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Political and Socio-Economic Change: Revolutions and Their Implications for the U.S. Military

John R. Deni
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Editor

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John R. Deni
Editor

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Comments pertaining to this report are invited and should be forwarded to: Director, Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, U.S. Army War College, 47 Ashburn Drive, Carlisle, PA 17013-5010.

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FOREWORD

Significant political, economic, and social change can dramatically impact the international security environment and hence U.S. security. For example, the revolutions that have unfolded across the Middle East and North Africa over the last several years have impacted American interests such as the security of Israel and the spread of democracy. Likewise, the less "revolutionary" but equally impactful changes that have unfolded across Latin America over the last 15 years have affected American interests such as free and open trade and access to reliable energy sources. In response to these changes, American leaders will wield diplomacy, development, and defense tools to safeguard U.S. interests and to fulfill broader policy objectives. Whether and how those leaders choose to wield Landpower—a critically important element of the defense toolbox—is subject to significant debate these days in light of sequestration's continuing impact and the post-war drawdown impacting the U.S. Army in particular.

For these reasons, it seemed appropriate and necessary to examine the changes—revolutionary as well as evolutionary—that have unfolded across two disparate but vital regions of the globe, namely the Greater Middle East and Latin America, and how the United States might respond with all the tools at its disposal, including the U.S. Army. That was the task given to a panel of experts convened by the U.S. Army War College at the 24th annual Strategy Conference in April 2013 in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Organized by the Strategic Studies Institute's Dr. John R. Deni and chaired by the School of Strategic Landpower's Dr. Paul Rexton Kan, the panel—consisting of Professor

Greg Aftandilian of the Center for National Policy, Dr. I. William Zartman of the Johns Hopkins University, and Dr. Philip Brenner of the American University—addressed the nature of the changes occurring in the Greater Middle East and Latin America, potential American responses, and the utility of Landpower as a tool to safeguard U.S. interests and advance U.S. objectives. The chapters in this edited volume are based upon the presentations of those experts at the Strategy Conference, and the Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to offer them as part of the ongoing discussion over the future of the U.S. Army in American national security.

DOUGLAS C. LOVELACE, JR.
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CHAPTER 1

NAVIGATING CHANGE: AMERICAN DEFENSE AND FOREIGN POLICY IN RESPONSE TO REVOLUTIONS

John R. Deni

The revolutions of the Arab Spring have had profound implications for global security generally and for U.S. security specifically. In most cases, these implications are only beginning to reveal themselves in the various countries affected across the region. Most obviously, the future of Syria—indeed, whether it remains a unified political entity—remains an open question. Whether and how the Syrian civil war is resolved is bound to impact significantly U.S. efforts to help Israel maintain its security. Meanwhile, in Libya, weak governmental institutions and rival power centers have made it difficult for the authorities in Tripoli to gain full control over the entire country. Particularly along Libya's borders, this has magnified the risk of transnational terrorists and traffickers exploiting the poorly governed spaces of the Pan Sahel. Elsewhere, the unfinished revolution in Egypt holds implications for Israel and the Palestinian Authority, for the balance of regional power vis-à-vis Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, and for the global trade—especially energy resources—that passes through the Suez Canal every day.

These examples highlight the fact that, although initial causal factors may have been the same or similar in many affected states, the Arab Spring unfolded—and continues to unfold—in a unique way in each of the Middle Eastern countries affected. In the same

way, Washington must develop a tailored response to each as it seeks to promote key U.S. interests and objectives across the region. Simply put, the precise set of policies or tools—including the use of the U.S. military—most appropriate for one Middle Eastern or North African country will not necessarily apply to another.

As Washington navigates the path forward across the region, one near certainty seems to be that the era of Middle Eastern and North African political leaders caring very little about opinion on the so-called Arab street—which often enabled them to follow Washington's lead without concern for the consequences—is over. Instead, the necessity of heeding the will of public opinion—as expressed through newly empowered legislative bodies, routine legitimate elections, public polling, or other means—will likely make Middle Eastern and North African governments less pliable and hence the pursuit of American interests in the region more challenging. In this setting, wielding the levers of American power, including the military dimension, requires a particularly deft hand.

Similar challenges exist in the American response to the social and political changes that have unfolded across Latin America over the last decade. Although certainly not as revolutionary as the changes witnessed across the Middle East and North Africa in the last several years, the growth and spread of modern Bolivarianism has confronted American policymakers with a new set of challenges in Latin America.

At first glance, the rise of modern Bolivarianism and the challenge it presents to the United States resembles the communist-capitalist dichotomy of the Cold War era. But this is too facile a metaphor to draw upon to explain the most recent changes across Latin

America. Real and perceived economic and social injustices in countries such as Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Venezuela have led to political change in each of these countries, characterized by the development of a new "left" and frequently resulting in a worsening of relations with the United States. Whether Washington is indeed responsible for some or all of those injustices—or whether some Latin American leaders of the new left are simply instrumentalizing the United States in order to gain domestic political advantage—is open to interpretation and debate.

Meanwhile, elsewhere across the region, political and economic opportunities have broadened, allowing a wider swath of society—that is, beyond the elites—to benefit from globalization. In countries such as Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Panama, economic mismanagement has given way to economic mobility, and political monopolies have given way to increased political transparency, competition, and modernization. Even in Cuba, the significant reforms of the last several years have enabled Cubans to own their homes, become self-employed, and travel without a permit.

Together, the social, economic, and political changes that have occurred across Latin America and the Middle East have challenged the pursuit of U.S. interests through the development of new, unfavorable orders in some contexts and regions and unacceptable disorder in others. Washington is hence confronted with the issue of how to respond to these various changes to safeguard U.S. interests, promote Western values, and shape the security environment into the future. Whether and to what degree U.S. policymakers can influence the unfolding changes and shape outcomes remains to be seen. But if Washington is to

achieve success in this regard, though, it will likely only be possible through the skillful employment of a variety of policymaking tools, including development, diplomacy, and defense.

These were among the central issues confronting a panel entitled, "Political and Socio-Economic Change: Revolutions and Their Implications," during the U.S. Army War College's annual Strategy Conference in April 2013. Three expert panelists—Professor Greg Aftandilian of the Center for National Policy, Dr. I. William Zartman of the Johns Hopkins University, and Dr. Philip Brenner of the American University—were each asked to consider the aforementioned issues, as well as to address how the United States should balance the need to promote democracy, human rights, and other Western values with the necessity of building and maintaining stability and security. The chapters of this volume were the basis for their presentations at the April 2013 Strategy Conference.

The chapter by Aftandilian begins by assessing the many changes that have occurred across the Greater Middle East and then asks how the United States can maintain its influence there in order to achieve its broader security objectives. Certainly, argues Aftandilian, despite growing energy self-reliance and the rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region, the Middle East is still an area where U.S. interests will be affected in the coming years. In order to maintain influence and advance U.S. interests, Aftandilian calls for the United States to exhibit greater consistency in responding to undemocratic behavior of regimes in the Greater Middle East.

At the same time, Aftandilian advocates for the United States to maintain ties with most of the military bureaucracies throughout the region—particular-

ly army-to-army ties, given the importance of armies in the region—as a means of maintaining influence. He also notes that military-to-military ties enable the United States to show support for national sovereignty within Middle Eastern countries, since the military institutions of those countries are often viewed with great respect and as a symbol of autonomy by the average citizen. Additionally, Aftandilian calls on U.S. officials to engage with a broad swath of opposition and civil society figures, particularly given the diffusion of power evident in many countries of the region.

In his thought-provoking chapter, Zartman identifies both risks and opportunities for the United States as it seeks to promote the democratization process across the Greater Middle East. In some cases, according to Zartman, Washington can "at best" react wisely to events in the Middle East. **Controlling** such events will likely prove impossible. As part of this strategy, he posits that U.S. foreign policy should seek changes in the **policies** of other countries, not more fundamental **regime** change. Often, he argues, this requires "cold calculations and hardheaded stocktaking about where real interests lie."[1] In contemplating the policy tools necessary to achieve U.S. objectives, Zartman argues that military-to-military ties can function as a useful bridge. Additionally, he recommends stubborn tenacity in the search for new or different means of engagement, collaboration, and negotiation. Zartman also argues for the importance of the "human domain," insofar as it enables the United States to take into account the historical aspirations of other, adversarial countries.

Perhaps most interestingly, Zartman concludes with a call for policymakers to seek to maintain U.S. primacy. In his view, deliberations over scarce re-

sources and whether and how the world is now more multipolar only encourage the forces of conflict and disorder that are so typically inimical to U.S. interests, vital and otherwise, around the world. Ultimately, he argues, weakness becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, making efforts to shape the international security environment more difficult.

When confronted by changes in the international security environment, Brenner argues that the United States would benefit from a greater degree of humility in how it reacts and in terms of what it aspires to achieve. In a provocative examination of the great social and political changes that have unfolded across Latin America over the last 2 decades, Brenner argues that the United States must end its "hegemonic presumption" and instead practice a "realistic empathy." In Brenner's assessment, the United States has increasingly found itself looking in from the outside of Latin American affairs over the last 20 years, which have in some ways been characterized by more continuity than change.

To some degree, this is both the result and the effect of U.S. policies toward the region, stemming in part from an American inability to update its policies and broader objectives for the 21st century, and leading to a U.S. misperception that key countries in the region are hostile to U.S. interests. Instead of assuming Latin American populists—who have in most cases been the vanguard for dramatic political, economic, and social change in the region—are fundamentally anti-American, Brenner argues that U.S. officials should begin from the premise that those populists object to **specific** U.S. policies. American officials would also benefit, posits Brenner, from simply trying to place themselves in the shoes of Latin American leaders,

and to see America and its actions not as Americans do, but as **Latin** Americans do.

As Brenner, Zartman, and Aftandilian all make clear, managing change in the international security environment—whether revolutionary or evolutionary in nature—is always a complicated task. Together, their 2013 Army War College Strategy Conference presentations, and the chapters in this volume upon which they were based, offer compelling insights into how the United States can best respond to trends and events in two very disparate regions of the globe. American leaders will need to carefully consider how best to wield defense tools, among others, at their disposal—particularly Landpower—given the continuing defense austerity in the United States, the experience of over a decade of war, and the ongoing recovery from the Great Recession. Effective and efficient employment of Landpower, especially during peacetime, will necessarily remain a challenging endeavor.

ENDNOTE - CHAPTER 1

1. I. William Zartman, "The Limits of American Power—Challenges and Opportunities in Washington's Response to the Arab Spring," Chap. 3, in this book.

CHAPTER 2

REVOLUTIONS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS—A FOCUS ON THE MIDDLE EAST REGION

Gregory Aftandilian

The Middle East is going through the most profound transition since the post-colonial independence period after World War II. The notion that the autocratic systems prevalent in the region were immune from democratic pressures and political upheavals that changed once-repressive regions like Latin America and Eastern Europe some 20 to 30 years ago proved not to be the case. Since early-2011, several countries have experienced revolutions, some have experienced civil wars, and others are witnessing pressures for political change. The autocratic bubble has burst, and those countries like the Gulf States that are hanging on to the status quo are using a combination of largess and repression to stave off unrest, but this strategy may not be effective for very long. In this interconnected age, young people, in particular, see what is possible, such as bringing down long-standing autocratic leaders—Egypt's Mubarak and Tunisia's Ben Ali. Many believe that their countries' destinies should be in their hands and not in those of autocratic leaders and tribal elders who seem stuck in the past.

The question arises whether the United States should care about, or be worried by, these profound changes in the region. After all, there is much discussion in Washington policy circles about the so-called "pivot to Asia," where U.S. attention is supposed to be re-directed because of larger U.S. national security interests there. In addition, with new oil and gas discov-

eries in the United States, the U.S. domestic economy will not depend on Middle Eastern oil as it once did. Moreover, in the eyes of most Americans, the long and protracted Iraq war was a costly misadventure that should not be repeated; hence, there is no appetite among the American people for another major U.S. engagement in the Middle East. Some of the new regimes that have emerged from the upheavals have shown little support for the United States, making the pursuit of democracy open to question.

While there is a significant element of truth in the previous assertions, the Middle East will likely remain an important region for the United States for some time to come, with attendant implications for American Landpower. First, although instability in the region can perhaps lead to democracy one day, it can also lead to a breakdown of order in which terrorist elements can flourish, as we have seen in Libya and Yemen. Second, while the United States will indeed be importing less Middle Eastern oil, petroleum is a globalized commodity, and instability in the region can lead to great price fluctuations that can have a deleterious effect on the U.S. economy and impact the economies of U.S. trading partners in Europe and Asia. Third, while a major U.S. land incursion in the Middle East (like the Iraq war) may now be a thing of the past, there may be contingencies where U.S. military forces are called in to help national armies. Fourth, since the Iranian nuclear issue is not likely to be solved soon, the Arab Gulf states will continue to want a U.S. security umbrella of some sort for the foreseeable future. Last, but not least, the unresolved Arab-Israeli dispute will keep U.S. attention on the region in the hopes of reviving the moribund peace process, as we are witnessing today with Secretary of State John Kerry's most recent efforts.[1]

All of these issues will keep the United States engaged in the Middle East region for important political, economic and strategic reasons. However, two major themes have emerged, particularly in Middle Eastern transition countries, which will affect the way the United States does business in the region. First, we are witnessing sharp divisions in several transition societies between Islamists and secularists, the most profound being the daily struggles in Egypt and Tunisia. Because the old regimes in these countries repressed liberal political forces at the same time as political Islam was emerging as the dominant ideological trend in the region, it is not surprising that Islamist political parties emerged as the strongest forces in these societies after the autocrats fell from power. However, the Islamist trend—both the more established parties like the Muslim Brotherhood and the more fundamentalist Salafi parties—is not necessarily supported by a majority of the citizens in these transition societies. Many secular and even religiously devout elements in these societies do not want their countries to be ruled by what they see as zealots pursuing a narrow religious agenda. In late-2012 and early-2013, for example, Egypt was witness to many bouts of street violence between opponents and proponents of then-Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi, who hailed from the Muslim Brotherhood. Scores of Muslim Brotherhood offices were attacked throughout Egypt, even in the city of Ismailia where the Brotherhood was founded in 1928.[2]

The other major theme that has characterized the transitions in the region is the emergence of multiple centers of power in once autocratic countries. Before, there was only one office that counted—the presidential office. Parliaments, the military and security services, and the judiciary were all subordinate to the

president in practice. Now, with the fall of some autocratic leaders, there are several centers of power in these transition countries, and the new executives no longer hold a monopoly of power. When new rulers try to act like an autocratic leader—like Morsi did in late-November 2012 by declaring his rulings exempt from judicial review—there can be significant push-back from many segments of society; Morsi was forced to scale back these newly assumed powers. Moreover, since several of these new leaders have not come from the military (from which most leaders of republican regimes in the region have hailed in the post-World War II period), and wanting to keep the military on their side or at least neutral during domestic controversies, the military establishments have actually become more autonomous that they were under the deposed autocratic leaders. In addition, parliaments are unlikely to be the rubber-stamp institutions they once were.

It will likely take many years, if not decades, for these countries to sort out the role of religion in politics and the political and institutional balances in their societies. There is no one blueprint for them to follow, and each country will likely strike its own path forward. The United States and other Western countries can do very little to influence these internal struggles, and whatever policies they would want to pursue would likely backfire. The idea of a Western country trying to influence the domestic affairs of a Middle Eastern country has all kinds of baggage associated with the colonial era. Any embrace of this or that faction stands a good chance of hurting those factions because they will, in turn, be targeted by their opponents as "agents or lackeys of the West." Even though the United States does not have a colonial history in

the Middle East, in the eyes of many people in the region, it is playing a so-called "neo-imperialist role" that smacks of the role the European powers played during the colonial era.

The key question for U.S. policymakers, then, is: How can the United States maintain influence in the region given these challenges? This question needs to be answered in both sensitive and practical ways:

1. First, U.S. officials need to recognize that the old way of doing business in the region is no longer tenable in states that have gone through revolutions or transitions, and may not be tenable for long in the so-called stable states of the Gulf.

2. Previously, as mentioned earlier in this volume, it was "one-stop shopping" for U.S. officials in these states. The key was to get the cooperation of the autocratic ruler, the president, or the monarch. The other so-called political players and institutions in these states did not really matter because all power flowed from the top. This is no longer the case, at least in the transition countries.

3. In some instances, since the upheavals of 2011, U.S. officials have reverted to a "two-stop shopping" strategy. In Egypt, for example, U.S. political and military leaders would tend to meet chiefly with the Egyptian military hierarchy and the Muslim Brotherhood—the former because it directly ruled the country for some 18 months and was considered a pro-U.S. institution, and the latter because it emerged as the strongest political force in the country after Mubarak fell from power.[3] This strategy may have seemed logical at the time, but it had the effect of alienating the liberal and secular political forces in the country that came to believe that the United States did not really care about democracy as long as its strategic inter-

ests in Egypt were taken care of. Because the liberals and the secularists saw the Egyptian military and the Brotherhood as anti-democratic forces and both institutions, while in power, often acted in undemocratic ways, this "two-stop shopping" had the effect of convincing many Egyptians that nothing much had changed from the Mubarak era in the way the United States approached the country.[4] Adding fuel to this assessment, the United States praised Morsi for helping to arrange a truce between Hamas and Israel after a flare-up of violence in November 2012, only to turn a blind eye when Morsi issued undemocratic decrees immediately thereafter. The feeling among liberals and secularists in Egypt was that as long as the Morsi government played ball with the United States on issues that matter most to Washington, like preserving the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, then the United States was willing to give Morsi a free hand to crack down on his opponents.[5] Although some of this criticism of the United States may be unfair, the upshot is that Washington alienated the liberal class within Egypt, the group most attracted and attuned to Western ideals and notions of democracy.

Egypt presents an interesting case study of how the United States, in the pursuit of strategic interests, can offend groups who would be its natural allies in a transition process. However, if the United States were to embrace such liberal groups to the exclusion of others, then these groups would be labeled as U.S. stooges or lackeys by their opponents. What the United States can do instead is to speak out in general terms for the need of countries like Egypt to abide by and uphold democratic principles, which are now international norms. After initially coddling Morsi, there seemed to

be a gradual change of approach by the U.S. administration toward Morsi's actions, and Secretary of State Kerry stepped up criticism of Morsi's crackdowns on his critics.[6]

In Yemen, after playing a prominent role with the Gulf States to convince longtime strongman, President Ali Abdullah Saleh, to step down in the face of mounting opposition, the United States is not seen in a favorable light by the majority of Yemeni people, according to some recent polls. U.S. policy is viewed as terrorist-centric, with attention only focused on targeting and destroying militants associated with al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. Even U.S. assistance projects in Yemen are viewed with suspicion. They are there only to weaken support for al-Qaeda by helping impoverished areas of the country so that residents in these areas will not be susceptible to the entreaties of terrorist groups and their affiliates.[7] Although this criticism may be unfair, it is nonetheless widely accepted. The U.S. drone policy, while effective in killing some major al-Qaeda leaders and operatives like Anwar al-Awlaki, who was linked to several anti-U.S. plots, has also resulted in collateral deaths which have alienated large segments of the population.

In the Gulf States comprising the Gulf Cooperation Council, the situation looks relatively calm with the exception of Bahrain, but this tranquility may not last. Most of the Gulf States, with the exception of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), face a serious youth jobless problem. A recent study has noted that in most Gulf States, young people between the ages of 15 and 24 confront an unemployment rate of between 17 and 24 percent.[8] Moreover, there is a large discrepancy between the fortunes of the tribal family (along with those families closely associated with them) and the

rest of society. In addition, in the Internet age, youth in these states closely follow developments in other parts of the Arab world. The calls for jobs, dignity, and self-determination by Egyptian and Tunisian young people in 2011, for example, were closely followed by the youth in the Gulf States. Thus far, the leaders of the Gulf States have reacted to these challenges by a combination of largess and repression to stave off unrest. Some Gulf rulers like the Saudis have increased social spending while imprisoning bloggers for supposedly spreading false information about the government. In some cases, young bloggers have received prison terms.[9] The Gulf regimes may believe that these tactics may serve to deter future bloggers from criticizing regime policies and leaders, but this is a losing strategy in the long run. In this interconnected age, it is increasingly difficult for regimes to silence criticism over the Internet, and clever computer-savvy youth will always find ways to get around attempts at censorship.

In Bahrain, the situation has taken on an added complication because of the sectarian dimension of the crisis. Most of the protestors who took to the streets and occupied the capital city's Pearl Roundabout (emulating the actions of Egyptian protestors in Tahrir Square in central Cairo) in 2011 were from the majority, but largely oppressed, Shia population. Although some within the Shia community have called for the removal of Bahrain's Sunni monarchy, most Shia have merely called for reforms of the political system. The ruling family, after some initial hesitation, responded with force, even calling in troops from Saudi Arabia and the UAE in March 2011 as part of its crackdown against the protestors.[10] While parts of the ruling family, including the king, have admitted mistakes and

have pledged to undertake reforms, little has been done to address legitimate grievances.[11] The Bahraini authorities and other Gulf officials have frequently invoked the Iranian threat to justify their crackdowns against restive Shia populations, but this is often an excuse to cover up acts of repression. Although Iran may indeed try to exploit these crackdowns for political reasons, the origins of the grievances in the Arab Gulf states are homegrown.

The U.S. reaction to the crackdown in Bahrain has been weak and largely ineffective. Although U.S. officials have been occasionally critical of the Bahraini government response, no real pressure with teeth has been applied.[12] Many observers suspect that because the United States maintains its 5th Fleet in Bahrain (and is worried about losing this base) and because other Gulf states, for political reasons, would not want to host the base despite their concerns about a revanchist Iran next door, it is the Bahraini authorities who have leverage in this situation over the United States, not the reverse.

Some observers have suggested that the only way for the United States to maintain a long-term naval presence on Bahrain is to help bring about political stability on the island, and this can only be accomplished by political compromise and the recognition by the Bahraini authorities of legitimate Shia grievances. Otherwise, Bahrain, given the demographics (a Sunni elite ruling over a Shia majority), is headed for more political strife and instability.[13]

The United States needs a multifaceted approach to maintain its influence in the region. While it needs the cooperation of current rulers—new rulers who have emerged from revolutions and upheavals in the region as well as old ones from existing autocratic re-

gimes—**the United States needs to speak out consistently when these rulers take blatantly undemocratic actions**. For example, in late-November 2012, when Morsi declared that his decrees were essentially above the law (not subject to judicial review), the United States should have spoken out much more forcefully against this action. The U.S. silence or very muted criticism of this action was interpreted by nearly the entire Egyptian political class as the United States only caring about broader strategic interests (Morsi's decree came 1 day after the United States praised him for helping to broker a truce between Hamas and Israel) and not about democracy in Egypt.[14] In the Gulf States, the United States needs to speak out more forcefully against the arrests of bloggers and other critics who are voicing opposition to the ruling establishments and are who not engaged in violence. The United States must make certain that its outspokenness is based on the principle of protecting free speech rather than an agreement with any one dissident's particular point of view. There will inevitably be pushback by new and old rulers to such stances by the United States, but if U.S. officials are sincere about supporting the notion of democracy and political reform in the region—even while recognizing that it will be an uneven process and will take some time to take root—it needs to be consistent. Inconsistency will have the effect of alienating democratic forces in these societies and will ultimately redound against the United States.

Nevertheless, the United States should continue to maintain its ties to the military establishments of most of these countries. First, these military establishments have had long-standing relationships with the United States (even going back in some cases to the immediate post-colonial period), and it would be fool-

ish to scuttle them, especially because of mutual threat perceptions. Second, the United States can and should use its influence with these military establishments to play a responsible role during times of domestic upheavals by not firing on the people. Third, even among young revolutionaries who want to change the regimes they live under, the military establishments—if they are not used for domestic repression—are seen as institutions that should be supported because they represent strong symbols of national sovereignty. The notable exceptions were Libya and Syria, the former because its armed forces were seen as a mercenary force and the latter because it was seen (and is still seen) as a sectarian force repressing the majority.

U.S. officials need to engage with a broad range of political factions, civil society activists, and opinion makers in transitional societies and in those countries that are likely to experience transitions in the near future. Just because the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt has emerged as the strongest political force since 2011 should not mean that the United States should pay less attention to the liberal and secular forces, no matter how divided or incompetent they may appear.[15] As the Brotherhood loses public support, these other factions may emerge in the near future as the new leaders of the country, and it would be foolish and counterproductive to alienate them. Moreover, having a broad-based strategy of dealing with a wide range of political forces would help to insulate the United States from conspiracy charges that it is in cahoots with this or that particular political faction.

Beyond these broad objectives, there are also significant implications for American Landpower and the U.S. Army. Given that the largest component of

the military establishments in these Middle Eastern countries is the army, the U.S. Army has a natural, important role to play. These ties should be kept and cultivated as a way of maintaining U.S. influence in these countries. The U.S. Army should help these military establishments develop into truly national forces that will be used only to protect the nation against hostile outside forces (including terrorists) and not as an instrument to be used against internal dissent. Hence, the U.S. Army should continue to support the international military education and training (IMET) program for these countries that bring foreign military officers to the United States for education and training. These foreign military officers from the Middle East region should continue to study at professional military educational institutes (such as the U.S. Army War College) where they are taught the importance of civilian control of the military and respect for human rights norms.[16]

New leaders in the region's transition countries, for a variety of political and strategic interests, would not want to end the relationships between their armies and the U.S. Army because it brings their countries tangible benefits such as a more professional military force that is backed by the people. If chaos does come to states in the region experiencing revolutions or upheavals, the army in these countries is the only institution that can bring about order, as was the case in Egypt in early-2011. Although the Egyptian military's rule was problematic in subsequent months when it ran the country, the fact that it did not fire on the people in January and February 2011 was a very positive development. It prevented the Egyptian revolution from becoming even bloodier than it already was because the military ultimately backed the people

against the interior ministry forces and forced Hosni Mubarak to resign. While the Egyptian military had its own reasons for not wanting to shoot the demonstrators (perhaps not wishing to sully their reputation and not wanting to risk losing their perquisites and business interests in the face of a popular revolution), the fact that many Egyptian military officers had studied at U.S. professional military educational institutions (where civilian control over the military is taught, and foreign military officers learn to respect internal dissent) may have played a role in the Egyptian military's decision not to fire on the people.[17]

Although the days of a large U.S. military intervention in the Middle East region (such as the Iraq war) may be a thing of the past, there are possible contingencies in which host governments may call in the U.S. Army to deter aggression, confront terrorists with special operations forces, or fight back a land incursion from a common foe. For example, if there were to be U.S. air strikes against Iranian nuclear facilities, Iran might retaliate in some way against the Arab Gulf States, necessitating the introduction of some U.S. Army elements to protect and defend these states. Long-standing and continuing ties between the U.S. Army and the armies of these states would facilitate the necessary military-to-military cooperation to make such contingencies effective.

Hence, military exercises between the U.S. Army and the armies of many Middle Eastern states should continue and, in some cases, be reactivated. For example, the United States and Egypt have participated in the biennial Bright Star military exercises held on Eyptian soil for more than 2 decades.[18] These exercises helped to facilitate cooperation between the two countries' armies (along with other countries that par-

ticipated in them), and this cooperation proved vital in times of crisis. For a variety of reasons, Bright Star has not been held for several years, but once Egypt's political situation stabilizes, the exercises should be revived and the U.S. Army should advocate for them because they serve vital U.S., Egyptian, and ultimately Arab Gulf States' national security interests.

Although Washington may focus more of its attention and resources in the Asia-Pacific region in the coming decades because of the rise of China and other reasons, the Middle East is likely to remain a chief area of interest and concern for U.S. strategic planners for some time to come. However, because of the revolutions and upheavals in the region just in the past 2 years, and the likely prospect that some of the remaining autocratic regimes will undergo change as well, U.S. officials need to understand that the old way of doing business in the region—that is, dealing only with the autocrat—is no longer viable. U.S. officials need to be sensitive to more assertive populations and the emergence of multiple centers of power in countries going through political transitions. For the U.S. Army, these changes present both a challenge and an opportunity. Although some countries undergoing transition, for political reasons, may want to distance themselves from outwardly embracing U.S. foreign policy goals, they will likely want their armies to continue relationships with the U.S. Army for joint training exercises, assistance in operations against terrorists, and contingency planning in the face of common threats. The U.S. Army should encourage these partner armies to continue or reactivate joint training exercises, encourage them to send their officers to the United States as part of the IMET program, and engage actively with them in discussions on common threat perceptions. Military-to-military contacts such

as these can also influence partner armies toward becoming truly national protective forces, deterring outside enemies and not simply acting as instruments of internal repression. These activities by the U.S. Army, taken as a whole, can serve to enhance U.S. national security objectives as well as enhance a positive image of the United States in the Middle East region.

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CHAPTER 3

THE LIMITS OF AMERICAN POWER— CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN WASHINGTON'S RESPONSE TO THE ARAB SPRING

I. William Zartman

We live in a Conservative Era: people are trying to hold onto what they have rather than fighting for new gains. Revolts occur when it looks like people are going to lose what they have or had, to save *les acquis*. Social psychology prospect theory tells us that we are risk averse as a result.[1] Examples are all around us, in very different conditions. In the West, the situation is the result of the economic meltdown, rendering investors risk averse and making workers worried, above all, about unemployment. In the Muslim East, where al-Qaeda is the result of globalization, the surging movement represents an effort to hold onto Islamic explanations of life and Arab cultural ways of living against the cultural, social, political and economic onslaught of the West.

No anecdote is necessary to illustrate the situation in the West, but a story will convey the Eastern perception. Rachid Ghannounchi, the leading Tunisian Islamist, explained to me that we all believe in human rights, but that he believes they come from God, whereas Tunisian liberals want to call them "universal," in an allusion to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights drawn up by human beings in the French Revolution; the difference underlies a burning issue over whether "universal" should be included in the new Tunisian Constitution. I said, "What does it

matter as long as we protect the same rights," but he merely repeated his statement.[2] The point is that Tunisian Islamists want to assert that they are there too, with their own source of human rights not dependent on a Western document. However, the corollary is that, if their wording of the constitution is accepted, their protection of the rights then depends on their religious sources, which, like all religious sources, are good and categorical in some instances but convoluted and contradictory in others. The challenge is to acknowledge the first, the need for recognition for one's accomplishments, but to be alert to contrarian use.

REVOLUTION

So what kind of revolutions are we facing? Certainly not the classical type of **social revolution** that we know from Russia, China, and France, where the social pyramid was upended with violence and the underdogs took over the state.[3] The closest thing available of this type is a **Jacksonian revolution** in which a new populist leadership is brought into power but by peaceful, democratic means, provoking a new distribution of benefits for lower classes. Currently, the most striking example is Venezuela, a case which also illustrates the frequently felt need for an external scapegoat to delegitimize opposition. The United States fits this role conveniently, and Washington should do its best not to aggrandize that role by protests and counteractions that only play the foreign state's game. A potential case for the future can be South Africa, which is still awaiting its revolution when a populist leader plays to the still impecunious black masses.[4] Cognizant of the danger, the United States should urge and help South Africa develop a distributionist domestic policy.

Political revolution is currently the more frequent occurrence, where there is a change in regime type and leadership, without any change in its social composition. This is the type of revolution referred to by leaders and populations in the Arab Spring with the overthrow of the region's authoritarian regimes. The event, with its enormous potential, nonetheless leaves many questions that only time will answer: Will the overthrow be merely a blip in the continuing history of authoritarian regimes when new dictators come to power? It is worth recalling that a similar wave of events occurred in the 1990s in 12 countries of West and Central Africa when Sovereign National Conferences claimed sovereignty from local dictators and installed democracy;[5] 2 decades later, it remains in only two of the original 12. What will be the nature of the New Order if it does not reverse the Old Order? In its world relations, the new regime will not necessarily be any more or less anti-American than the old, but will be certain to have some new views on its interests, as discussed later.

Islamic revolution is the term used in Iran and aspired to by parts of the polity in many Arab Spring cases.[6] It refers to a particular form of political revolution in which the nature of identity, the shape of the state, and the source of legitimacy are all focused on religion (or a particular interpretation of it). Such regimes, with Afghanistan and Pakistan also on the list, will need time to settle into working definitions of themselves. Their leaders are new and experienced only in opposition, not in governance and responsibility, and will have to undergo much on-the-job training in working at home and in the world. Here is a challenge for the United States, not to assume hostility but rather to show patience and gentle persistence (words

not often associated with foreign relations, admittedly) in "training" the new governments in friendly cooperative relations. (The United States so "trained" Vietnam, but never even tried to "train" North Korea, with predictable results). "Partnership" was a prominent word in working with Russia and Eastern Europe after the end of the Cold War, and it can be applied to relations with the Middle East, where dreams of democracy inspired the uprisings.

IMPACT

Beginning in January 2011, the Arab World exploded in a spontaneous, vibrant demand for dignity, liberty, and achievable purpose in life, rising up against an image and tradition of arrogant, corrupt, unresponsive authoritarian rule. The Tunisians and Egyptian slogans of Dignity, Freedom, Jobs, and Citizenship or Dignity, Freedom, Bread, and Justice is of significance equal to the Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity of the French Revolution, and it is important to recognize it as such and to help it achieve its goals (the slight difference between the two Arab countries' slogans is interesting). It has long been held that Arabs are not capable of democracy; now, it is up to them to prove the reverse, and it is a challenge to the world's leading democracy to seize an opportunity to assist in the goal it has long promoted.

The ensuing regimes can be expected to have continuing concerns and some new ones. They will have to face the same welfare challenges to governance that any regime encounters, augmented because of the poor state of the post-uprising economy and because of their claim to represent popular aspirations and notably the call for "bread" or "jobs." They will also have

the same strategic concerns in regard to the Palestinian question, the Syrian issue, and many other matters in the region. Although there may be some new lenses used to examine old issues, the geostrategic position of Egypt and the rest of North Africa remains the same, determined by history as well as geography. On the other hand, the crucial position of Syria in the Middle East and larger complex carries enormous implications for U.S.—and local and regional—interests and is open to significant variations. Syria will long be a battleground between religious and secular, Sunni and Shia factions, exacerbated by neighboring states' involvement, as it has been since the end of colonial rule and World War II. The variations in the interest of whatever regime is in power will require active and deliberate attention from Washington and close coordination with states of the region and with other allies. It will also require some pointed collaboration with rival states—notably Russia—with different views in order to find overlapping interests and broad goals.[7]

LIMITS

It is legitimate to ask what the limits of tolerance are for accepting unfavorable order and disorder, although there are perceptional traps in the wording of the question. The United States is not responsible for either the cause or the course of the Arab Spring; it can at best react wisely to events in a world it did not create and make its way among both the roses and the rubble lying around it. The United States *is* generally the country most able to influence these events to various degrees, but at the same time such popular outbursts and democratic aspirations are expressions of domestic inspiration antithetical to teleguiding from abroad.

The limits of tolerance for unfavorable disorder are not a single measure but involve additional criteria. If conditions yield genocide and mass murder, the United States has an obligation to respond under the developing norm on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P).[8] Interventions under Pillar 3 of R2P, which concerns the need for direct foreign involvement, should be collective by whatever groups of the international community to which the United States belongs, beginning with the United Nations (UN) Security Council but extending to other coalitions of the willing when UN action is blocked. Thus, the failure to act in Rwanda in 1994 or Congo-Brazzaville in 1997 leaves the United States with an obligation unfulfilled and blood on our hands.[9] However, individual countries acting for the international community, such as the French in Mali in 2012, deserve acknowledgement and legitimization, notably through the UN Security Council.

On the other hand, there must be a capability for effective action. The collapsed states of Libya, Syria, and Mali have required different sorts of military intervention appropriate to the particular situation, coupled with informal negotiations. Wild rebel groups need to be defeated but also brought into normal politics through local and traditional conflict management practices.[10] In all these cases, the United States and others sought to negotiate transition and used military means only when negotiations were rejected. But the most important lesson from these cases is that early attention is required, in different forms; worsening situations will not just go away. Libya was a timely R2P response under Pillar 3 (direct foreign intervention), but earlier attention to the gradually collapsing Malian state under auspices of R2P Pillar 2—which calls for foreign assistance to a state that requests help in han-

dling its responsibilities—or earlier assistance to the Syrian rebellion before Iran did so would have done much to limit the murder and anarchy that eventually ensued. Unfavorable disorder requires early, decisive attention, before it becomes totally unmanageable.

The limits of tolerance for unfavorable order begin with classic redlines against subversion and aggression. The messianic quality of some practitioners of Islamic revolution requires surveillance and firm response. The United States has a very muddy record of drawing redlines and then being embarrassed by them. The use of chemical weapons by Syria is the latest, where the redline has been diluted to a "range of options." The Christmas 1992 warning to Serbia on Kosovo, the 1978 sanctions threats on South Africa over South West Africa, the warnings to South Korea on nuclear explosions and missile testing and to Iran on enrichment are all hurdles left overturned without a commensurate reaction, leaving further attempts to draw redlines in doubt.[11] Threats are offered in the hopes that they will be strong enough in their brandishing that they will not have to be used. But they are only as good as their credibility, and their credibility depends on their being used once in a while. Threats must therefore not be costlier to the threatener than to the threatened; easy threats lose their bite and "this hurts me as much as it hurts you" is a sign of seriousness if overcome. All this is basic doctrine about threats and redlines, but it is too often forgotten.

Beyond such extreme cases, foreign policy should seek policy change, not regime change, of a target state in case of serious and important differences in goals. Standard tools of persuasion, carrots (rewards or gratifications) and sticks (sanctions or deprivations), are involved. It must be remembered that both are in-

volved, that future carrots are not very attractive if not accompanied presently by sticks, just as sticks are not very compelling if future carrots are not brandished at the same time. Frequently, the situation itself is the stick, when parties find themselves caught in a policy impasse that is painful to them.[12] The ensuing mutually hurting stalemate is what defines a moment ripe for negotiation, or for mediation.

However, questions still remain about responses in unfavorable situations. As already noted, the means of response may exacerbate the situation, and many means are inappropriate even if the order or disorder is unacceptable. The tactical question—whether to use political or violent means—presents a major decision to any policy actor, whether a responsible state or a terrorist organization, and the state, above all, wants to avoid being the one that turns a political conflict into violence. It is notable that in all the Arab Spring cases where external parties were involved—Libya, Yemen, and Syria—they tried negotiations first and were not the first to turn to violence.

Ultimately, as the case grows worse, the question appears whether policy change can be accomplished without regime change. On one hand, policy change is obviously facilitated by regime change and a state with serious interests would clearly prefer to deal with a regime to which it is closer. Indeed, major policy shifts tend to be accompanied by regime shifts—Anwar Sadat over the Suez Canal and to Jerusalem, Yitzhak Rabin's Israel to Oslo, Charles de Gaulle's France on Algeria, Dwight Eisenhower's America on Korea, Nikita Khrushchev's Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on Austria, and many more. On the other hand, a target regime will be less open to compromise and even to hearing the point of view of the interested

third party state if it feels that the latter is just waiting and working for the moment when it can replace the target regime. Even such memories have a strong influence that is hard to shake: as long as Iran remembers the United States as the Great Satan that once overthrew its regime, it will be on its guard, despite any assurances to the contrary. Hence the line between policy change and regime change is blurred and distorted by past memories, present perceptions, and future fears, blocking an ability to communicate directly and easily.

RESPONSE

Confronted with the revolutionary and revolution-like situations in the contemporary world, it is important for the United States to see the situation as a challenge and an opportunity. It is important to keep communications open and ties close despite major domestic changes in formerly friendly countries. Since memories, perceptions, and fears are major impediments to understanding, making policy differences unbridgeable and communications clogged, the atmospherics of relations become more important than substance and prevent real difference from being faced and discussed. In such countries, the military is a major conduit for communication, coordination and contacts and serves as a bridge to maintaining relations in stormy times, based on personal, professional and security ties, despite political differences and budgetary constraints.

Even where relations have been ruptured, it is incumbent of the great power to look for ways of restoring them rather than following the easier path of hostility. That often involves some cold calculations and

hardheaded stocktaking about where real interests lie, and how it can be possible to step over emotional rumble in the road to reach some solid security goals. If Iran would get over the Great Satan and Mossadeq and the United States would get over the Axis of Evil and the hostages, the two countries might be able to discuss areas of common interest such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Gulf and establish a wider base of needs and possibilities for handling the nuclear question.

A few sententious guidelines are worth keeping in mind:

1. **Get to know your new neighbors**. Open discussions of current perceptions and ways of correcting them without any reference to particular policies is a base to be developed. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) can be helpful in establishing such dialogs, which can gradually broaden into Dartmouth Talks and Kettering Tajik Projects.[13] Innumerable intersectarian—and specifically Muslim-Christian—religious dialogs and the rarer American-Iranian contact groups may not have brought dramatic policy openings, but it is permissible to wonder how much worse relations would be without them. Their greatest importance is in preparing people to promote communication when the government makes it possible.

2. **Cultivate common interests, seize new opportunities**. It is important to keep monitoring language, examining statements, and seeking out signs and areas where possibilities for collaboration or new initiatives might exist or be created. In the case of old friends, such possibilities are common fare but in the case of new regimes, they need to be sought out proactively. New issues of no relation to the target country can be used as an opening for costless collaboration that can then lead to more meaningful cooperation.

3. **Sympathize with efforts to compensate present weakness with past memories**. As the anecdote from Tunisia indicates, a basic element in the current Islamic revival is a feeling that the world has ignored Muslim accomplishments, and that globalization is wiping out their culture and self-pride. If this is indeed a conservative era, there is a premium in recognizing people's need to regain and hold onto what they have and had, in image as well as in reality. The importance of the "human domain"—of understanding human motivations, of gaining that understanding by building human networks that comprise that domain, of seeking to influence motivations through any variety of security cooperation activities—underscores the role the U.S. Army plays in operating in that domain. Because the current age is seen as so dismal, Islamic advocates hark back to a Golden Age (which never existed in its highly romanticized Camelot condition), and Iranian leaders recall the times when their country was a superpower (as Egyptians could with even more validity if they were not limited by a religious calendar). These memories are particularly foreign to Americans, who have no history, making it hard to understand their power and the need to which they respond. Slipping former great power status is a more contemporary phenomenon, visible among the French for example, and it should not be ignored by Americans since we are likely to have to come to terms with it ourselves some day. It does not take much effort to recognize past glories, much as U.S. diplomats were often careful to impart a sense of equality to Soviet negotiators during the Cold War.

4. **Avoid spitting contests**. If demonizing is facile, it is even more tempting to engage in its dynamics, one-upsmanship in escalated name calling. Escalation

does not just involve an increase of means; it also concerns a broadening of ends, an expansion of parties involved, and a spiraling degradation of images.[14] Exchanges with North Korea are a colorful example of creatively destructive name calling with a big spitter, in which the United States, outclassed, has nonetheless participated from time to time. There is no doubt that there are real and deadly issues involved, but the escalation of verbal and active exchanges makes their solution even more difficult.

5. **Make an effort to overcome lasting bad images**. As noted, the images of the Great Satan and the Axis of Evil bedevil relations with Iran. A contrast is the case of U.S. relations with Vietnam, also already mentioned, not to speak of more distant cases of image change with Germany and Japan. Such revisions take some effort, particularly when they reach far back into complex histories. Demonizing is easy to slip into and makes good press copy, but it is hard to reverse. Fallen angels are tempting to spit at, and risen devils are hard to swallow; it is easier to recall their sins than to revive tarnished idols. All of which is to say that it takes a real effort to wash the dirt off of bad images.

6. **Do not cry over old friends**. The United States has a greater proclivity than most to personalize its foreign relations and thus remains attached to the person beyond his diplomatic usefulness. As Lyndon Johnson was supposed to have said about an African ruler, "He may be an SOB but he's our SOB." There are situations where the very presence of egregious rulers is the cause of the conflict; good relations with their country were not possible as long as Mobutu Sese Seko or Mubarek or Samuel Doe were in power in Zaire (Congo) or Egypt or Liberia, yet Washington remained tied to their persons. Furthermore, foreign

relations demands putting up with unattractive leaders, but when they are relieved of their duties, their personal ties of the past should not be allowed to trouble the new interstate relations. This is not to say that a mortally ill Shah of Iran should have been turned over to the Islamic government, but that past services do not outlast government changes in politics.

7. **Use R2P Pillar 2 whenever possible, R2P Pillar 3 only when necessary**. The second pillar of R2P involves helping a state when it is unable to take care of its population by itself; the third pillar involves third-party intervention when the state does not or cannot take care of its own population.[15] While it is the latter that has drawn attention and heated debate, although affirmed several times by the UN General Assembly and heads of state, it is the former that constitutes the challenge to foreign policy and cooperative relations. When third-party states or target states sense a problem that is beyond the host state capability, they need to consort to see what help third-party states can supply. This help may be in expertise, in security council and reinforcement, in financial assistance directly or through the international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, or through appropriately targeting NGOs. It is the responsibility of the targeted state to open itself to foreign assistance, as it is the responsibility of third-party states and agencies to provide the needed assistance. The important and justifying element is the welfare of the targeted state's population. Yet the emphasis on Pillar 2, where current inattention justifies such emphasis, should not obscure the need for continual alertness to situations that escape the responsibility of Pillars 1 and 2 and call for outside powers to take up the challenge of direct intervention as the only way

to restore the country's or region's (and often more widespread) security. The fact is some future president may feel it necessary to send 80,000 soldiers to some crumbling country to secure vital U.S. and broader interests, and so the Army must maintain the knowledge and experience base to perform those hard slogs. We cannot assume that we can "tech" our way through every conflict—or even every Pillar 3 situation—and we must therefore acknowledge that dirty, long interventions are at least theoretically possible and at most currently typical. Obviously a great power such as the United States may be criticized for working for its own interests rather than targeted state interests, but such criticisms are part of the occupational hazard of being a great power, and they may indeed be helpful in keeping the responsibility to protect the population in the forefront. Its interventions must respond to both criteria—its own interest and its responsibility.

8. **Build neighbors' walls when chronic instability strikes**. Nonetheless, there will be rotten spots, ranging anywhere from strong or at least brittle states whose policy and perhaps regime are outside the limits of tolerance and the soft or even collapsed states whose internal conflict contaminates the neighborhood. They may not be important enough as challengers to warrant direct treatment from the United States, but they need to be isolated and the neighbors need to be protected from the overflow of the conflict. Where the core area of collapse and conflict cannot be immediately brought under control directly, the wall against their extension can be strengthened. Their neighbors deserve an extra measure of attention and assistance, to protect themselves against contagion and to reinforce their own internal structures and policies. The neighbors of Syria in the Middle East, as earlier of

Liberia in West Africa, and now of Mali or Libya in the Saharan/Sahelian region, need help in both their external and their internal defenses. U.S. military assistance, in partnership with the regional organization of the area, is relevant externally but must be in close collaboration with internal security and welfare agencies and assistance.

CHALLENGES

It is important for the United States to **regain primacy and irreplaceability** in these actions. Wimpers of scarce resources and of a multipolar world only encourage forces of conflict and disorder to try their chances and test the potency of the great powers. The more one pleads weakness, the more weakness becomes a self-debilitating fact, and credibility is gone. Such a scenario weakens prevention and raises higher the challenges to protection, further destroying credibility. The cycle is vicious and debilitating. Foreign policy standing is limited by will and engagement, not by budget, and is asserted by positive diplomacy and careful use of the military. Beyond the particular challenges raised in the earlier discussion is the overriding challenge of restoring the primacy of the United States and its irreplaceability as a source of order and assistance, working to mobilize and lead the international community in the assertion of order and security.

It is equally important to **understand the causes of revolution**, of any sort. Triggers require immediate and agile responses, but deeper causes can be the subject of initiatives, pressures, campaigns, and assistance. This not a call for taking refuge in the deeper causes underlying conflicts and rebellions that prevent any immediate response, but it is an indication

that the layers of grievances must be understood for responses to be effective. The Arab Spring in Tunisia and Egypt were not merely retirement moves against aged rulers who were on their way out anyhow; they were appeals for redress for the grievances against Dignity, Liberty, Jobs/Bread, and Justice/Citizenship that went very deep. Nations need to be reassured that their welfare is our concern, even though it is **their** primary responsibility, and that our responsibility is to offer all possible assistance to their achievement of these goals. As they try to regain their luster in world affairs, retain their identities, and restore their welfare, they offer Washington a challenge and an opportunity to work to assure their well-being and security in a conventional world order that the United States has a major role in maintaining.

ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 3

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CHAPTER 4

THE IMPLICATIONS OF POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGES IN LATIN AMERICA

Philip Brenner

In July 2013, the ministers of social development from the 33 countries in the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) issued a plan for action to deal with the more than 150 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean still living in poverty.[1] The 2-day meeting was an avatar for the challenges that the United States faces in the Western Hemisphere. These can be perceived as "threats" if viewed inappropriately, or they can be seen as opportunities if the United States is willing to appreciate and accept the changes that have taken place in the hemisphere during the last 20 years.

This chapter begins with a brief comparison of Latin America in 1993 and 2013 which reveals the enormous change in the region over 20 years. It then examines U.S. attitudes toward the region, which have not changed much since 1980 despite a new rhetoric heard in Washington, and the consequences of the U.S. approach toward Latin America. Third, it proposes an alternate approach—based on ending a hegemonic presumption and practicing realistic empathy—which could help the United States to shape a policy that is more congruent with the reality of the region, and which is most likely to serve both U.S. interests and Latin American interests.

A CHANGING HEMISPHERE

Looking back 20 years, we can see marked changes in Latin America. To be sure, there also have been great changes globally since President Bill Clinton was inaugurated in January 1993. But the transformation of Latin America seems especially notable for two reasons. First, the 1980s were considered a "lost decade" for the region because of its economic stagnation. Second, the changes have contributed to a break in the nature of the nearly 2-century relationship between Latin America and the United States. Consider the following five indicators of the ways in which the region has been transformed: gross domestic product (GDP); poverty and inequality; trade patterns; regional organizations; and, democratic governance.

Gross Domestic Product.[2]

Nearly all of the countries experienced rapid economic growth between 1990 and 2010. As Table 4-1 indicates, Argentina, Chile, and Peru's per capita GDP doubled. Brazil's grew by more than 40 percent, and Brazil now has the seventh largest GDP in the world. In 1993 it was 11th, and its share of the world's GDP rose from 1.92 percent in 1993 to 3.39 percent in 2010. Overall, the Western Hemisphere—excluding the United States and Canada—increased its share of the world's total GDP from 6.19 percent to 7.68 percent in this period.

Country	1990	2000	2010
Argentina	5,582	7,696	10,750
Bolivia	871	1,011	1,233
Brazil	3,353	3,696	4,717
Chile	3,068	5,145	6,781
Colombia	2,325	2,512	3,218
Ecuador	1,300	1,291	1,728
Paraguay	1,397	1,323	1,579
Peru	1,664	2,061	3,180
Uruguay	5,254	6,914	9,097
Venezuela	4,824	4,819	5,528

Source: "Econ Stats: The Economic Statistics and Indicators Database," *Economy Watch*, 2012.

Table 4-1: Per Capita GDP, in constant 2000 U.S. Dollars.

Notably, Brazil's growth has been inclusive, bringing many more people into the middle class than ever before in its history.[3] In fact, a growing middle class was a region-wide phenomenon in Latin America. The World Bank estimates that the number of people considered middle class in the region grew by 50 percent, to 152 million, between 2003 and 2009. This may be one of the most important changes in the last 20 years. But as Michael Shifter notes, the political consequences may not necessarily be salutary. While it is a "development that gives citizens a more substantial stake in their political systems," he explains, the middle class's "strength increases pressures on governments that, in many cases, have scant capacity to respond and deliver the public services demanded."[4]

Poverty and Inequality.[5]

Income inequality in Latin America, which historically was the worst of any region in the world, had long been a source of misery, violence, instability, authoritarian rule, poor health, unsupportable migration into cities, and uneven development. The region also was home to large numbers of people living in poverty, which exacerbated these problems. Thus a second important change in Latin America between 1993 and 2013 was the decline in the percentage of the population living in poverty in nearly every country in the region. But inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient, has been reduced by more than two points in only a few countries: Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, and Venezuela.[6] The reduction in inequality in these six countries was not accidental or a result of the magic of the free market. In each case, well-planned government programs, such as the *Bolsa Familia* subsidy in Brazil, brought about the improvement.

Trade Patterns.[7]

In 1993, the United States was the largest trading partner outside of the region for most Latin American countries, and about a third of the countries' international trade occurred within the region. As Table 4-3 highlights, today about a third of international trade continues to occur within the region, but the largest trading partners outside of the region are now China and Japan. For example, Brazil's trade with China increased more than 10-fold, while its trade with the United States decreased by more than 50 percent. Notably Brazil and Venezuela reduced their imports and

Year / Country	1994	1995	1996	1997	2000	2003	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Argentina	46.0	48.9	49.5	49.1		54.7	47.7	47.4	46.3	46.1	44.5
Bolivia				58.3	62.8		56.4	57.4	56.3		
Brazil		60.2	60.6	60.5		58.8	56.8	55.9	55.1	54.7	
Chile	55.1		54.9		55.3	54.6	51.8			52.1	
Colombia			56.94			57.86	58.66	58.88	57.23	56.67	
Costa Rica	46.8	45.7	46.5	45.6	46.5	49.7	49.1	49.3	48.9	50.7	
Ecuador	54.3	51.2				55.1	53.2	54.3	50.6	49.4	49.3
El Salvador		49.9	51.2			50.7	46.2	47.0	46.8	48.3	
Guatemala					54.3	56.1	55.9				
Mexico	51.9		48.5				48.1		48.3		47.2
Paraguay		58.2				56.9	54.9	53.3	52.1	51.0	52.4
Peru	44.9					55.2	50.9	51.7	49.0	48.1	
Uruguay		42.1	42.7	42.7	44.4	46.2	47.2	47.6	46.3	46.3	45.3
Venezuela, RB		47.2				48.1	44.8				

Source: World Bank, "World Development Indicators: Gini Index," 2013.

Table 4-2: Inequality (Gini Coefficient).

exports within the region overall, as they diversified trading partners, despite their supposed commitments to the Southern Common Market (Mercosur) and Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA), respectively.[8]

In 1993 the United States, Canada, and Mexico had just signed the North American Free Trade Agreement, and Clinton's staff had begun to contemplate a grandiose plan for a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), which was unveiled in 1994. Today, the FTAA is no longer a goal, as the United States has resigned

itself to establishing bilateral free trade agreements, and many of the countries are developing cooperative plans that exclude the United States and use trade as only one tool of development.

Brazil

Year	Brazil's Total Trade with World	U.S. Percent of Brazil's Total	China's Percent of Brazil's Total	Argentina's Percent of Brazil's Total	Venezuela's Percent of Brazil's Total
2011	$482,282,111	12.48	15.99	8.21	1.22
2003	$121,528,872	21.94	5.50	7.61	0.73
1993	$66,000,286	21.67	1.42	9.81	1.20

Venezuela

Year	Venezuela's Total Trade with World	U.S. Percent of Venezuela's Total	China's Percent of Venezuela's Total	Argentina's Percent of Venezuela's Total	Brazil's Percent of Venezuela's Total
2011	$127,725,874	8.31	3.78	1.01	2.73
2003	$33,331,982	41.49	1.02	0.46	2.45
1993	$26,636,785	51.55	0.03	0.92	2.91

Source: "Interactive graphic system of international economic trends (SIGCI Plus Trade Module)," Series 101, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, New York.

Table 4-3. Trade Patterns (in current U.S. Dollars).

Regional Organizations.

Traditionally, the Organization of American States (OAS) had been Washington's preferred instrument for hemispheric cooperation, a claim that persists in the imagination of ALBA countries chafing at OAS pressures on human rights-related issues. In reality,

recent U.S. administrations have done little to buttress the OAS's relevance and have repeatedly undermined the leadership of Secretary General José Miguel Insulza. The 2012 Summit of the Americas in Cartagena, Spain, at which President Barack Obama was caught entirely off-guard by unified Latin American criticism, underscored the degree to which the OAS simultaneously has been weakened and has ceased to serve as a so-called tool of U.S. domination.

While the United States has essentially left the OAS to languish, Latin American members have not sought to enter the vacuum created by the absence of the northern colossus. Instead, they have developed several new institutions or put their energy into strengthening others in which the United States is not a member. These include the System of Central American Integration (SICA in its Spanish acronym), the Ibero-American Summit, and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR). Unasur is made up of 12 countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela), and was established in 2008 as an outgrowth of two regional trade associations, the Andean Community and Mercosur. Its goal is to promote regional integration on a range of issues, not only trade, including health care, energy, the environment, transportation, and education. A fourth organization, CELAC, is potentially the most significant of the new formations.

CELAC was formed in 2010 from a base in the Rio Group, which originated during the 1980s in response to the conflicts in Central America. The Rio Group itself was an expansion of the Contadora Group, a Central American-Mexican initiative intended to provide third-party mediation between the United States

and Nicaragua. When its efforts failed, Brazil took the lead to bring in some South American countries in the hope that they could end the several conflicts in Central America. By 2009, the Rio Group had expanded to include all of the countries in South America, and it provided a semi-formal forum to discuss regional issues. That year it reached out to make Cuba a full member of the organization.

Today CELAC includes every country in the Western Hemisphere except Canada and the United States. In what may have been an intended signal to the United States after the 2012 Cartagena Summit, the group chose Cuba to be its chair for 2013. In January 2013, the European Union announced that CELAC, not the OAS, would be its counterpart organization for bi-regional negotiations. As Uruguay's foreign minister, Luís Almagro Lemes, remarked in February 2014, "The importance of CELAC is political, in the sense that it enables Latin America to have a strategic dialogue with the EU and China apart from the relationship China or the EU has with the United States."[9] In short, there has been a movement in the region to isolate and exclude the United States, which is a dramatic change in 20 years.

Democratic Governance.

Democracy was still fragile in much of the region in 1993, but it had become much stronger by 2001, when all the countries except Cuba signed the Inter-American Democracy Charter. Still there have been setbacks: the 2009 coup in Honduras and the 2012 "legal" coup in Paraguay were not overturned, as the 1993 autogolpe in Guatemala and the 2002 Venezuelan coup had been with the help of the OAS. In Venezuela, Ecuador,

and Colombia, there have been institutional changes that have served to enhance authoritarianism. Significant human rights abuses committed by government forces in Honduras and Mexico have gone unpunished. Corruption and a lack of transparency continues to be prevalent throughout the region, especially at the local level, even when democratic governments have been well established at the national level. Still, the generally accepted norm in the region has become the peaceful transfer of power from one party to another, and in several cases international monitors have reported that national elections come closer to best practices than they do in the United States. This is no longer a region that the United States can easily dismiss as politically immature.

U.S. APPROACH TO THE REGION: *PLUS ÇA CHANGE, PLUS C'EST LA MÊME CHOSE*

The French have an old phrase that serves well to characterize U.S. policy toward Latin America: **the more things change, the more they stay the same**. The continuity in the U.S. approach toward Latin America has left the United States out of sync with the hemisphere and has frustrated many of the region's leaders. The resulting lack of congruence has engendered a U.S. misperception that key countries in the region are hostile both to the United States and U.S. interests. In turn, U.S. policymakers now appear to be re-orienting U.S. policy in a new direction that they hope will enable the United States to avoid the apparent hostility but which is less likely to serve U.S. interests.

Obama's 2008 electoral triumph generated great expectations among Latin Americans for a change in U.S. policy. Indeed, his initial signals regarding U.S.-

Latin American relations reprised a cooperative vision that President Jimmy Carter had articulated in 1977 and 1978, but were discarded amidst the upheavals in Central America starting at the end of the decade. During his first presentation at the 2009 Summit of the Americas, the new U.S. President reinforced the climate of optimism by echoing his campaign message of "change you can believe in" and setting the stage for what appeared to be a new era in U.S.-Latin American relations:

> I know that promises of partnership have gone unfulfilled in the past and that trust has to be earned over time. While the United States has done much to promote peace and prosperity in the hemisphere, we have at times been disengaged, and at times we sought to dictate our terms. But I pledge to you that we seek an equal partnership. . . . So I'm here to launch a new chapter of engagement that will be sustained throughout my administration.[10]

As the applause reported in the transcript from that session suggests, the new discourse was greeted warmly by Latin American and Caribbean leaders, both for its acknowledgement of past injustices and its vow to jointly forge a cooperative agenda for the hemisphere. In many Latin American countries, as elsewhere in the world, the President's own persona as the first non-white U.S. chief executive suggested unprecedented possibilities rooted in a new capacity for the United States to empathize with smaller powers.

Yet, as early as the end of Obama's first year in office, the atmosphere already had grown colder. Political analyst Michael Shifter observed in February 2010:

> The past year has actually seen relatively little substantive change on a number of longstanding disputes. . . . Also disconcerting, if not unexpected, for many Latin Americans was the absence of a sustained, high-level focus on the region during the first year of the Obama administration.[11]

Two years later, at the Cartagena Summit of the Americas, the air was downright chilly as Latin American frustration with the Obama administration erupted openly. Leaders of even the friendliest countries criticized Washington's failure to address their concerns about U.S. hostility toward Cuba and U.S. anti-narcotics policies. Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos, speaking on behalf of his 32 other hemispheric heads of state (all except from the United States and Canada) asserted that there would not be a subsequent summit unless Cuba were allowed to participate.[12]

While Obama would later lament the degree to which some of his counterparts in the region appeared to be caught up in a Cold War mindset, it was the policies and discourses of the United States itself that had failed to evolve to reflect conditions of the 21st century. Consider that in June 2013, the region's foreign ministers who were participating in the General Assembly of the OAS ended the meeting with a barely veiled attack on U.S. hemispheric drug policy. The "Declaration of Antigua for a Comprehensive Policy Against the World Drug Problem in The Americas," called for governments to "encourage broad and open debate on the world drug problem so that all sectors of society participate," noting "that drug abuse is also a public health problem and, therefore, it is necessary to strengthen public health systems, particularly in the areas of prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation." The Declaration emphasized that "drug policies must

have a crosscutting human rights perspective consistent with the obligations of parties under international law."[13]

In mid-2013, the cascade of revelations about the National Security Agency's spying operations throughout Latin America provided further evidence to Latin Americans of a continued hegemonic mindset in the White House. The widespread uproar over the grounding of Bolivian President Evo Morales' airplane in Europe, because of U.S. suspicions that former security contractor Edward Snowden might be aboard, highlighted the widening gulf between the United States and much of the rest of the region. Similarly, when *O Globo* revealed that the National Security Agency had listened to President Dilma Rousseff's private telephone conversations, Obama offered what Latin Americans viewed as less than even half of an apology. Speaking at the United Nations (UN), he said, "We've begun to review the way that we gather intelligence so that we properly balance the legitimate security concerns of our citizens and allies with the privacy concerns that all people share."[14] The Brazilian leader then cancelled a planned state visit to Washington, scheduled for October 23, 2013, in what was clearly a major rebuff to the United States.

The initial focus of the Obama administration's defense policy toward Latin America was the sale of high tech weapons, which tend to feed a debilitating arms race in the region, and an emphasis on military solutions to political problems.[15] U.S. officials tended to denigrate—albeit privately—the Colombian government's negotiations with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC, in the Spanish acronym), and the United States encouraged the government of Mexico's Felipe Calderon to step up the militariza-

tion of its anti-narcotics campaign through the Merída Initiative. Notably, the resulting human rights abuses and dislocations contributed to the defeat of the National Action Party in Mexico's 2012 elections.[16]

While the U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) has reoriented its Cold War focus of 20 years ago, the new approach attempts to engage the military more in police-like functions than traditional military ones. It now defines its primary six missions as: (1) Countering Transnational Organized Crime; (2) Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief; (3) Support to Peacekeeping Operations; (4) Training and Exercises; (5) Multinational Engagement; and (6) Human Rights. Two of these missions—dealing with organized crime and protecting or promoting human rights—involve activities that domestic law enforcement agencies normally conduct. Using the military this way is a controversial approach in the region, as was evident by the widespread negative reaction in October 2013 when Diego García Sayán, president of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, seemed to give his stamp of approval to the military conducting police operations.[17]

However, SOUTHCOM's preferences may have less impact on security policy than in the past. A September 2013 report ("Time to Listen") by three Washington research organizations highlights the current decline in U.S. military and security assistance to the region, in part because Plan Colombia and the Merída Initiative—which included the purchase of expensive equipment—are "winding down." The authors of the "Time to Listen" report that the likely outcome of budgetary reductions will be a "light footprint" with greater use of Special Operations Forces (SOF) and covert operatives.[18] Such a change would probably reduce the influence of SOUTHCOM. For example,

Admiral William McRaven, the commander of U.S. Special Forces Command, "has sought authority to deploy SOF teams to countries without consulting either U.S. ambassadors there or even the US Southern Command," according to the London-based *Latin American Security & Strategic Review*.[19]

While the official State Department program for the region pays obeisance to the language of partnership, in reality the Obama administration either has ignored the region or has acted in ways that contradict its professed objectives. Consider that one of the four main objectives is "Strengthening Effective Institutions of Democratic Governance." Yet much to the dismay and anger of the major leaders in Latin America, the United States undermined the Inter-American Democratic Charter by not championing the return of Honduran President José Manuel Zelaya after he was removed from office in June 2009 in a *coup d'état*. While Obama immediately condemned the Honduran military's action, the State Department refused to acknowledge formally that a coup had occurred. This enabled the Obama administration to continue military aid to the new regime, even though the army engaged in widespread human rights violations over the next 6 months.[20] As *The Christian Science Monitor* reported:

> The US finding that the circumstances leading to Zelaya's ouster were too 'complicated' to allow for legally declaring the action a coup leaves the US at odds with Latin America at a time when President Obama had pledged to bring the region closer together.[21]

A proclaimed U.S. second objective is the "Safety of the Hemisphere's Citizens," but the Obama administration has done little to help Mexico reduce its rate of

impunity, which stands at 98 percent for major criminal activity.[22] Another goal is "Promoting Social and Economic Opportunity," but there is no acknowledgement of the reality that inequality remains a chronic problem. In part, the obstacle standing in the way of Washington addressing the problem of economic opportunity is that it remains fixated on the so-called Washington Consensus, which even its early proponents acknowledge was intended to stimulate only macro-economic growth.[23] The dictates of the Consensus require limited government intervention in a country's economy, export-oriented growth, minimal restraint on the movement of international capital, and the privatization of many public services. U.S. officials tend to find favor only with those governments that do not resist adherence to these tenets, even though most of the region's countries have rejected them.

Despite these failures, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Roberta S. Jacobson testified in February 2013 that, "U.S. relations with our hemispheric neighbors are on a positive trajectory. We have fulfilled President Obama's commitment at the 2009 Summit of the Americas by pursuing flexible, balanced partnerships."[24] Her remarks suggested a deafness to complaints coming from the region that bordered on insult.

To be sure, there have been some accommodations to the hemisphere's new realities. For example, when center-leftist candidate Mauricio Funes Cartagena became president of El Salvador in 2009, Washington graciously accepted his rise to power. In turn, President Funes rewarded the United States by supporting the U.S. position on the legitimacy of the post-coup Honduran government. The Obama administration also has been generally less brazen with Brazil than

in the past, in effect acknowledging the obvious economic power of South America's largest country. Yet despite such minor anomalies, the practice of the Obama administration toward Latin America until recently has been better characterized by continuity than change.

IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY

The preceding review of changes in the hemisphere and of U.S. policy suggest two elements that are necessary for the development of a new approach toward Latin America that would serve U.S. economic and security interests now, and provide a base for fortifying the defense of these interests in the future. The first is that the United States must end its hegemonic presumption, and the second is that the United States must practice realistic empathy.

Ending a Hegemonic Presumption.

In a prescient *Foreign Affairs* article nearly 40 years ago, political scientist Abraham Lowenthal decried "the hegemonic presumption upon which this country [the United States] has long based its policies toward Latin America and the Caribbean." He argued that the United States had to face the reality that its "special relationship" with the countries in the hemisphere "is coming to an end—in fact if not yet in rhetoric."[25] Evidently Lowenthal's arguments were not persuasive, because a hegemonic presumption still pervades U.S. policy. For example, U.S. attempts to "punish" countries such as Bolivia and Ecuador because they do not follow U.S. dictates; it stipulates that all countries must follow the Inter-American Democracy Charter,

while it felt free to ignore the Charter's requirements in 2002 and 2009 with the Venezuela and Honduras coups, respectively; and it has demanded that, before a country can receive economic or military assistance, it agrees to waive its right to submit a U.S. military or civilian employee accused of a crime to the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (Article 98 Agreements).[26] Despite this behavior, the logic of Lowenthal's position is even more compelling today for at least three reasons.

First, the United States is no longer hegemonic. The review of the changing hemisphere in the first section of this chapter indicates that the United States is not the most important trading partner for most countries in the region. Its ability to persuade countries in the region to support its political positions also has diminished significantly. Consider how striking it was that Chile did not endorse the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq in the UN Security Council, even though at the time Chile was awaiting congressional approval of a free trade pact with the United States.[27] The United States can best serve its interests when it acts in accord with its capabilities.

The second reason follows from the first. Insofar as the United States is not hegemonic but acts as if it is, it appears to be irrational, if not psychotic. Such an appearance undermines an important source of American strength, the credibility of the United States. Other states need to believe the United States perceives its interests accurately and will act reasonably to secure those interests. Irrational behavior thus engenders doubts about U.S. credibility and undermines confidence in U.S. judgment, thereby diminishing American power.

Third, the hegemonic presumption generates the appearance of a vital U.S. interest. In turn, challenges to U.S. hegemony tend to be viewed as significant threats. This has led some U.S. leaders to believe they are obligated to defend U.S. hegemony, and some opportunistic demagogues in the United States to use the alleged threats as a basis for attacking political opponents.[28] In any of these cases, real U.S. interests have been damaged as the United States tramples on the interests of Latin Americans, engenders hostility, and makes cooperation more costly and less feasible. Consider the case of Cuba as an illustration of the problem, though the 1954 U.S. intervention in Guatemala, U.S. covert actions in Chile from 1964 to 1973, U.S. engagement in the Central American civil wars in the 1980s, and U.S. pressure throughout the region since the early-1990s to adopt the Washington Consensus model highlight similar patterns.

Three months after Cuban revolutionaries overthrew the Fulgencio Batista dictatorship, Fidel Castro visited the United States. Vice President Richard Nixon met with the new Cuban leader, and afterwards wrote a memo in which he assessed that Castro was not a communist, but "because he has the power to lead to which I have referred, we have no choice but at least to try to orient him in the right direction."[29] Castro rejected U.S. "orientation," and by the end of the year, the Central Intelligence Agency was developing plans to overthrow the Cuban government.[30]

Castro's defiance provided the initial justification for these efforts, because they indicated to U.S. officials that the Cuban leader was prepared to challenge the U.S. conception of itself as protector of the hemisphere. In early-November 1959, Secretary of State Christian Herter summarized why such devi-

ance from U.S. discipline posed a threat to the United States. Writing to President Dwight D. Eisenhower, he observed that Castro "has veered towards a 'neutralist' anti-American foreign policy for Cuba which, if emulated by other Latin American countries, would have serious adverse effects on Free World support of our leadership."[31]

The Cold War, Cuba's close ties to the Soviet Union, and ultimately the Cuban Missile Crisis tended to obscure these origins of U.S. hostility toward Cuba, which may be why some critics today describe U.S.-Cuba policy as an outmoded remnant of the Cold War. But the root of the policy did not germinate from an anti-communist impulse. The new Cuban government did not even establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union until the spring of 1960, 15 months after Batista's departure. Castro also had tense relations with members of the old Cuban communist party (the Popular Socialist Party), and actually believed they were plotting to oust him from power.[32] The source of U.S. policy was Washington's perception that Cuba posed a threat to U.S. hegemony in Latin America. Moreover, it still seems to pose such a threat.

In fact, the apparent Cuban threat to U.S. hegemony provides a more robust explanation for the continuity in U.S. policy than traditional explanations about the vaunted power of the Cuban-American lobby. The policy persists—despite the end of the Cold War, the growing divisions within the Cuban-American community over engagement with Cuba, and Obama's success in attracting Cuban-American votes by removing restrictions on their travel and sending remittances to Cuba—because other Latin American countries have anointed Cuba as a leader.

Furthermore, Latin American leaders who have seemed to take direction from Cuban Presidents Fidel and Raúl Castro—such as, Venezuela's Hugo Chávez and Nicolás Maduro, Ecuador's Rafael Correa, and Bolivia's Evo Morales—have been the objects of greatest U.S. scorn as enemies. Yet, none of these leaders have harmed real U.S. interests. Venezuela has not denied an ounce of oil to the United States since 1998, when Chávez was elected president. Bolivia's tin, which had been a U.S. concern after a 1952 revolution there, has been readily available.

Ecuador, Bolivia, and Venezuela have been critical of U.S. military operations in Latin America, opposing the expansion of seven bases in Colombia in 2009, and they have not been cooperative in U.S. anti-narcotic efforts. But it is also reasonable to assume that U.S. hostility has made them suspicious of U.S. intentions. In this sense, the legacy of U.S. hegemonic intervention now undermines the ability of the United States to pursue a real interest in curbing narco-trafficking. Notably Colombia, which has received the most U.S. assistance in the region since 2000, recognizes realistically that its interest lies in ending its war with the FARC. For this reason, the Colombian government has applauded Cuba's key role as a mediator and led the effort to secure an invitation for Cuba to the 2015 Summit of the Americas. Yet even though an end to the war would supposedly also serve important U.S. interests, the U.S. policy of antagonism toward its island neighbor continues.

In short, the United States is hardly likely to regain lost trust by demanding countries pay obeisance to its supposed hegemonic interests. Rather than assume Latin American populists are fundamentally anti-American, a more promising approach would be

to assume they are opposed to specific U.S. policies and behavior.[33]

Practicing Realistic Empathy.

The most effective way for the United States to work with Latin Americans would be by not dictating to them, and by reacting to their valid criticisms of U.S. behavior with what political psychologist Ralph White calls "realistic empathy." Realistic empathy, White explains, "is distinguished from sympathy, which is defined as feeling with others—as being in agreement with them. . . . We are not talking about warmth or approval, and certainly not about agreeing with, or siding with, but only about realistic understanding."[34]

The practice of empathy has two necessary elements. First, one must step into the shoes of an adversary in order to understand an adversary's motives, constraints, and pressures, and perceptions of threat. Second, it means seeing oneself through the adversary's eyes. White emphasizes that this, "means trying to look at one's own group's behavior honestly," recognizing that even though an adversary's perceptions will likely be distorted by strong biases, the adversary "has the advantage of not seeing our group's behavior through the rose-colored glasses that we ourselves normally wear."[35]

The requirement for complete honesty makes practicing empathy quite difficult for most people under ordinary circumstances. For state leaders, the practice is complicated by the "two-level" games they must play to satisfy domestic constituencies while trying to relate to other state leaders.[36] Yet, were the United States to end its hegemonic presumption—for

example, by openly abandoning the discredited and outdated Monroe Doctrine—it could alter domestic expectations about the U.S. role in Latin America.[37] This could help U.S. officials to reduce the distance between the positions they feel compelled to assert before domestic audiences and the positions they take with foreign officials in pursuit of U.S. international interests.

Another complicating factor is asymmetry. When one country is much more powerful than the other, as is the case with the United States vis-à-vis most Latin American countries, it has a vastly different calculus of threat than the smaller country.[38] Smaller countries tend to watch every move a larger country makes, which can lead to misperceptions about the larger country's intentions. At the same time, large countries tend to dismiss the fears of small countries as if they were wholly irrational, which engenders distrust and the breakdown of an atmosphere conducive to empathy.

Empathy also has three necessary pre-conditions: (1) accepting the legitimacy of an adversary's existence; (2) assuming an adversary wants peace; and (3) acknowledging the reasonableness of an adversary's anger. As Latin Americans have repeatedly advised the United States, these three pre-conditions are the necessary first steps it must take in relating to Cuba. Indeed, were the United States to accept the legitimacy of Cuba's government by moving to establish diplomatic relations and ending the Cuba's formal designation as an "enemy"—U.S. economic sanctions are based on the 1917 Trading with the Enemy Act—the positive response from Latin America would likely multiply several times over. Latin Americans have turned U.S. policy toward Cuba into a litmus test for

the overall U.S. approach to the region. More than any other policy change, a new approach to Cuba would demonstrate that the United States is capable of active listening and positive engagement, both of which are essential for achieving empathy.

CONCLUSION

The Obama administration has been cautious not to challenge openly the initiatives by Latin America to strengthen organizations that exclude the United States. But some officials privately express discomfort at being isolated from regional discussions in which Brazil and Venezuela are perceived as in the driver's seat. Their concern may explain why the Obama administration has shown an interest in renewing ties with key Latin American allies under a new cooperation mechanism focused on common interests in Asia and the Pacific.

The possible shift toward situating Latin American relations in a broader Asia-Pacific context has largely been presented in domestic economic rather than political terms, although it represents as well a response to the 20-fold increase in China's trade with the region over the past 15 years.[39] It also sends an unequivocal signal that liberalizing trade remains the core tenet guiding U.S. thinking about economic relations in the hemisphere, in effect continuing a paradigm that has reigned for decades. The lynchpin of this shift is the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), also known as the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership, a multilateral free trade agreement aimed at reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers to boost trade and investment. Originally formed by Chile, Brunei, New Zealand and Singapore in 2006, five more countries now are

negotiating their membership in the group: Australia, Malaysia, Peru, the United States and Vietnam. Other countries, including Mexico, Colombia, Canada, and Japan, also are considering doing so. Speaking at a 2013 conference at the Inter-American Development Bank, U.S. Commerce Under Secretary for International Trade Francisco Sánchez referred to:

> the framework for the TPP agreement as 'a landmark accomplishment' because it contains all the elements considered desirable for modern trade agreements: It removes all tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade; takes a regional approach to promote development of production and supply chains; and eases regulatory red tape limiting cross border flows.[40]

The degree to which the TPP may have become central to policymakers' vision for U.S. ties with the region is evident in increasingly frequent official statements. Briefing reporters after Obama's May 2013 visit to Mexico and Costa Rica, National Security Adviser for Latin America Ricardo Zuniga noted:

> the strategic relationship between the United States and Mexico, and that stems in part from the $1.5 billion in commerce between the United States and Mexico every day, and the half-a-trillion-dollar economy that exists with us . . . as well as our work together in global institutions and global mechanisms such as the G-20 and our . . . joint participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership.[41]

Washington's increased interest in the TPP also may be part of the larger shift in U.S. policy commonly called the "Asian Pivot." The Asian Pivot partly explains the growing emphasis placed on strengthening U.S. ties to the Pacific Alliance, made

up of Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru. A second factor that appears to have contributed to the focus on only these four countries in Latin America is the Obama administration's perception that hemispheric-wide cooperation is an unrealistic goal because of the region's seeming hostility toward the United States. Rather than search for ways to achieve an elusive objective of hemispheric unity, some policymakers have argued that it makes more sense to try to disrupt the new Brazilian-led South American cooperation project by enticing away members of the Pacific Alliance.[42] Understandably, Brazil and the ALBA countries have strongly criticized such an initiative as detrimental to visions of regionalism that they actively have espoused over the past decade.

The new, narrow regional agenda also would seem to mesh well with Washington's traditional anti-narcotics and security agenda, under which U.S. officials have viewed Peru, Colombia, and Mexico as principal partners. To be sure, Central American countries are part of this agenda, though less as partners and more as collateral damage to which the United States needs to be attentive. They have suffered from the balloon effect, in which pressure on narco-traffickers in Colombia and Mexico has pushed the problem into the territory lying between the two drug centers to the south and north of Central America.

The U.S. reaction to the reasonable anger in Latin America is neither rational nor sustainable. Rather than treat the anger as manufactured by demagogues who try to use the United States as a whipping boy for their own domestic advantages, or as childish ingratitude for the many years the United States supposedly has helped the region, U.S. officials could experiment with empathy in the Western Hemisphere. It

is an area where there are not serious security threats, and where the neighbors seem quite ready to accept responsibilities as equals. Engaging in empathy takes practice, and Latin America would be a good place to begin.

ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 4

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> Militarization of the drug war has caused increased violence and has failed to provide citizen security. Human rights abuses against our families and communities are, in many cases, directly attributable to failed and counterproductive security pol-

> icies that have militarized our societies in the name of the 'war on drugs.' The deployment of our countries' armed forces to combat organized crime and drug-trafficking, and the increasing militarization of police units, endanger already weak civilian institutions and leads to increased human rights violations.

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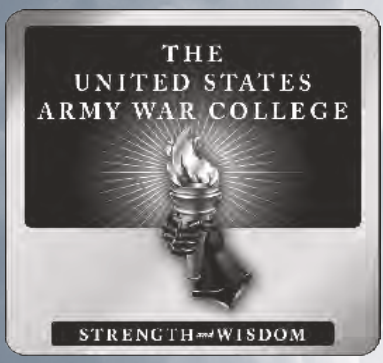

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