis Establishment: David Charters and Maurice Tugwell, "Insurgency and Counter-insurgency in Central America," ORAE Extra-Mural Paper, no. 23 (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, June 1983); and Edgar J. Dosman, "Latin America and the Caribbean: The Strategic Framework - A Canadian Perspective," ORAE Extra-Mural Paper, no. 31 (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, April 1984).

<sup>7</sup>It goes without saying that those who specialize in the sub-discipline of international relations known as "strategic studies" are viewed with misgiving by a large number of their academic colleagues, particularly by those whose own manner of grappling with international reality is identified with the "peace" and "development" approaches. For a sensitive treatment of the cleavage, see Michel Fortmann, "Les Études Stratégiques: Défense d'une Discipline," Études Internationales 17 (December 1986): 767-84. On the broader question of the ethical merits (or demerits) of contemporary realism, see Richard K. Ashley, "The Poverty of Neorealism," International Organization 38 (Spring 1984): 225-86.

<sup>8</sup>The "North-South" variant is also known as the "local-roots" hypothesis, and it is fair to say that not only do the critics of Canadian Central American policy adhere closely to it, but so too do the Central America experts at the Department of External Affairs. Steven Baranyi,

"Canadian Foreign Policy towards Central America, 1980-84: Independence, Limited Public Influence, and State Leadership," Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies 10 (1985): 32-33.

<sup>9</sup>Marx may be the most celebrated theorist of the social origins of revolution, but he is far from the only writer--nor was he the first--to explore the security implications of certain socio-economic arrangements. See, for useful guides to the literature on social revolution, A.S. Cohan, Theories of Revolution (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1975); Jack A. Goldstone, "Theories of Revolution: The Third Generation," World Politics 32 (April 1980): 425-53; and Theda Skocpol, "Explaining Revolutions: In Quest of a Social-Structural Approach," in The Uses of Controversy in Sociology, ed. Lewis A. Coser and Otto N. Lansen (New York: Free Press, 1976), pp. 155-75.

<sup>10</sup>On the tendency of the international system toward fragmentation, see K.J. Holsti, "Change in the International System: Interdependence, Integration, and Fragmentation," in Change in the International System, ed. Ole R. Holsti, Randolph Siverson, and Alexander L. George (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1980), pp. 23-53.

<sup>11</sup>For an attempt to render the national interest into an operational concept, see the following two books: Stephen D. Krasner, Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investments and U.S. Foreign Policy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); and Donald E. Nuechterlein, America Overcommitted: United States National Interests in the 1980s (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1985).

<sup>12</sup>The starting point for any discussion of structural realism remains Kenneth N. Waltz, Theory of International Politics (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1979). Also noteworthy for its structural biases is Robert W. Tucker, The Inequality of Nations (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

<sup>13</sup>Such, at least, is the thesis of Kim Richard Nossal, The Politics of Canadian Foreign Policy (Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall, 1985). For the flavour of the contemporary debate over where Canada fits in the "structure" of the international political system, see David B. Dewitt and John J. Kirton, Canada as a Principal Power: A Study in Foreign Policy and International Relations (Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, 1983); and Michael K. Hawes, Principal Power, Middle Power, or Satellite? Competing Perspectives in the Study of Canadian Foreign Policy (Toronto: York University Research Programme in Strategic Studies, 1984).

<sup>14</sup>Canada's policy toward Cuba is often projected in a mercantile light; and analysts of Canadian interests elsewhere in Latin America have stressed the relative visibility of trade over other interests. Cecilio J. Morales, Jr., "A Canadian Role in Central America," International Perspectives, January/February 1985, pp. 12-15; Morris H. Morley, "The United States and the Global Economic Blockade of Cuba: A Study in Political Pressure on America's Allies," Canadian Journal of Political Science 17 (March 1984): 25-48. Also see André Donneur, "La politique du Canada vis-à-vis de l'Amérique Latine," a paper presented to the Inter-University Seminar on International Relations, Quebec, March 1983, p. 10:

"Si l'on se penche plus en détails sur les relations du Canada avec l'Amérique latine, il apparaît que les relations les plus importantes sont commerciales."

<sup>15</sup> See Harry Magdoff, The Age of Imperialism: The Economics of U.S. Foreign Policy (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969). For a different view of the relationship between capitalism and imperialism cf. Benjamin J. Cohen, The Question of Imperialism: The Political Economy of Dominance and Dependence (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

<sup>16</sup> The exemplary work in the "radical revisionist" tradition remains William Appleman Williams, The Tragedy of American Diplomacy, 2d ed. (New York: Dell, 1972). For a useful critique of this perspective, see Robert W. Tucker, The Radical Left and American Foreign Policy (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971).

<sup>17</sup> See Walter LaFeber, Inevitable Revolutions: The United States and Central America (New York: W.W. Norton, 1984); and Noam Chomsky, Turning the Tide: The U.S. and Latin America (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1986).

<sup>18</sup> Although dated, a good starting point for the dependency perspective remains Stephen Clarkson, ed. An Independent Foreign Policy for Canada? (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1968) especially the editor's concluding chapter, "The Choice to be Made," pp. 253-69. Somewhat less dated is John Hutcheson, Dominance and Dependency: Liberalism and National Policies in the North Atlantic Triangle (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1978).

<sup>19</sup> See especially Eldon Kenworthy, "Central America: Beyond the Credibility Trap," in The Central American Crisis: Sources of Conflict and the Failure of U.S. Policy, ed. Kenneth M. Coleman and George C. Herring (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1985), pp. 111-35; and James Chace, Endless War: How We Got Involved in Central America - and What Can Be Done (New York: Vintage, 1984).

<sup>20</sup> See, for two radical analyses that stress the salience of ideology as expressed in a "geopolitical" approach to the Western Hemisphere, George Black, "Central America: Crisis in the Backyard," New Left Review, no. 135 (September/October 1982), pp. 5-34; and Xabier Gorostiaga, "Towards Alternative Policies for the Region," in Towards an Alternative for Central America and the Caribbean, ed. George Irvin and Xabier Gorostiaga (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1985), pp. 13-37.

<sup>21</sup> For an analysis that stresses the "mixed" aspect of contemporary economic life in Nicaragua, see Michael E. Conroy, "Economic Legacy and Policies: Performance and Critique," in Nicaragua: The First Five Years, ed. Thomas W. Walker (New York: Praeger, 1985), pp. 219-44.

<sup>22</sup> Robert A. Pastor, "A Question of U.S. National Interests in Central America," in Political Change in Central America: Internal and External Dimensions, ed. Wolf Grabendorff, Heinrich W. Krumwiede, and Jörg Todt (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1984), pp. 190-91; Canada, the United States, and Latin America: Independence and Accommodation (Washington: Latin American Program, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars,

1984), pp. 3-5.

<sup>23</sup> Interview, Canadian Embassy, San José, Costa Rica, 12 December 1986. Of this amount, approximately 60 percent consists of imports.

<sup>24</sup> "In the case of Canada, whose trading relations with developing countries are a comparatively small part of total trade, official development assistance (ODA) is a major element, arguably the major element in North-South policy. More than that, it is a Canadian vocation." Independence and Internationalism, p. 88.

<sup>25</sup> John W. Graham, "The Caribbean Basin: Whose Calypso?," notes for a speech delivered to the Canadian Institute for International Affairs, Toronto, 4 May 1985. Graham is the Director General of the Caribbean and Central America Bureau, Department of External Affairs.

<sup>26</sup> Interview, Ottawa, 19 February 1986; Baranyi, "Canadian Foreign Policy Towards Central America," pp. 38-39; Independence and Internationalism, p. 89.

<sup>27</sup> Interview, Washington, 20 May 1986. For accounts of the repression in Guatemala, see Piero Gleijeses, "Perspectives of a Regime Transformation in Guatemala," in Grabendorff et al., Political Change in Central America, pp. 127-38; William M. LeoGrande, "Central America: Expanding Wars and Elusive Peace," in Central America and the Western Alliance, ed. Joseph Cirincione (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1985), pp. 34-37; Alan Riding, "The Central American Quagmire," Foreign Affairs: America and the World 61 (1983): 653-54; and Marlise Simons, "Guatemala: The Coming Danger," Foreign Policy, no. 43 (Summer 1981), pp. 93-103.

<sup>28</sup> For the 20,000 figure, see Caesar D. Sereseres, "The Guatemalan Legacy: Radical Challengers and Military Politics," in Report on Guatemala: Findings of the Study Group on United States-Guatemalan Relations, SAIS Papers in International Affairs, no. 7 (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1985), p. 39. The 100,000 figure is given in Canadian Jesuit Refugee Programme, "Background to the Refugee Crisis," CAPA Memo, March 1987.

<sup>29</sup> Good sources for refugee and other population flows in Central America are Elizabeth G. Ferris, The Central American Refugees (New York: Praeger, 1987); and Michael S. Teitelbaum, Latin Migration North: The Problem for U.S. Foreign Policy (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1985), chap. 3: "Who Are the Migrants and What Are the Numbers?" For an analysis of the policy impact of the refugee problem on the various countries of the region, see Centro de Estudios Democráticos de América Latina, Refugiados en Centroamérica: Soluciones Políticas y Jurídicas (Heredia, Costa Rica: CEDAL, 1986).

<sup>30</sup> Interview, Ottawa, 18 February 1986. Between 1979 and 1986 140,300 refugees arrived in Canada, of which total 10,200 were from Latin America. The vast majority of arrivals during this period (some 90,000) came from Southeast Asia. Annick Billard, "Record Number of Asylum Seekers in Quebec," Refugees, no. 38 (February 1987), pp. 18-21. Also see Louis Michon, "Refugees: Ten Million Homeless," in Development (Winter 1986/87):

21-26.

<sup>31</sup>By August 1987 about 2,000 refugee claimants a month were arriving in Canada. See Richard Cleroux, "Ottawa May Construct Giant Refugee Centre," Globe and Mail, 17 August 1987, p. A1.

<sup>32</sup>For an analysis that links the refugee situation with the need for the U.S. to oppose vigorously the Sandinistas, see H. Eugene Douglas, "The Problem of Refugees in a Strategic Perspective," Strategic Review 10 (Fall 1982): 11-20.

<sup>33</sup>Robert White, cited in the transcript of the TV Ontario broadcast on "Canadian Policy in Latin America," 20 February 1986, p. 11.

<sup>34</sup>There were, of course, exceptions to this tendency during the 1970s and earlier, and notable in this regard is the path-breaking work of J.C.M. Ogelsby. See, in particular, the following articles: "A Trudeau Decade: Canadian-Latin American Relations, 1968-1978," Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs 21 (May 1979): 187-208; and "Canada and Latin America," in Canada and the Third World, ed. Peyton V. Lyon and Tareq Y. Ismael (Toronto: Macmillan, 1976), pp. 162-99.

<sup>35</sup>Government of Canada, Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence, Sub-Committee on Canada's Relations with Latin America and the Caribbean, Final Report to the House of Commons: Canada's Relations with Latin America and the Caribbean (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1982), p. 23.

<sup>36</sup>See, for example, Stephen Kinzer, "Walking the Tightrope in Guatemala," New York Times Magazine, 9 November 1986, pp. 32-42; and Peter Ford, "The Army's Power Overshadows Guatemala's President Cerezo," Christian Science Monitor, 30 March-5 April 1987, p. 9.

<sup>37</sup>The preliminary peace accord reached in Guatemala was the first signed agreement among the Central American leaders in nearly four years of peace negotiations. See Stephen Kinzer, "Managua calls Latin Pact an Historic 'First Step,'" New York Times, 9 August 1987, p. 13. On Cerezo's role, see James Le Moyne, "Four Latin Leaders Meet on Ending Nicaragua War," New York Times, 16 February 1987, p. 1; John M. Goshko, "Guatemalan Assured of U.S. Flexibility on Nicaragua," Washington Post, 14 May 1987, p. 37; and Elaine Sciolino, "Guatemalan in Plea over U.S. Policy," New York Times, 14 May 1987, p. 13.

<sup>38</sup>"Un Sueño que Valió la Pena," Prensa Libre (Guatemala City), 10 December 1986, p. 10.

<sup>39</sup>John P. Holdren, "North-South Issues and East-West Confrontation," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (August 1985): 97-101; Aaron L. Friedberg, "Engagement and Escalation: The Danger of Nuclear War in the Pacific and in the Persian Gulf," Crossroads, no. 21 (1987), pp. 59-81.

<sup>40</sup>Michael McGwire, "Soviet Military Objectives," World Policy Journal 3 (Fall 1986): 685.

<sup>41</sup> S. N. MacFarlane, "Superpower Rivalry and Soviet Policy in the Caribbean Basin," Occasional Papers, no. 1 (Ottawa: Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, 1986), pp. 14-15.

<sup>42</sup> Robert S. Leiken, "The USSR and Central America: Great Expectations Dampened?," in Central America and the Western Alliance, pp. 155-76. Also see Jerry F. Hough, "The Evolving Soviet Debate on Latin America," Latin American Research Review 16 (1981): 124-43.

<sup>43</sup> Cole Blasier, The Giant's Rival: The USSR and Latin America (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983). For a differing perspective, cf. Robert S. Leiken, Soviet Strategy in Latin America, Washington Papers: 93 (Washington: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1982).

<sup>44</sup> This, at least, is the thesis advanced by Carl H. Builder, "The Prospects and Implications of Non-nuclear Means for Strategic Conflict," Adelphi Papers, no. 200 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1985). Nor is it only in the West that strategic planners contemplate the prospects of another major conventional war; the Soviets apparently have for two decades predicated their strategic calculations on the assumption that the next war need not be a nuclear one. See MccGwire, "Soviet Military Objectives."

<sup>45</sup> Robert Kennedy and Gabriel Marcella, "U.S. Security on the Southern Flank: Interests, Challenges, Responses," in Western Interests and U.S. Policy Options in the Caribbean Basin, ed. James R. Greene and Brent Scowcroft (Boston: Oelgeschlager, Gunn & Hain, 1984), pp. 187-241; Ashley J. Tellis, "The Geopolitical Stakes in Central American Crisis," Strategic Review 13 (Fall 1985): 45-56; and William J. Cox, "The Gulf of Mexico: A Forgotten Frontier in the 1980s," Naval War College Review 40 (Summer 1987): 66-76.

<sup>46</sup> Margaret Daly Hayes, "United States Security Interests in Central America in Global Perspective," in Central America: International Dimensions of the Crisis, ed. Richard E. Feinberg (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1982), pp. 85-102; Edward N. Luttwak, "The Nature of the Crisis," in Central America and the Western Alliance, pp. 71-79.

<sup>47</sup> See Julia Preston, "Nicaragua Says It Will Proceed with Plans to Get MiGs," Washington Post, 3 August 1987, p. 17. In June 1987 it was reported in the U.S. Press that Nicaraguan pilots were operating a squadron of from 10 to 17 MiG-21s at the San Julián base in Pinar del Río, Cuba. See "MiGs Keep Out!," Miami Herald, 18 June 1987, p. 32.

<sup>48</sup> There is some confusion about the origins of the "Contadora Group." According to Daniel Oduber, former president of Costa Rica, the Group actually got started in the mid 1970s, when Oduber and three other Latin American heads of state (Carlos Andrés Pérez of Venezuela, Luís Echeverría of Mexico, and Alfonso López Michelsen of Colombia) convened at Contadora to form a support group whose goal was to facilitate the negotiations

between the U.S. and Panama over the Panama Canal. Daniel Oduber, "Is Peace Possible in Central America?," in The Central American Crisis, pp. 193-204.

<sup>49</sup> Among the salient features of the Guatemala accord are the following: a cessation in outside military involvement in the region; a cease-fire in the region's guerrilla wars; immediate negotiations between the Nicaraguan government and its political opposition, to open up the political process in that country; and a cutoff of U.S. aid to the contras. John M. Goshko, "Shultz, Latin Envoys Discuss Peace Initiative," Washington Post, 11 July 1987, p. 20; Paul Knox, "Massive Obstacles for a Fragile Pact," Globe and Mail, 11 August 1987, p. A8. For a comprehensive discussion of the current peace plan, see Institute for European-Latin American Relations, "The Arias Plan: A Way Out for the Central American Peace Process?," Dossier no. 10 (Madrid: IRELA, May 1987).

<sup>50</sup> Bruce Michael Bagley, "Contadora: The Failure of Diplomacy," Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs 28 (Fall 1986): 3. For a more critical perspective on Contadora, see Susan Kaufman Purcell, "Demystifying Contadora," Foreign Affairs 64 (Fall 1985): 74-95. A useful compendium is Contadora and the Central American Peace Process: Selected Documents, ed. Bruce Michael Bagley, Roberto Alvarez, and Katherine J. Hagedorn, SAIS Papers in International Affairs, no. 8 (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1985).

<sup>51</sup> For an analysis that puts the emphasis on the divergences, see Jonathan Lemco, "Canada and Central America: A Review of Current Issues," Behind the Headlines 43 (May 1986).

<sup>52</sup> Although the Soviets may not pursue reckless policies in Central America, they do have a set of interests that they seek to advance in the region. For analyses of Soviet and Cuban involvement, see Edward Gonzalez, "The Cuban and Soviet Challenge in the Caribbean Basin," Orbis (Spring 1985): 73-94; Mark N. Katz, "The Soviet-Cuban Connection," International Security 8 (Summer 1983): 88-112; and Jiri Valenta, "Soviet Policy in Central America," Survey 27 (Autumn/Winter 1983): 287-303.

<sup>53</sup> On Canadian involvement in peacekeeping, see R.B. Byers, "Peacekeeping and Canadian Defence Policy: Ambivalence and Uncertainty," in Peacekeeping: Appraisals and Proposals, ed. Henry Wiseman (New York: Pergamon, 1984), pp. 130-60; J.L. Granatstein, "Canada and Peacekeeping: Myth and Reality," Canadian Forum 54 (August 1974): 14-19; and (LCol.) J.R. MacPherson, "A Canadian Initiative and Its Results: Active Peacekeeping after Thirty Years," Canadian Defence Quarterly 16 (Summer 1986): 42-49.

<sup>54</sup> Interview, Ottawa, 17 February 1986. This comment was made during one of the periods of optimism regarding the Contadora negotiations, following the Caraballeda Declaration of January 1986. It could be equally applicable to the current mood of optimism engendered by the Guatemala City accord.

<sup>55</sup> Calvin Bricker, Central America and Peacekeeping: A Workshop Report (Toronto: York University Centre for International and Strategic Studies,

1986), pp. 32-40.

<sup>56</sup>For a discussion, in the most general terms, of the Commission's mandate and possible organizational backing, see "Text of Agreement by 5 Central American Leaders on Peace in the Region," New York Times, 12 August 1987, p. 8.

<sup>57</sup>A good treatment of Canadian peacekeeping efforts in Indochina is Douglas A. Ross, In the Interests of Peace: Canada and Vietnam 1954-1973 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984).

<sup>58</sup>Black, "Central America," p. 29.

<sup>59</sup>Constantine Menges, "Central America and Its Enemies," Commentary 72 (August 1981): 32-38.

<sup>60</sup>Alois Mertes, "Europe's Role in Central America: A West German Christian Democratic View," in Third World Instability: Central America as a European-American Issue, ed. Andrew J. Pierre (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1985), p. 130.

<sup>61</sup>Wolf Grabendorff, "The Central American Crisis: Is There a Role for Western Europe?," in Central America and the Western Alliance, p. 133.

<sup>62</sup>For analyses of French policy toward Central America in the 1980s, see Esperanza Durán, European Interests in Latin America, Chatham House Papers:28 (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs/Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985), pp. 36, 49-50, 80-81; and Michel Tatu, "Europe, the United States, and Central America: A Nest of Misunderstandings," in Central America and the Western Alliance, pp. 119-22.

<sup>63</sup>Michael A. Ledeen, "European Policy Intellectuals and U.S. Central American Policy," Washington Quarterly 8 (Summer 1985): 187-98.

<sup>64</sup>Nadia Malley, "Relations with Western Europe and the Socialist International," in Nicaragua: The First Five Years, p. 485.

<sup>65</sup>For an interesting discussion of the invasion option, see The Defense Monitor, "U.S. Invasion of Nicaragua: Appraising the Option" (Washington: Center for Defense Information, 1987).

<sup>66</sup>Irving Kristol, "Should Europe Be Concerned about Central America?," in Third World Instability, p. 46.

<sup>67</sup>Fernando Morán, "Europe's Role in Central America: A Spanish Socialist View," in ibid., pp. 30-31.

<sup>68</sup>See especially, for this economic interpretation of the value of NATO to the U.S., Earl C. Ravenal, "Europe without America: The Erosion of NATO," Foreign Affairs 63 (Summer 1985): 1020-35; and James Chace, "Ike Was Right," Atlantic Monthly, August 1987, pp. 39-41.

<sup>69</sup>Angelo Codevilla, "American Soldiers in Europe: Hostages to

Fortune," National Interest, no. 8 (Summer 1987), p. 91. Although he professes to be concerned with giving Europe the "incentives" it needs to defend itself better, Melvyn Krauss does share the neo-conservatives' dismay over a Europe that is seen to be ideologically soft, as well as a positive nuisance to the U.S. in Central America. See How NATO Weakens the West (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986), especially pp. 78-81.

<sup>70</sup> See Michael Smith, Western Europe and the United States: The Uncertain Alliance (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984).

<sup>71</sup> For a psycho-sociological analysis of the recent strains besetting U.S.-European relations, see Andrew J. Pierre, ed., A Widening Atlantic? Domestic Change & Foreign Policy (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1986). For more topical discussions of Alliance disunity, see "The Sundering Alliance," Manchester Guardian Weekly, 22 March 1987, p. 1; and "Europe without America," Economist, 5 July 1986, pp. 11-12.

<sup>72</sup> Elizabeth Pond, "Europe Questions America's Promise," Christian Science Monitor, 10-16 August 1987, p. 12.

<sup>73</sup> See "America Betrayed by Its Friends," Sun-Times (Chicago), 4 August 1987, p. 23.

<sup>74</sup> See Eliot A. Cohen, "The Long-Term Crisis of the Alliance," Foreign Affairs 61 (Winter 1982/83): 325-43.

<sup>75</sup> See, for a trenchant analysis of the credibility argument, Lars Schoultz, National Security and United States Policy toward Latin America (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), especially chap. 8: "Latin America and the Global Balance of Power." For another good discussion of the way in which (perceived) global interests could affect U.S. policy toward Latin America, see Robert S. Litwak, Détente and the Nixon Doctrine: American Foreign Policy and the Pursuit of Stability, 1969-1976 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

<sup>76</sup> George C. Herring, America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975, 2d ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986).