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THE CARIBBEAN IN A NEW STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

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Glossary

CA	- US Army Civil Affairs
CMOC	- Civil Military Operations Center
CNN	- Cable News Network
CSS	- Combat service support
DART	- Disaster Assistance Response Team
DOS	- Department of State
DPKO	- Department of Peacekeeping Operations
FM	- Field Manual
GAO	- Government Accounting Office
HAST	- Humanitarian Assistance Survey Team
HOC	- Humanitarian Operations Center
ICRC	- International Committee of the Red Cross
JRTC	- Joint Readiness Training Center
JTF	- Joint Task Force
MOOTW	- Military operations other than war
MRC	- Major regional conflict
NGOs	- Nongovernmental organizations
OAS	- Organization of American States
OAU	- Organization of African Unity
OFDA	- Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OSD	- Office of the Secretary of Defense
PSYOPS	- Psychological operations
PVO	- Private Voluntary Organizations
RC	- Reserve Component units
ROE	- Rules of Engagement
SOF	- US Special Operations Forces
UN	- United Nations
UNHCR	- UN High Commission for Refugees
USAID	- US Agency for International Development
WEU	- Western European Union

Introduction

The cumulative dynamics of developments within nations and across regions over the past decade have made credible the characterization of contemporary world politics as both turbulent and transformational. Scholars and statesmen are not all quite clear about what all the turbulence and transformations portend, but they no longer have the luxury of trying to interpret the world before attempting to change it. Now part of the challenge involves having to manage change while interpreting events and outcomes.

This paper seeks to interpret global events and consider how the Caribbean "stands" in the new environment. The analysis here suggests that while the new strategic environment is the result of global turbulence and transformation, some "old era" issues still retain their security salience; others have developed new dynamics. In the latter regard, drug trafficking--a nontraditional security issue--stands out, and considerable attention is paid here to some of its dimensions. However, this discussion must be prefaced by an assessment of some of the structural and operational aspects of the global turbulence and transformations at hand.

The New Strategic Environment

There are at least three structural and operational features of the still-transforming global environment with direct implications for

the Caribbean: the changed structure of global military and political power; alterations in economic relationships; and policy reprioritization by states with traditional Caribbean interests.

The collapse of world communism and the concomitant end of the Cold War are at the centre of the transformation in the first area. The bipolar character of global military-political power has been replaced by the reemergence of a multipolar global system. Not only is there evidence of multipolarity, but some scholars point to the development of the multidimensional basis of global power. One reputable scholar, for example, discerns the development of different currencies of power affixed to different poles of international power: military, economic and financial, demographic, and military and economic. He sees the poles varying in their productivities, with demographic power as more of a liability than an asset, and the utility of military power being reduced.[1] Another respected scholar, now policymaker, views the structural and operational aspects of world power differently. He sees the distribution of power being "like a layer cake," with the top, military, layer, being largely unipolar, the economic, middle layer as tripolar, and the bottom layer of transnational interdependence showing a diffusion of power.[2]

This post-Cold War structural-operational transformation has

at least two major implications for the Caribbean, both of which pertain to the realities of United States geographic proximity, power, and interests. The first is that US policy and action toward the Caribbean will be shorn of the previous East-West ideological cloud, thereby altering the character, if not the scope, of US-Caribbean relations. Although it is true that to the extent that Fidel Castro is able to remain adamant in the pursuit of communism in Cuba, there will be some US concern about an ideological threat, partly because of regional changes--in Nicaragua, Grenada, Guyana, and elsewhere--"the communist threat" is virtually nonexistent.

The East-West military-political fixation of the United States not only coloured its relations with Caribbean countries on a bilateral basis, it influenced multilateral relations as well. During the Cold War period the interests and conduct of some Caribbean countries caused them to suffer the consequences of US displeasure while others received the benefits of its approbation in the context of institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). However, there is already evidence that the end of the Cold War has led to appreciable change in US attitudes and behaviour toward Caribbean countries in these multilateral arenas.

The second implication is related to the American military

presence in the region. The nature and scope of US military deployment and posture in the Caribbean, part of its geopolitical gameplan for countering the Soviet Union, have already begun to change. This is contributing both to a lesser US military presence, reduced IMET (International Military Education and Training Program) assistance, and reduced arms supplies and sales to countries that were either US allies in the East-West conflict, or considered otherwise important to US national interests.[3] Moreover, as Jorge Domínguez has rightly observed, (and this is partly because of the two implications mentioned above,) the Caribbean now has lesser military importance in world affairs, although there remains some significant military issues in the region.[4] Yet, the end of the Cold War does not obliterate the strategic value of the Caribbean. As several Caribbean specialists have shown, the region's strategic significance is reflected in economic, geographic, and communications attributes that have transcended East-West geopolitics, even though they were affected by it during the Cold War.[5] And as will be seen below, the Caribbean is not only of strategic importance to states, but also to nonstate actors, notably the drug barons.

Allied to the military-political changes attendant upon the end of the Cold War are alterations in the structure and operation

of economic power relationships. The profundity of actual and anticipated economic power changes has been such that one security specialist was able to quickly popularize a concept he coined about the scope and depth of economic power relations in the new global environment. The term is geo-economics--the mixture of the logic of conflict with the methods of commerce. Edward Luttwak is convinced that the new strategic environment will be such that "as the relevance of military threats and military alliances wanes, geo-economic priorities and modalities are becoming dominant in state actions."[6] He expects that both the causes and instruments of conflict will be economic.

The movement toward the formation of economic blocs around the world is one important manifestation of global economic power alteration. The European Union now boasts a unified market of 320 million consumers, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) agreed in January 1992 to create a free trade area as a precursor to the establishment of a common market. Closer to home is NAFTA with an annual production of over $6 trillion and 320 million consumers. One appreciable consequence of this megabloc phenomenon for the Caribbean is the potential reduction or even loss of economic assistance, foreign investment, and preferential trading arrangements. Concerning NAFTA, for example, there is

justified fear that the anticipated increase in trade resulting from the removal of trade barriers in Mexico will help displace US trade with Caribbean countries and reduce the benefits of tariff preferences under schemes like the Caribbean Basin Initiative, the General Scheme of Preferences, and Section 936 of the US Internal Revenue Code. And this is only one of several policy and institutional concerns with economic and political security implications.

The megabloc phenomenon with its multiple implications comes at a particularly unpropitious time for the region, given the cumulative impact of the global and regional turbulence, which includes depressed banana, bauxite, and sugar production, high public debt, and high unemployment. A former deputy secretary-general of the Latin American Economic System has observed:

> The dawn of a new era of heightened economic competition in which industrial countries are adopting a less concessional approach to developing countries on trade and economic matters generally coincides with an almost loss of geopolitical appeal for Caribbean countries.... It is important for Caribbean Community societies to recognize that the nature of the challenge goes even beyond NAFTA.... It relates much more to the requirements of the current global economic environment of increased competition, to which NAFTA is itself a response.[7]

The military-political changes due to the end of the Cold War and the megabloc phenomenon have had both causal and consequential linkages to the third general feature of the new strategic

environment that is critically important to the Caribbean. This is the issue of policy reprioritization by big and middle powers that either once considered the Caribbean to be important to them and/or countries on which Caribbean states placed importance. The noteworthy countries in this respect are the United States, Britain, Canada, the Netherlands, and Venezuela.

The reprioritizing by these countries is the result of several factors, sometimes acting in combination. These include leadership changes which may or may not cause policy reevaluation, budgetary constraints, economic recession, the demand by domestic constituencies for more attention to the "home front," aid reallocation, and shifting foreign policy focus. In tangible terms, these mean reduced aid, readjustments in preferential trading arrangements, reduction in foreign investment guarantees, and diplomatic downgrading of Caribbean countries.

For example, the withdrawal by the British of their military garrison in Belize has been prompted by both budgetary difficulties and a review of British foreign and security policy toward Central America and the Caribbean. This action has had a dual effect: it has increased the vulnerability of Belize to territorial and political sovereignty violation by Guatemala; and it has reduced the capacity of Belize to render credible responses to narcotics

production and trafficking. When the US slashed its 1990 aid package to Jamaica to augment its aid to Poland, more important than the sum of money involved--US$20 million--was the symbolism of the action. Moreover, in May 1994 the US State Department explained that it planned to close embassies in Antigua-Barbuda and Grenada because of the strategic insignificance of those countries and partly "to shift resources to Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union." It took Congressional pressure, especially from the Black Caucus, for a reversal of the decision in relation to Grenada. The embassy there will remain open--for the time being.[8]

Not all countries of importance to the region have been reducing their tangible interaction with the region, though. Mexico, France, and Spain are notable in this regard, although Spain's involvement has been narrowly focused, mainly on Cuba and the Dominican Republic. There are also a few countries that are taking new or renewed interest in the region, Japan and South Korea being two of them. Nevertheless, the value of the lost interest seems to far outweigh that of the new/renewed relationships. More than this, the Caribbean's diminished importance based on reprioritization is not limited to actions by states. Some nonstate actors, such as foundations and multinational corporations, are also acting accordingly.

The Present Landscape: Territorial Disputes and Drug Trafficking

As might be expected, the turbulence and transformations mentioned above have affected the region's strategic landscape, precipitating changes in many areas. Yet, some issues of the previous era have retained their salience. One area where salience has been retained is territorial disputes; one where the dynamics have been accentuated pertains to drugs. Territorial disputes and drug trafficking are, however, not the only items on the Caribbean security agenda; they are among the most critical ones.[9]

The outbreak of hostilities between Peru and Ecuador on 26 February 1995 not only threatened to shatter "the Spirit of Miami" six weeks after it was created, but it provided sobering testimony of the continued salience of territorial and border disputes in the Americas. Moreover, while there had been an accentuation of peace initiatives in the hemisphere even before the Summit of the Americas, among the collateral consequences of the Peru-Ecuador conflict has been a jolting of memories about the number of similar disputes in existence and a rekindling of nationalist sentiments about the prosecution of claims.

In the Guyana-Venezuela case, for instance, the aftermath of the Peru-Ecuador war led to apprehension in Guyana over troubling signals coming from Venezuela. In relation to its Guyana claim,

which is for two-thirds of the country, Venezuela's foreign minister, Miguel Burelli Rivas, visited Guyana 2-3 March 1995 and asked for priority attention to be given to the issue. More troubling, though, he called on President Cheddie Jagan of Guyana to have "a proposal to be pursued in practical terms" ready for when Jagan meets Rafael Caldera during the Fall of 1995. Guyana flatly refused the diplomatic arm twisting.[10]

Not only have the global transformations not reduced the salience of the Guyana-Venezuela dispute, but, similarly, they have left intact other significant disputes involving Caribbean countries, notably the claim by Suriname for 15,000 square kilometres of Guyana's territory; and that by Guatemala for the entire territory of Belize. While Guatemala recognized Belizean sovereignty in August 1991, it has not renounced its claim, although its posture has changed remarkably. It is useful to note, though, that while the structural and operational post-Cold War changes might not have affected the salience of territorial disputes, they have helped to create an environment where peace and reconciliation are emphasized, and this environment itself can make a difference in approaches to resolving territorial and other disputes.

The Caribbean lies at what Jóse Martí once called "the Vortex

of the Americas," making it a bridge or front between North and South America. European leaders recognized the strategic importance of this vortex soon after the 1492 encounter between Europe and the Americas. This strategic importance has persisted over the centuries, and it was dramatized in geopolitical terms during the recent Cold War. However, the strategic value of the Caribbean lies not only in its geopolitical value as viewed by state actors engaged in systemic conflict and cooperation. Over recent years the region has also been viewed as strategic by nonstate drug actors, also with conflict and cooperation in mind, but in terms of geo-narcotics, not geopolitics.

Geo-narcotics is a concept developed to explain the multiple dynamics of the narcotics phenomenon. It posits that the phenomenon is multidimensional with four main problem areas: drug production, consumption-abuse, trafficking, and money-laundering; that these give rise to actual and potential threats to the security of states around the world; and that the drug operations and the activities to which they give rise precipitate conflict and cooperation among various state and non-actors in the international system. Over and above this, the term captures the dynamics of four factors: drugs, geography, power, and politics.

Geography is a factor because of the global spacial dispersion

of drug operations, and because certain geographic features facilitate some drug operations. Power involves the ability of individuals and groups to secure compliant action. This power is both state and nonstate in source, and in some cases nonstate sources exercise relatively more power than state entities. And politics, the fourth factor, revolves around resource allocation in the Lasswellian sense of the ability of power brokers to determine who gets what, how, and when. Since power in this milieu is not only state power, resource allocation is correspondingly not exclusively a function of state power holders. Moreover, politics becomes perverted, and all the more so where it already was perverted.[11]

The Caribbean as Vortex

Although drug production, consumption-abuse, trafficking, and money-laundering are all present in the Caribbean, it is trafficking that best highlights the region's strategic value. Aspects of both the physical and social geography of the Caribbean make it conducive to drug trafficking. Physical geography considerations are more important than social geography features, and in the physical geography area the key elements are island character and location.

Except for mainland Belize, French Guiana, Guyana, and Suriname, Caribbean countries are all island territories. Some are plural island territories, examples being St. Vincent and the Grenadines, comprised of close to 600 islands, and the Virgin Islands, about 100 islands and cays. Indeed, one--the Bahamas--is an archipelago of 700 islands and 2,000 cays. This island character permits entry into and use of Caribbean territories from scores, sometimes hundreds, of different places from the surrounding sea. For the mainland states, access is from various places from the Atlantic Ocean in the case of Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana, and from the Caribbean coast in the case of Belize. And when one adds to the matrix the inability of Caribbean countries to provide adequate territorial policing, their vulnerability to trafficking is more readily appreciated.

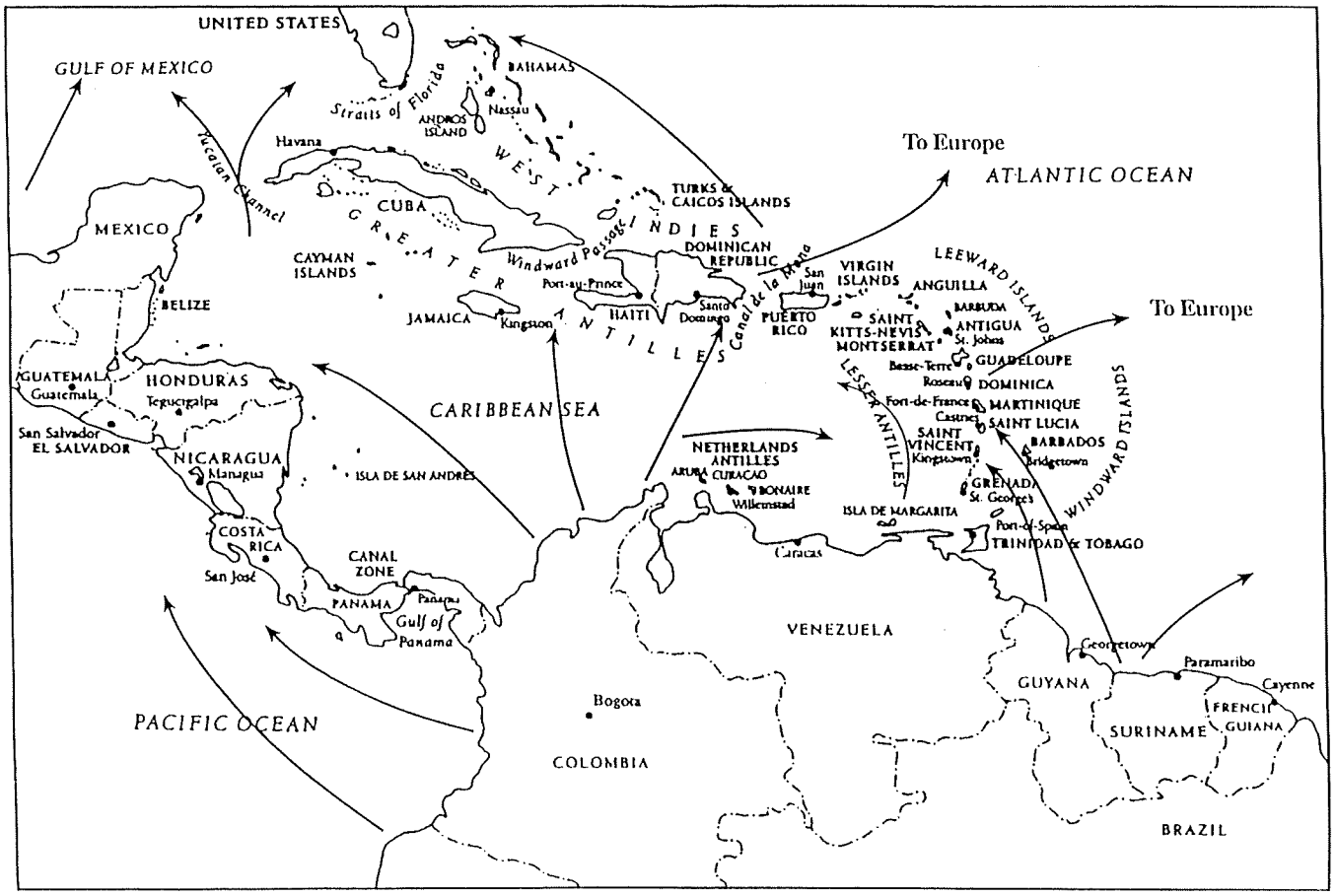
The most important location feature of the region's physical geography is proximity. This proximity is dual. There is proximity to a major drug supply source--South America--and to a major drug demand area--North America. On the supply side, the world's cocaine is produced in South America, coming notably from Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, and Venezuela. Colombia alone produces about 80 percent of all the cocaine in the world, although only about 20 percent of worldwide coca leaf cultivation is done there.

A significant proportion of global heroin and marijuana production also comes from South and Central America, especially from Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Paraguay, Brazil, and Guatemala.[12]

On the demand side, the United States has the dubious distinction of being the world's single largest drug consuming nation. An analyst at the Congressional Research Service reported as follows in 1988: "America is consuming drugs at an annual rate of more than six metric tons (mt) of heroin, 70-90 mt of cocaine, and 6,000-9,000 mt of marijuana--80 percent of which are imported. American demand therefore is the linchpin of one of the fastest-growing and most profitable industries in the world."[13] By 1993, however, State Department estimates placed consumption of cocaine alone at 150-175 metric tons, valued at US$ 15-17.5 billion.[14] In April 1995 the head of the United States Southern Command estimated that about 300 metric tons of the approximately 575 metric tons of cocaine available worldwide in 1994 were consumed in the United States.[15]

Figure 1

Maritime Trafficking Routes in the Caribbean



As Figure 1 shows, there is not much distance between either the Caribbean and South America, or between the Caribbean and the United States, especially the southern and northeastern parts of the United States. Except for French Guiana and Suriname, all

Caribbean countries are less than 2,000 miles from Miami, and only seven of them are more than 2,000 miles from Atlanta and Washington, DC. As for distances between the Caribbean and some main South American drug centres, over 80 percent of the Caribbean countries are less than 1,000 miles from Caracas, and all except Belize (in relation to Caracas), French Guiana (in relation to Cali and Medellín), and Suriname (in relation to Medellín) are less than 1,500 miles away from Bogotá, Cali, Caracas, and Medellín. The distances involved are often quite short. For example, the island of Bimini in the Bahamas is just 40 miles from the Florida Keys. A mere 90 miles separate Cuba from the United States. It is only seven miles between La Brea in southwestern Trinidad and Pedernales in northeastern Venezuela, a point called Serpent's Mouth. Moreover, the town of Lethem in southwest Guyana is a mere 75 miles away from the city of Boa Vista in northeast Brazil; and Eteringbang, Guyana is only 28 miles from El Dorado, Venezuela.[16]

Europe is also a huge drug consuming area, with cocaine, heroin, and marijuana imports coming through and from the Caribbean.[17] However, despite the relatively great distance between that continent and the Caribbean region, the Caribbean is a major transit area for drugs bound for Europe. Several reasons explain this. One is proximity between the Caribbean and South America, and

a second relates to commercial, communications, and other linkages between Europe and the Caribbean, which provide the institutional and other infrastructure for trafficking.

A third reason is tied to the second: because French Guiana, Guadeloupe, and Martinique are Départments d'Outre Mer (DOMs) of France, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, and the Turks and Caicos are British dependencies, and Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, and St. Maarten are integral parts of the Netherlands, there are certain customs, immigration, and transportation arrangements and facilities between these territories and their respective European "owners," and these are exploited by traffickers. Some of the arrangements are similar to those involving the United States and Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands, which also facilitate traffickers aiming for destinations in the continental United States.

Each of the elements of the physical geography factor discussed above--island character and location--can by itself be conducive to trafficking. However, the region's vulnerability to trafficking and the prospects for continued trafficking can be better appreciated when it is recognized that these factors are often mutually supporting and reinforcing, and that they interact with aspects of social geography. One way to understand the

dynamics involved is to examine trafficking patterns and routes in and through the region.

Trafficking Patterns and Routes

Apart from trading their own marijuana in the United States, some Caribbean countries are important transshipment centres for South American cocaine, heroin, and marijuana bound for Europe and North America. For more than two decades the Bahamas, Belize, and Jamaica dominated this business. In the case of the Bahamas, its geography makes it an excellent candidate for drug transshipment, given its 700 islands and 2,000 cays, and strategic location in the airline flight path between Colombia and south Florida. For a typical cocaine trafficking mission, aircraft depart from the north coast of Colombia, arriving in the Bahamas four to five hours later. The cargo is dropped either to waiting vessels, or for collection later to be placed on vessels, and then the final run is made to a United States point of entry. However, this is not the only *modus operandi*. As one report indicates, traffickers use other tactics, including use of Cuban waters to evade OPBAT (Operation Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos) efforts, drop-offs by aircraft making only momentary landings, and development of a cocaine route through Jamaica.[18]

The geography and topography of Belize also make that country ideal for drug smuggling. Apart from a long coastline and contiguous borders with Guatemala and Mexico, two major heroin and marijuana producers, there are dense unpopulated jungle areas and numerous inland waterways. Moreover, there are about 140 isolated airstrips and virtually no radar coverage beyond a 30-mile radius of the international airport at Belize City. While there still is air trafficking, recently there has been an increasing use of maritime routes. Crack has also been featuring more prominently. While 141 kilos of cocaine were seized in all of 1994, two seizures in January 1995 alone netted 636 kilos of cocaine.[19]

Jamaica has long been key to the drug trade, given its long coastline, proximity to the US, its many ports, harbours, and beaches, and its closeness to the Yucatan and Windward Passages, as Figure 1 shows. Trafficking takes place by both air and sea. For the maritime traffic use is often made of pleasure boats with storage compartments to ferry small quantities of drugs. Large loads are put aboard commercial cargo and fishing vessels. Both large and small amounts are also smuggled by air. Jamaicans also have an asset as far as South American operators are concerned: a long track record of ganja smuggling.

Jamaica Defense Force (JDF) sources indicate that both legal

and illegal airstrips are used for trafficking. Many of the illegal airstrips are only 1,200-1,500 feet long, just enough length for use by Pipers, Cessnas, BE-100, and KingAir aircraft. The largest known illegal strip, 3,000 feet, was on the south coast. Jamaica's west and south coast are the most popular areas for air trafficking. Apart from landings on strips designed or adapted for drug operations, landings have been made on roads, in cane fields, and on legal strips owned by bauxite and sugar companies. The JDF has destroyed some 80 illegal airstrips and fields (up to December 1994), but, as the JDF chief of staff explained, given the heavy limestone in many of the popular landing areas, operators are often able to make fields serviceable within ten days of destruction.

Indications are that most of the cocaine air operations using Jamaica involve San Andres and Bogotá in Colombia, the Bahamas, Panama, and Curaçao. Traffickers do not rely only on illegal flights; legal commercial flights are also used. Particularly popular, and problematic for Jamaican officials, was the commercial link between San Andres and Montego Bay. That connection was suspended in September 1994, but there are still commercial flights linking Jamaica and Bogotá. Now, according to military intelligence sources, the drugs go from San Andres to Bogotá, and then to Montego Bay or Kingston.[20]

Jamaican drug seizures are sometimes dramatic because of the quantity of drugs seized. In April 1989, for instance, United States Customs found 4,173 pounds of marijuana on an Air Jamaica A-300 Airbus in Miami. That same April 5,000 pounds of marijuana were seized in Gramercy, Louisiana, on board *MV Kotor*, which was there to deliver a shipment of Jamaican bauxite. The drugs were discovered after violent clashes by two rival gangs over its ownership. According to the 1995 INCSR, during 1994 179 kilos of cocaine, 47 kilos of hashish oil, and one kilo of heroin were seized. There was also a large seizure on 6 March 1995: 4,000 pounds of marijuana along with weapons and ammunition in the St. Paul's district of Manchester.[21]

Although the Bahamas, Belize, and Jamaica are still important drug trafficking centres, countermeasures there and in South and Central America have prompted traffickers to seek and develop alternative routes, bringing eastern and southern Caribbean countries into greater prominence since the early 1990s. The shifts are of such a magnitude that in November 1994 Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands were designated by the United States drug "czar" as High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTAs), a designation surely appropriate to other areas in the region. Moreover, because of the increased drug activity, in July 1995 the Drug Enforcement

Administration (DEA) upgraded its presence in Puerto Rico from "Office" to Field Division, increasing its staffing and assigning a special agent--Félix Jiménez--to oversee the Caribbean, formerly done from Miami. The Division became operational on 1 October 1995.

Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles are said to serve as vital links in the transshipment of cocaine and heroin from Colombia, Venezuela, and Suriname to the US and Europe. Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao are very close to Venezuela, from which much of the drugs confiscated in these islands come. Trafficking in the Dutch Caribbean generally involves the use of commercial and private airlines, air cargo flights, and cruise ships, although ship containers have also been used. In Suriname, for example, one seizure in 1994 netted 207 kilos of cocaine concealed in cargo waiting to be shipped to Europe.

Cuba's strategic location has caused it to be used for trafficking, apparently both with and without official sanction. One 1983 DEA report dates official Cuban involvement to 1991, suggesting that there were economic and political motives involved. Cuban officials have often been indicted in the US for trafficking. One of the earliest cases of importance was in November 1982 when four senior officials were convicted *in absentia*: Rene Rodriguez Cruz, of Dirección General de Inteligencia, Cuba's intelligence

service, then also a Cuban Communist Party central committee member; Vice Admiral Aldo Santamaría Cuadrado, also a central committee member; Fernando Ravélo Renédo, former ambassador to Colombia; and Gonzalo Bassols Suarez, a former minister counselor of the Cuban embassy in Colombia. Ravélo Renédo and Basols Suarez reputedly directed arms-for-drugs deals involving the Medellín cartel and Colombia's M19.[22]

Andres Oppenheimer asserts that Fidel Castro and Colombian drug operators once had a long association, based mainly on political convenience. Castro is said to have first ordered his intelligence agencies to penetrate the Colombian drug networks in the 1970s to gain access to what then appeared as potentially one of Latin America's most powerful economic and political forces. Indeed, he says, "When the Carter Administration launched exploratory dialogue with the Castro regime in the late 1970s, one of the things the Cubans offered was to help stop drug smuggling through the Caribbean. The proposal died when normalization talks collapsed."[23]

Cuban involvement in trafficking and questions about officially sanctioned involvement commanded the greatest attention in 1989 when several top military officials were convicted and given harsh sentences for trafficking, corruption, and other

infractions. The chief defendant was Division General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, then a hero of Cuba's Africa campaigns who had in 1984 been awarded Cuba's highest military honours: Hero of the Cuban Republic, and the Máximo Gomez Order, First Class. All 14 defendants were found guilty. Ochoa, Captain Jorge Martinez Valdez, Col. Antonio De La Guardia, and Major Amado Padrón were sentenced to death. Brigadier General Patricio De la Guardia and Captain Miguel Ruiz Poo were each given 30 years in prison, and the eight others were given prison terms ranging from 10 to 30 years.[24]

Several analysts indicate that the participation of military officials in the smuggling of drugs and other commodities was not done mainly to profit individual officers, but to satisfy economic needs of the military in particular, and economic and political interests of Cuba generally. Evidence suggests that both the military and the Cuban Communist Party knew about the trafficking and protected officials for some time, but turned on them when it became politically inexpedient to have their operations continue. Oppenheimer claims, for instance, that "in 1988, the Commandante had asked [Interior Minister Division General Jose] Abrantes to sell 10 thousand kilos of cocaine that was in storage at Havana's Cimeq Hospital, if possibly through Eastern European countries. Abrantes was to seek $50 million for the cocaine, which originated

largely from Cuban coast guard seizures."[25]

Although there is no credible evidence of present Cuban government involvement in trafficking, there is evidence of the practice in Cuba. For example, in April 1992, 29 Cubans in the city of Camaguey were found guilty of possessing and trafficking cocaine. Some were also convicted of currency and weapons possession charges.[26] Cuban officials reported that 3.3 metric tons of cocaine were seized in 79 different cases during 1993. Reported seizures for 1994 were 238 kilos of cocaine and 1.1 metric tons of marijuana.[27] Several features of the Dominican Republic also make that country a trafficking candidate: proximity to Colombia, the Bahamas, Puerto Rico, and the southern United States; a long, often desolate, border with Haiti; and poorly equipped police and soldiers. Moreover, drugs are smuggled over the border from Haiti using the same techniques and routes used to smuggle petroleum into Haiti during the embargo.[28]

In Haiti, the complicity of military and other officials has been well established.[29] The DEA estimated in 1993, for instance, that two to four tons of cocaine then passed through Haiti, mostly with the blessings of military officials. In April 1994, Gabriel Toboada of the Medellín cartel told a US Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing that Lt.Col. Joseph Michel François, then

commander of Haiti's police, collaborated in the shipment of tons of cocaine during the 1980s. According to the testimony, the deal had been sealed in 1984 following François's visit to Medellín. Haiti was used as a bridge to the US with both the flights and the cargo protected by the military.[30]

Several factors explain haiti's trafficking vulnerability and involvement: geographic location, poorly monitored coasts, mountainous interior, about 20 unpatrolled airstrips, inadequate law enforcement resources, and corruption. Officially reported cocaine seizures have been increasing recently. In 1992, the figure reported was 56 kilos of cocaine; in 1993, 157 kilos; and in 1994, 716 kilos.[31] The return to power of Jean-Bertrand Aristide in October 1994 was expected to lead to reduced trafficking as the government reduced the size and role of the military in society and tried to deal with the problem of corruption. These actions, however, were not enough to combat Haiti's involvement in trafficking.

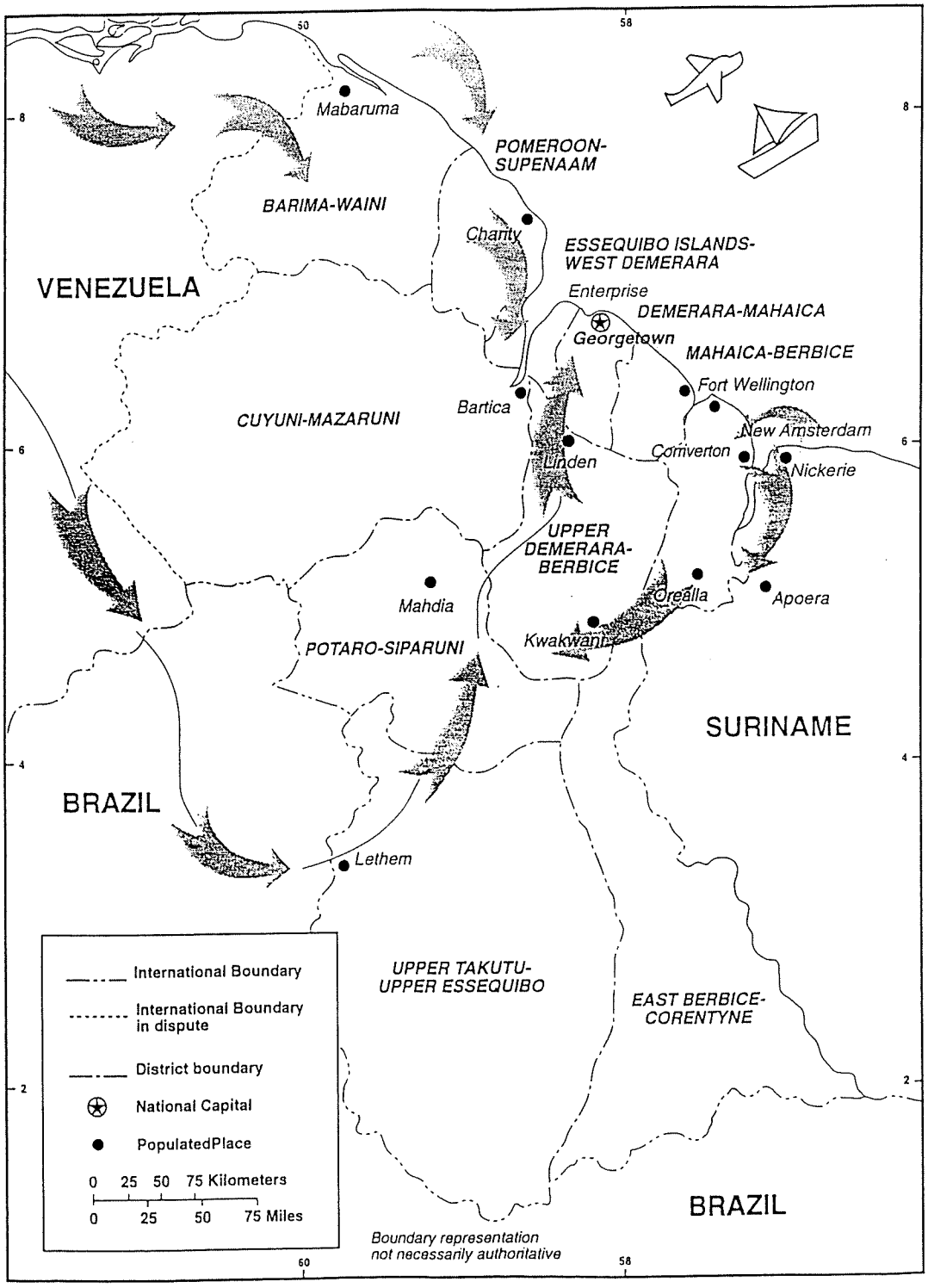
Guyana has recently become an important centre of operations. Like other Caribbean countries, Guyana's trafficking use saw its graduation from marijuana to cocaine and heroin. The earliest known trafficking case was on 16 June 1979 when a trader from the bauxite mining city of Linden arrived from Jamaica with 60 pounds of

compressed marijuana.[32] Cocaine and some heroin now enter Guyana from all three neighbouring countries: Brazil, Suriname, and Venezuela. Cocaine seizures in 1993 were 463 kilos--1,000 percent higher than in 1992. The exceptional 1993 figure was due to one dramatic seizure where on 4 June 1993 800 pounds of cocaine were dropped from the air into the Demerara river, along with US$24,000 and huge quantities of Colombian and Guyanese currency. Several Guyanese, Colombians, and Venezuelans were implicated in the affair.[33]

As with Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, and elsewhere in the region, there is also marijuana trafficking. Both foreign and local marijuana are involved, the foreign marijuana coming from Colombia, Venezuela, and Brazil. According to military sources in Guyana, during 1994 alone, 56,707 kilos of marijuana were confiscated, up from 15,654 kilos seized in 1993. And on 4 January 1995, 5,000 pounds of marijuana valued at US$2 million were discovered behind a false fibreglass wall of a container about to be shipped from Georgetown to Miami.[34]

Figure 2

Guyana Trafficking Routes



The air, sea, and land routes developed for smuggling contraband into Guyana from Brazil, Venezuela, and Suriname during the economic crisis of the 1970s and 1980s have now been adapted for narcotics trafficking. Some of these routes are shown in Figure 2. A further complication is that the borders with these neighbouring countries are very long: 1,120 kilometres with Brazil; 745 kilometres with Venezuela; and 600 kilometres with Suriname. Moreover, traffickers are able to take advantage of the country's large size (214,970 km^2), the coastal habitation, and the absence of adequate manpower and equipment to police the territory. In relation to air trafficking, for example, there are 92 legal aerodromes (private and public), most of them being in remote parts of the country where the physical and social geography provides clear advantages for traffickers.

Given the country's physical and social geography and the corruptibility of some officials, traffickers sometimes aim at establishing their own physical base in a big way. In one case some Colombians and Americans were able to enter the country illegally, and bring a generator, a water pump, two airplane engines, six transmitting sets, tool kits, arms and ammunition, and other supplies over a four-month period. The plan was to build a processing and transshipment centre at Waranama, in northeastern

Guyana, 400 miles from the capital, Georgetown, to be part of an international network involving Colombia, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United States.[35]

Like elsewhere in the Caribbean, trafficking in Guyana is not done only by air runs dedicated to drug delivery or collection; commercial flights are also used. In one dramatic case, on 15 March 1993, a Guyana Airways Corporation (GAC) plane--flight GY 714--arrived in New York from Guyana with 117 pounds of cocaine in its panelling. The US Customs imposed a fine of US$1.8 million for this violation, which led the GAC to offer a million dollar (Guyana) reward for information leading to the arrest and successful prosecution of the people involved in the affair.[36] This was the first time that a Caribbean airline had been forced to resort to such desperate and dramatic action to deal with commercial trafficking. The case was unsolved as of August 1995.

Guyana's physical geography makes it vulnerable to maritime trafficking. One could readily appreciate this when it is noted that Guyana, whose name is derived from an Amerindian word that means "Land of Many Waters," has hundreds of inland rivers and creeks. Moreover, there are 13 huge rivers that flow into the Atlantic Ocean, and each of those rivers has a network of tributaries. The maritime traffic is also facilitated by the fact

that the network of rivers also runs into Brazil, Suriname, and Venezuela. For example, the Takatu river in southwest Guyana flows into the Parima, a tributary of the Rio Negro, which flows into the Amazon in Brazil.

The Guyana situation is clear evidence of the vulnerability of Caribbean countries to drug trafficking and other operations. Geography apart, a contributor to this situation is the absence of adequate military and police resources to offer credible countermeasures. In effect, the state lacks the power to exercise proper political and territorial jurisdiction over the nation. Top army, coast guard, and police officials in many parts of the region have expressed frustration at not only the inability to adequately protect their countries' borders against trafficking, but also at being the pawns of traffickers who often create successful small interdiction diversions in order to execute large operations.[37]

Conveyance and Organization

Drug trafficking brings out the creativity and ingenuity of drug operators and the people who collude with them. People have used every possible orifice of the human anatomy, every possible piece of clothing, all manner of fruits and vegetables, and a variety of craft, furniture, and other things for the conveyance of drugs. In

so far as the human anatomy is concerned, use has been made of the vagina, anus, arm pits (to strap packages of drugs), the abdomen and the back (to strap packages), the tongue (by placing drugs under it), both natural and false hair, thighs (where drugs are strapped on inner thighs), and the stomach and intestines. Indeed, there are people--called swallowers or mules--who specialize in the use of the stomach and intestines. One Eastern Caribbean official related a case where a leg wound was used. Condoms with cocaine were found in the wound and within the bandaging of the wound.

Drugs have also been found in fish, rice, cake, pepper sauce, coconuts, yams, bananas, "coffee beans" (where the beans are cocaine pellets stamped to the shape of coffee beans and dipped in coffee syrup), cheese, butter, cans of fruit, beer, and juice, cigarette packaging (purported to be cigarettes), vegetables, detergent, furniture and furniture fixtures, lumber, piñatas, false legs (of amputees), mannequins, bales of cloth, mail (letters, packages, and mail bags themselves), ceramic tiles, ice cream, bottles of shampoo and mouthwash, video tapes, frozen vegetables, concrete posts, wooden coat hangers, rum (where liquid cocaine was purported to be coconut rum), and countless other objects. All sorts of clothing are used, including shoes and sneakers with false soles and heels. So too are picture frames and suitcases with false

sides and bottoms.

Both dead and live birds and animals are also used to convey drugs. In one December 1994 case, US Customs agents in New York found ten cocaine-filled condoms weighing about five pounds sewn into the abdomen of an English sheep dog that had arrived from Bogotá, Colombia. The four-year-old dog, which had been shipped as cargo, looked emaciated and lethargic on arrival, prompting officials to order an X-ray, which revealed the drugs. The person who attempted to retrieve the dog, 22-year-old John Erik Roa of New Jersey, was arrested and charged with cocaine smuggling. He later pled guilty and was sentenced, on 26 April 1995, to three years and one month in prison.[38]

One official recounted a situation where a guitar was made entirely of compressed marijuana.[39] I call it "the case of the guitarganja." Not only are cars, vans, trucks, planes, and boats used to convey large and small quantities of drugs and people and objects with them, but drugs are often concealed in unbelievable places in these vessels: in car batteries and tires; the panelling and upholstery of planes, boats, cars, trucks, and vans; false hulls and bottoms of boats; false gas tanks of cars, vans, and trucks; in the gas itself; false floors and walls of trucks and vans; in life jackets; and in ship containers, some with false

sides and bottoms, some without.

One *New York Times* report highlighted some of the most incredible (and creative) cases uncovered: dead cocaine-filled eviscerated parrots among a shipment of live parrots sent from Grenada to China in 1991; a bust of Jesus Christ moulded of cocaine and spray painted grey; over 6,000 pounds of cocaine in bricks inside ice-packed cases of broccoli, Fort Lauderdale, April 1992; 1,000 pounds of cocaine packed into hollow plaster shells shaped and painted to resemble yams; 37 pounds of cocaine, in condoms, sewn into the rectums of live boa constrictors, seized in Miami, June 1993; and 192 kilos of cocaine hidden in cans of tomato sauce sent from the Dominican Republic to Puerto Rico in April 1995.[40]

People of all ages and of both sexes are involved in trafficking. Old women are sometimes used since they do not fit the trafficker profile used by law enforcement agencies. But some are caught. In one case, a 63-year-old Honduran-born American citizen was arrested in Guyana with six pounds of cocaine in her underwear. She was about to board a British West Indian Airways (BWIA) flight to New York when one of the packages fell from underneath her. The woman, Gwendolyn Martinez, a grandmother, later admitted that she had been recruited in Brooklyn for the job. Upon conviction she was sentenced to ten years in jail.[41] Martinez was one of several

"granny mules" arrested during 1993 and 1994 in Guyana and Trinidad.

Even children have been used, because their youth and innocence are often good camouflage. Use has been made of cadavers, of both adults and children. In the latter respect, a military intelligence official cited the 1994 case where a 16-month-old dead baby was used to convey cocaine from Kingston, Jamaica to London, England. It was the suspicion of an alert air hostess who found it unusual that the "child" had not cried or fidgeted once throughout the eight-and-a-half-hour flight that led to the uncovering of this heinous act.[42]

Some trafficking is done on an individual basis, but mostly it is based on simple or elaborate organizational structures and networks. Some operations are very sophisticated, using digital encryption devices, high frequency transmitters, cellular telephones, beepers, radar tracking devices, flares and sensors for air drops, and other equipment. Some operators are trained in armed combat, counternarcotics surveillance, evasive driving, and other areas. And, of course, traffickers are able to buy the services of specialists such as lawyers, pilots, and accountants.

Most of the structures and networks could not exist and deliver without the collusion of people in government and private

agencies in various positions and at all hierarchical levels; people in shipping companies, customs and immigration agencies, warehouses, police forces, the military, airlines, export and import companies, stores, cruise ships, fishermen, trucking companies, farms, factories, bus and taxi operators, etc. Some officials collude by acts of omission: they just fail to perform certain acts, go to certain places, or return to their posts at a certain time. And considering their earnings for "doing little" or "doing nothing," one could appreciate how many people are susceptible to the corruption, especially in places with poor salaries specifically, and or economic deprivation generally.

Trafficking does not always involve the direct movement of drugs from place of origin to intended destination; often it is done circuitously. For instance, cocaine would go from Colombia to Jamaica and then to the United States, sometimes with a further stop in the Bahamas; or from Colombia to Venezuela to Guyana to the United Kingdom, or to the United States, sometimes again with intermediary stops in places like Antigua or Trinidad. The circuitous routing of drugs often involves "island hopping," which is facilitated by the closeness of Caribbean countries to each other. The "island hopping" is also possible because of two geographical features mentioned earlier: the island character of

most countries, which permits entry from scores, sometimes hundreds, of places; and the physical dispersal of territory in some cases, examples being the Bahamas and the Virgin Islands.

Conclusion

In sum, while the recent global turbulence and transformations have altered the strategic environment in many ways, because of the continued salience of some issues and the heightened dynamics of others, the Caribbean strategic environment still holds some clear and present dangers.

Drug trafficking presents some of these dangers. The implications of trafficking go well beyond the consequences of being a transit centre, partly because not everything intended to go through the region actually does so. Some of the cocaine and heroin remain, both by default and by design, as payment for services, for example, in the latter case. There is a correlation between cocaine trafficking and cocaine consumption and abuse: the countries with high cocaine addiction are the very ones that are major cocaine trafficking centres. Moreover, throughout the Caribbean there are the attendant problems of crime, arms trafficking, and corruption--the dynamics of drugs, geography, power, and politics.[43]

Notes

1. Stanley Hoffman, "A New World Order and its Troubles," Foreign Affairs 69 (Fall 1990): 115-22.

2. Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "What New World Order?" Foreign Affairs 71 (Spring 1992): 88. Nye is now Assistant US Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs.

3. For a discussion of military changes, see Humberto García Muñiz and Jorge Rodríguez Beruff, "U.S. Military Policy Toward the Caribbean in the 1990s," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 533 (May 1994): 112-24; and Gen. John J. Sheehan, "Lessons of 1994; Outlook for the Future," presentation at the LANTCOM--NDU--North-South Center Caribbean Security Symposium, Miami, 18 April 1995.

4. Jorge I. Domínguez, "The Caribbean in a New International Context," in The Caribbean: New Dynamics in Trade and Political Economy, Anthony T. Bryan, ed. (Miami, Fl: University of Miami, 1995), p. 2.

5. See Andrés Serbín, Caribbean Geopolitics: Toward Security Through Peace? (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1991); Ivelaw L. Griffith, The Quest for Security in the Caribbean (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), pp. 175-216; and Michael Morris, Caribbean Maritime Security (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).

6. Edward N. Luttwak, "From geopolitics to Geo-economics," National Interest 20 (Summer 1990): 20.

7. Henry S. Gill, "NAFTA: Challenges for the Caribbean Community," in The Caribbean: New Dynamics in Trade and Political Economy, 49.

8. See Steven A. Holmes, "Less Strategic Now, Grenada is to Lose American Embassy," New York Times, 2 May 1994, pp. A-1, A-6; and Holmes, "U.S. Embassy for Grenada," New York Times, 15 May 1994, p. A-9.

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3-32.

10. See "Indecent Proposal," and "Venezuela's Ultimatum," Guyana Review No. 27 (April 1995), pp. 2-6; and "[Foreign Minister Clement] Rohee Says No," Guyana Review No. 29 (June 1995), p. 7.

11. See Ivelaw L. Griffith, "From Cold War Geopolitics to Post-Cold War Geonarcotics," International Journal 49, 1 (Winter 1993-94): 1-36.

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13. William Roy Surrett, The International Narcotics Trade: An Overview of its Dimensions, Production Sources, and Organizations, CRS Report for Congress 88-643, 3 October 1988, 1.

14. INCSR (1993), p. 16.

15. Presentation by General Barry McCaffrey, "Lessons of 1994: Prognosis for 1995 and Beyond," at the 1995 Annual Strategy Symposium co-sponsored by the Southern Command and the National Defense University, Miami, 25 April 1995.

16. I am grateful to Brig. (Ret.) David Granger of the Guyana Defense Force for the Guyana-Brazil and the Guyana-Venezuela information and to Ricardo Rodríguez, Minister Counselor at the Venezuelan Mission to the OAS for the Trinidad-Venezuela information, all provided during May 1995.

17. For a recent assessment of European drug operations and their Latin American, Caribbean, and other connections, see INCSR (1995), pp. 303-98, and 513-21; Scott B. MacDonald and Bruce Zagaris, ed., International Handbook on Drug Control, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992), chs. 14-18; and Rensselaer W. Lee, III and Scott B. MacDonald, "Drugs in the East," Foreign Policy 90 (Spring 1993): 89-107.

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19. INCSR (1995), p. 119.

20. Interviews with Rear Admiral Peter Brady, chief of staff, Lt. Col. Allan Douglas, staff officer (Operations and Training), and Captain Desmond Edwards, military intelligence officer, JDF Head Quarters, Up Park Camp, Jamaica, 19 December 1994.

21. "Jamaica Under Drug Siege," New York Carib News, 2 May 1989, p. 4; "Questions Surround Air Jamaica Drug Find," New York Carib News, 16 May 1989, p. 3; and "Major Ganja Find in Manchester," Gleaner (Jamaica) 8 March 1995, p. 3A.

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24. Ibid., p. 115.

25. Oppenheimer, Castro's Final Hour, p. 127.

26. "Cocaine Found on Coast Brings 29 to Court," Miami Herald, 14 April 1992, p. 13K.

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28. INCSR (1994), pp. 184 and 185; and INCSR (1995), pp. 168-69.

29. See US Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, Drugs, Law Enforcement, and Foreign Policy: The Cartel, Haiti, and Central America. Hearings, Part 4. 100th Congress, 2d Sess., 11, 12, and 14 July 1988; and Alexandra Marks, "Haiti's Military May Dig in Heels to Keep Lucrative Drug Trade," Christian Science Monitor, 1 November 1993, pp. 1, 14.

30. Tim Weiner, "Colombian Drug Trafficker Implicates Haiti Police Chief," New York Times, 22 April 1994, p. A7.

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33. See Mohamed Khan, "Drugs Dropped by Mysterious Aircraft," Stabroek News (Guyana) 8 June 1993, pp. 1, 11; and "23 Held in Air-dropped Cocaine Probe," Stabroek News, 9 June 1993, pp. 1, 11.

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35. See "Illegal Airstrip Case: Three Colombians, One Guyanese Charged," Guyana Chronicle, 29 January 1989, pp. 1, 4.

36. See Anand Persaud, "117 Pounds of Cocaine Found on GAC Plane," Stabroek News, 18 March 1993, pp. 1, 2; and "GAC Offering G1M Reward for Cocaine find Leads," Stabroek News, 19 March 1993, p. 1.

37. Interviews with, among other officials, Brig. Joe Singh, chief of staff, Guyana Defense Force, Camp Ayanganna, Georgetown, 30 June 1994; Lt. Cmdr. Gary Best, acting commander, Guyana Coast Guard, Coast Guard Headquarters, Georgetown, 1 July 1994; Jules Bernard, commissioner of police, Trinidad, Police Headquarters, Port of Spain, 8 July 1994; Orville Durant, commissioner of police, Barbados, Police Headquarters, Bridgetown, 19 July 1994; Rear Adm. Peter Brady of the JDF; Supt. Reginald Ferguson, head of drug enforcement unit, Bahamas Police Force, Nassau, 22 December 1994; and Alvin Goodwin, deputy commissioner of police, Antigua-Barbuda, in Port of Spain, Trinidad, 21 January 1995.

38. "NY Drug Agents find 10-cocaine-filled Condoms inside Dog," Miami Herald, 6 December 1994, p. 3A; and "Man Sentenced for Bid to Smuggle Coke in Dog," Miami Herald, 27 April 1995, p. 3A.

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40. Jessica Spart, "The New Drug Mules," New York Times Magazine, 11 June 1995, pp. 44-45. The tomato sauce case was reported in Miami Herald, 16 June 1995, p. 17A.

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