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CONTEMPORARY CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN BRAZIL AND ARGENTINA:
BARGAINING FOR POLITICAL REALITY

A Thesis Presented

by

CARLOS P. BAIA

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

September 1996

Political Science

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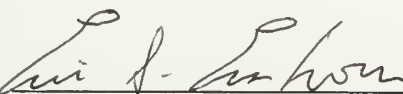
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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The 1980's marked an exhilarating and yet trying time for Brazil and Argentina. In Brazil, government was formally turned over to civilian president José Sarney in 1985 after twenty-one years of bureaucratic-authoritarian military rule. Two years earlier, Argentina experienced liberation from its notoriously oppressive military regime known as the *Proceso de Reorganización Nacional* (simply *Proceso*) which had controlled every facet of Argentine existence since 1976. Both nations still harbored bitter memories from human and civil rights abuses committed during those administrations; Argentina much more so with estimates of civilians murdered by the government ranging anywhere from 6,000 to 30,000 while in Brazil the numbers approximated 300.

The re-emergence of civilian rule in both Brazil and Argentina brought new hope for those outside the military that they could once again determine their own future. Nevertheless, the armed forces, traditionally powerful, remained a viable entity within the socio-political framework of both nations and, thus, needed to be addressed. This thesis examines the evolution of that civil-military dynamic during the 1990's. With the multiple global transformations experienced since the end of the Cold War including the ubiquitous rise of trade blocs, the world today is very different from that of the 1980's. This metamorphosis has, in many respects, greatly influenced South American civil-military relations. Cognizant of that change, my work seeks to update the civil-military discussion by answering the following central questions:

1. Is the military still a political actor?
2. Are civilian institutions sufficiently strong to counter armed forces involvement?
3. What is the effect of economic globalization and neo-liberalism on the civil-military dynamic?
4. Are remnants of authoritarianism still prevalent?
5. What is the likelihood of another military government?
6. Do civilian leaders interpret democracy and effective policy results as an "either or" situation or can the two concepts co-exist?
7. What do the above answers foretell for the future of democracy in Brazil and Argentina?
8. Can any one model accurately explain contemporary civil-military relations?

"If you do not know where you came from; how will you know where you are going?" Reflective of the wisdom of this Hispanic quote, I begin this thesis with an examination of the civil-military literature and history from the colonial period to the present. Writing chronologically, I attempt to demonstrate how the Brazilian and Argentine military officer's psyche evolved from his early days as a representative of the king's authority to the latter twentieth-century as a national governor. In so doing, I hope to shed light on, not only what bureaucratic-authoritarianism was, but also how and why it emerged in South America. Finally, I close this historical chapter by introducing the various schools of thought on contemporary civil-military relations; a discussion to which greater depth will be afforded in chapters three and four.

Chapter three analyzes Brazil, the largest of all Latin American nations. There the armed forces emerged from government as a relatively cohesive body (in comparison to Argentina). During the first five years after the official transition, that military unity, along with an indirectly elected civilian president, perpetuated a tutelary model of civil-military relations. However, with the dawn of the post-Cold War era and the first direct presidential election in three decades in 1989, Brazilian civil-military relations became much more ambiguous. Some scholars have claimed that the military is no longer a political factor in that Portuguese-speaking nation.¹ However, economic and political events have challenged that assertion. I argue that the Brazilian armed forces, which still enjoy a considerable degree of public sympathy, remain an important political actor, yet as an interest group. Traditional national security/guardian themes have been abandoned in their political discourse and replaced by union-like demands for salary increases, benefits, etc. which have been addressed by the civilian sphere through extensive bargaining. This is, however, not to say that the military cannot still be a vehicle of political intimidation. The key discerning feature between this threat and that of its past, is that with the emergence of a new world order, the threat has been harnessed and manipulated to a considerable extent by the president. Nevertheless, this relationship still highlights the challenges inherent in

Brazil's democratic consolidation. Without the strengthening of its institutions, Brazil may never rid itself of the necessity to negotiate with the military.

Chapter four delves into the turbulent post-Authoritarian Argentine experience. In that country a discredited armed forces emerged from the 1982 Malvinas/Falklands war in utter shame. The war focused world attention on the military's incompetence and on its reputation for brutal internal repression. The Argentine armed forces quickly became a domestic and international pariah. Internal military factions, which had developed concerning the direction of national government, became even more polarized as a result of the events of the early 1980's. The Argentine "transition by collapse" was a clear product of that self-destruction. Unlike frustrated Brazilians, Argentine civilians were too enraged by the *Proceso* to settle for indirect elections while the military was too weak to contest that pent-up demand. The first post-authoritarian president, Raúl Alfonsín, felt he had a popular mandate for pursuing democracy, with no need to bargain with the broken armed forces. Unfortunately, his passion for the respect of democratic institutions came at a sacrifice of decisive leadership. He allowed the quest for civilian retribution to determine the course of his presidency. A society bent on justice, and in many cases, vengeance pursued the military establishment into a corner. However, as Deborah Norden has noted: "A slightly weakened group [military] which is adamantly opposed to the existing political system poses a greater threat to that system than a somewhat stronger group which has been incorporated into it."² Fighting for its existence, the military recomposed itself and eventually forced the civilian president to negotiate.

Carlos Saúl Menem, Alfonsín's successor, had learned much from the first post-*Proceso* president. He interpreted Alfonsín's weakness as a product of inflexibility. Alfonsín had adhered too faithfully to democratic principles that ultimately proved his downfall. Menem viewed basic tenets of liberal democracy such as the separation of powers only useful if they moved the nation forward. Progress is what Argentina needed, not necessarily democracy. That understanding would be key to explaining Menem's

relations with the military which have perpetuated a bargaining function. However, unlike Brazil, those negotiations have not been due to institutional weakness, rather to an attempt by Menem to centralize and monopolize power in the executive.

The future of democracy in Brazil and Argentina is addressed in the epilogue. Can these two nations, with long histories of regional and national authoritarianism, forge a lasting democratic course? Are democratic civil-military relations governmental priorities? Can democracy co-exist with authoritarianism? These are all challenging questions for which I offer a number of equally challenging and complex answers. My responses are not meant to be ultimate conclusions, but merely a departure point for future scholarly debate.

¹See Wendy Hunter, "Politicians Against Soldiers: Contesting the Military in Postauthoritarian Brazil," *Comparative Politics* (July 1995): pp.425-443. See also Patrice Franko, "De Facto Demilitarization: Budget-Driven Downsizing in Latin America," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 36.1 (Spring 1994): pp.37-74.

²Deborah Norden, "Democratic Consolidation and Military Professionalism: Argentina in the 1980's," *Journal of Interamerican Studies* 32.3 (Fall 1990): pp.151-176.

CHAPTER 2 HISTORY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The military in Latin America has long been an important actor in the region's development and politics. In many respects, it has written much of Latin American history. With the transplantation of the Spanish and Portuguese corporate system to the "New World" in the late 1400's and early 1500's, the military occupied one of three essential spheres of preeminence along with the Church and the Elite. That spatialization or *fuero militar* allowed the colonial army to become an "independent organism...that acted as a 'self-governing' institution that was answerable only to itself."¹ That autonomy, initially warranted within the context of unestablished centralized states (as was the case in Latin America up to the 19th century), would become a heavy burden once independence was established and a formal state emerged.

In South America, as discernible states began to coalesce, armies that had defined and protected tenuous borders and nascent concepts of sovereignty to allow for the creation of the state, became increasingly institutionalized. However, Alain Rouquié, in *The Military and the State in Latin America*, noted that for Central American and Caribbean armed forces such an evolution was hampered by a variety of domestic and international factors. Rouquié explained this distinction, writing:

For one, the needs of the economy seem to have been decisive in determining the degree to which the skeleton of a state apparatus emerged. The growth of externally oriented social forces integrated into the world market at the end of the [19th] century presupposed political and social stability....The need for socioeconomic organization, for the establishment of an infrastructure, and for the expansion of services and of the public administration combined to build the state. On the other hand, in the nations that did not succeed in integrating themselves into international trade at this period, and therefore lacked export products that would permit the rise of a strong bourgeoisie and the appearance of an established social power, the crystallization of the state was slow in coming. In such nations civil convulsions were more prolonged and a national army never developed beyond the stage of a private garrison with a state facade.²

The geographic and economic challenges faced by Central America and the Caribbean, along with the ever-present influence of the United States and a Hispanic tradition of personalistic politics maintained a praetorian guard mentality within the militaries (or national guards) of such nations as Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic and Honduras. These factors helped guarantee the tenure of such memorable leaders/tyrants as Somoza and Trujillo who ruled with little fidelity to any concept of the "state good."

Graced by greater resources, territory, and population, the nations of South America were favored with a superior potential for development. They, in essence, appeared to have a "greater calling." This sense of national destiny, besides bolstering the growth of the state in the twentieth-century, contributed to the political outlook of the region's militaries. As their states became increasingly consolidated, the South American armed forces gained greater institutional cohesiveness. This new cohesiveness, sown in the fertile ground of the military's Aristotelian and Thomistic philosophy dating back to the *fueros*, soon blossomed into a distinctive nationalistic military ethos. South American militaries interpreted their strong sense of order and loyalty as the embodiment of the highest virtues of their emergent national societies. Military researcher Frederick Nunn, in *The Time of the Generals*, wrote that the military, particularly in the chaotic political and economic environment of Latin America, saw itself as "the purest image of society."³ Yet, at the same time the military also maintained a considerable degree of alienation from the civil society from which the members of its corps were drawn. In the armed forces' interpretation of global hierarchy, soldiers ranked above civilians, with the abstract state as supreme.

The importance of the state to an organized national military is obvious. The state represents the reason for its existence. Thus, the armed forces have as their fundamental mission the preservation of that entity; better known as national defense. However, what the term "national defense" signifies in practice is not necessarily uniform worldwide. In the United States, the military is generally looked upon as the protector of U.S. interests

abroad and the defender against foreign attack with few instances of domestic involvement. The South American armed forces definition of "national defense" prevalent for most of this century, however, reflected the region's Iberian roots. The militaries of such nations as Chile, Argentina, Brazil and Peru understood their mission to be not only the protection of the state against foreign incursion but also the preservation of a certain standard of moral and/or political conduct upon the state. This broad guardian/arbiter role was concisely explained by Argentine Major Venancio Carullo when he stated: "the fatherland looks upon the army as its sons, in whom it has placed its honor, its integrity, and its life."⁴

Chile in 1973 offered a vivid example of the ambiguous link between the state's "honor" and its "life." That year the Chilean military viewed democratically-elected President Allende's socialist reforms as "dishonorable." Thus, it felt justified in making the theoretical leap to interpreting those reforms as a threat to the state therefore allowing it to overthrow the civil government. Rouquié explains this logic by noting that, "the apparent desire of the military to free the state from civil society allows the armed forces to accomplish the goals of the state even against its will and acting in its defense."⁵ The Allende episode, as well as the military overthrows of governments in other South American nations this century, highlight the armed forces' perception of the state as a permanent entity with an immutable code of conduct contrasted with the transitory, and many times less than ethical, nature of elected governments. This desire to "free the state" from the "threat" of its own government, in the form of a coup d'état, became so common an occurrence in twentieth-century Latin America that Howard Wiarda, in 1978, concluded that it "could be considered...a 'normal,' or 'regular' part of the political process...."⁶ The dilemma for civilian citizens and politicians was that the allegedly immutable code of state conduct appeared, in many instances, to be an arbitrarily interpretable concept created by the armed forces. Often it was difficult to discern between the military's own institutional demands and the "state good."

Samuel Huntington, in his 1957 *The Soldier and the State*, proposed a solution to the problem of military coups. Huntington suggested that greater professionalism, in the form of stronger military instruction, would neutralize the military's political tendencies. He wrote: "Only if they [military] are motivated by military ideals, will the armed forces be the obedient servant of the state and will civilian control be assured."⁷ However, in Brazil and Argentina, where the military was in many respects the most technologically advanced and cohesive social entity, this move to greater professionalization had a contradictory effect. Samuel Fitch, in "Military Role Beliefs in Latin American Democracies: Context, Ideology, and Doctrine in Argentina and Ecuador," concluded that unlike Huntington's intended end, "[m]ilitary role beliefs legitimizing the military's tutelary role [were] reproduced and generationally transmitted through the military school system."⁸ The armed forces, thus, became even more isolated from civil society and more critical of civilian politics. They viewed "civil society as a divided world, dominated by self-interest and disorder, and lacking in shared values."⁹

With the Cold War rise of the National Security Doctrine the military's alienation from civilian society was only exacerbated. Alfred Stepan, in *Rethinking Military Politics : Brazil and the Southern Cone*, notes:

...where the military was highly institutionalized, the perception of the threat to the internal security of the nation and the security of the military itself led to a focusing of energies on the 'professionalization' of their approach to internal security. The military institutions began to study such questions as the social and political condition facilitating the growth of revolutionary protest and to develop doctrines and training techniques to prevent or crush insurgency movements. As a result, these highly professionalized armies became much more concerned with political problems.¹⁰

As a result of that concern, the militaries of Brazil and Argentina during the latter half of the twentieth century assumed an "integrated" professionalism.¹¹ Under this conception: "the armed forces saw military control of the government as a necessary step in nation-building and modernization."¹²

In his 1973 book *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism*, Guillermo O'Donnell outlined how the military's nation-building philosophy became a political reality. O'Donnell noted that in the 1960's & 1970's populist pressures on the economic systems of more modernized states, such as Argentina and Brazil, outpaced actual economic growth. This phenomenon created a threat, be it actual or perceived, to the "propertied classes" that the entire economic/political system was in jeopardy. That fear, combined with U.S.-led anti-subversive military training, O'Donnell argued, led the military to intervene in those two nations. These coups (Argentina: 1966 & 1976; Brazil: 1964) were distinct from those of the past. They represented the logical extrapolation of the military's philosophy of the state's preeminence and of the military's own inherent superiority over the civilian sphere. Under Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism (BA), the military restrained popular demands, but unlike previous transitional coups, the BA armed forces decided that they were better equipped than any civilian to govern in the long-term. The result of such a perception was the twenty-one year military government in Brazil and the infamous seven year *Proceso* in Argentina.

The emergence of bureaucratic-authoritarianism was testament to the fact that, as Brian Loveman and Thomas Davies, in *The Politics of Antipolitics: The Military in Latin America* point out, Latin American militaries thrived off an, ironically, very political notion of being "anti-political." Only the armed forces felt capable of filtering the many layers of political discourse in the best interest of the country. Loveman and Davies described the military mentality, writing:

'Politics,' including the demagogic appeals by civilian politicians to the emerging proletariat, promoted class conflict and instability which 'forced' sectors of the military to intervene to restore order and cleanse the body politic of political corruption.¹³

Fitch elaborates: "In Latin America...the conceptual language of national security and strategy is typically infused with an organic, corporatist view of society and politics which implicitly denigrates democratic politics and civilian politicians."¹⁴

The bureaucratic-authoritarian phenomenon was soon doomed to failure. A heavy reliance on loosely-monitored technocrats assigned the mission of "nation-building" quickly led to the accumulation of massive foreign debt. This problem, in addition to the multiple pressures of daily government, factionalized the armed forces primarily between those officers who wanted to leave power and those who refused to "surrender."

Sensing their institution threatened by its political role, strong elements within the Brazilian officer corps began the process of extricating the military from government in the mid 1970's. This gradual return to civilian rule, known as *abertura* or opening, allowed the Brazilian military to dictate the speed and depth of the transition. The Argentine armed forces, on the other hand, chose to purge their internal rifts by fire in the hopelessly miscalculated war with England over the Malvinas/Falklands islands. Argentina's humiliating loss in that endeavor ultimately resulted in a government transition by collapse.

A new civilian regime, it was commonly felt, symbolized a fresh beginning for both Argentina and Brazil. This new genesis appeared an ideal time to restructure historical civil-military patterns of interaction. The traditional *poder moderador* (arbiter) military, with its twentieth-century bureaucratic-authoritarian mutation, had proven life-threatening to the very concept of the state that the armed forces allegedly had tried to protect. Thus, many scholars looked to the United States as the paradigm for democratic civil-military relations. The United States military embodied the democratic professionalist model: obedience to both democracy and civilian authority. However, skepticism remained as to the feasibility of that model within the new Latin American civilian regimes. Both Argentina and Brazil were still burdened by their historical corporatist baggage of allotting the armed forces a distinct social sphere; which traditionally had been accompanied by political power. Moreover, doubts as to the "reality" of the military's departure from power were reinforced within the first few years of post-authoritarian life, in both nations, with numerous military demands being met by civilians. Such occurrences, at the very least, implied a military framework of "conditional subordination." In this case, the armed

forces would respect civilian authority until they deemed that authority overridden by their particular interpretation of the national interest; a shaky foundation upon which to re-build civilian government.¹⁵

The uncertainties demonstrated by civilian leaders as they attempted to determine which type of military they were confronting led Brazilian social scientist Jorge Zaverucha, in *Rumor de Sabres*, to argue that Brazil primarily, and Argentina to a much lesser extent, remained "tutelary democracies." Under that model, the military remained a powerful actor; a type of guardian over the system from whom civilians required approval in issues relating to the military and to "national security broadly defined."¹⁶ The tutelary model also maintained the potential for renewed direct military intervention in the form of a coup. This conception was steeped in the understanding that, "[t]he return of civilians to government is not automatically equivalent to the 'civilianization of power,' even after free and fair elections."¹⁷

With the passing of time, other theorists, such as Wendy Hunter, have suggested that the military in a nation such as Brazil has been politically neutralized by the natural evolution of electoral politics.¹⁸ In this theory, the civilian vote and related constituency patronage determine political reality. Hunter argues that the rational-choice dynamic on the part of elected politicians to be re-elected (specifically legislators) strongly discourages appeasement to military. Yet her analysis, more importantly than its definition of civil-military relations, highlights severe weaknesses in Brazilian democratic institutions. That fragility places into question the future of democracy and thus the potential of ever attaining truly democratic civil-military relations.

In the Argentine case, while contemporary mainstream opinion rarely considers the military a threat, scholars such as Atilio Boron and Patrice McSherry have inverted the civil-military equation to examine the potential for authoritarianism via the armed forces *under* civilian leadership. McSherry's analysis of Carlos Saúl Menem's presidency will demonstrate that the military remains an instrument of internal political power. Moreover,

while the trend in other countries of Latin America seems to bode negatively for the perpetuation of traditional military prerogatives, Argentina appears to be following a reverse path. President Alfonsín's initial alienation from the military has been replaced by President Menem's accommodation and praise. Menem has gone so far as to reinstitute military privileges that were revoked in the early to mid 1980's, placing in jeopardy the notion that authoritarianism is merely a memory.

This analysis of the civil-military relations of Argentina and Brazil, like much of Latin Americanist social science, alludes to the difficulty of imposing any one particular model as "the" explanation. Latin America, experiencing extreme cycles of prosperity, bankruptcy, authoritarianism, and experiments with democracy, has historically presented a highly convoluted picture. This ambiguity, in terms of contemporary civil-military relations, has been exacerbated by the worldwide uncertainty of the post-Cold War period. Thus, any one model may be inappropriate. Instead, it appears that the nations of Latin America, particularly for the purposes of this study Brazil and Argentina, have adopted excerpts of many different theories and, in effect, have created their own reality.

This comparative study will demonstrate that the military remains a political actor for much the same reason in both nations: Civilian government's need for policy results. To fulfill that need, civilian leaders appear content to bargain with the armed forces. This relationship, comfortable as it may seem now, presents a puzzling picture for the future of civilian government, of the military and of the very concept of democracy.

¹Alain Rouquié, *The Military and the State in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), p.45.

²Rouquié, p.61.

³Frederick Nunn, *The Time of the Generals: Latin American Professional Militarism in World Perspective* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), p.118.

⁴Nunn, p.126.

⁵Rouquié, p.43.

⁶Howard Wiarda, "Critical Elections and Critical Coups: State, Society and the Military in the Processes of

Latin American Development" (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1978): p.43; based on data in Warren Dean, "Latin American Golpes and Economic Fluctuations, 1823-1966," *Social Science Quarterly* (June 1970): 70-80. Wiarda cited in Robert H. Dix, "Military Coups and Military Rule in Latin America," *Armed Forces and Society* 20.3 (Spring 1994): pp.439-456.

⁷Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (New York: Vintage Books, 1957), p. 74.

⁸. Samuel Fitch, "Military Role Beliefs in Latin American Democracies: Context, Ideology, and Doctrine in Argentina and Ecuador," Paper presented at the XIX Meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Washington, D.C.; Sept. 28-30, 1995, p.13.

⁹Silio Waisbord, "Politics and Identity in the Argentine Army: Cleavages and the Generational Factor," *Latin American Research Review* 26.2 (1991): p.161.

¹⁰Alfred Stepan, "The New Professionalism of Internal Warfare and Military Role Expansion," in Abraham Lowenthal and J. Samuel Fitch eds., *Armies and Politics in Latin America* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1986), p.137.

¹¹Robert A. Potash, "The Impact of Professionalism on the Twentieth Century Argentine Military," Program in Latin American Studies Occasional Papers, 3rd Series (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1977) as cited in Paul Zagorski, "Civil-Military Relations and Argentine Democracy: The Armed Forces under the Menem Government," *Armed Forces and Society* (Spring 1994): p.424.

¹²Zagorski, p.424.

¹³Brian Loveman and Thomas Davies, eds. *The Politics of Antipolitics: The Military in Latin America, Second Edition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), p.3.

¹⁴Fitch, p.64.

¹⁵J. Samuel Fitch, Fitch, "Military Role Beliefs in Latin American Democracies: Context, Ideology, and Doctrine in Argentina and Ecuador," Paper presented at the XIX Meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Washington, D.C.; Sept. 28-30, 1995, p.13.

¹⁶Fitch, p.15.

¹⁷Alain Rouquié, *The Military and the State in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), p.365.

¹⁸Wendy Hunter, "Politicians Against Soldiers: Contesting the Military in Postauthoritarian Brazil," *Comparative Politics* (July 1995): pp.425-443.

CHAPTER 3
BRAZIL: BARGAINING FOR POLITICAL REALITY

In the Brazilian Republic, no one governs antagonizing the Armed Forces.
Gen. Octávio Costa (1992)
Participant in 1964 coup

After two decades of military rule, 1985 marked what was hoped to be a new beginning in Brazilian history. For political scientists, questions as to how civil-military relations in a democratic Brazil would unfold became of central concern.¹ The Brazilian Armed Forces had interpreted their time in government as an attempt to translate Thomistic principles of "order, obedience, authority, and stability," what Brian Loveman and Thomas Davies have referred to as "Hispanic antipolitics," to the State.² Alain Rouquié traced that sense of moral superiority to the fact that in the Latin American context, many militaries actually pre-dated the state. These armed organizations, therefore, considered themselves the most qualified to determine what was in the best national, as opposed to particular/political, interest. Cognizant of this tradition, the puzzle for Brazil in 1985, and in many respects to this very day, was one of determining how this military self-conception would fit into a new civilian-led democracy.

Two theses have emerged in answer to that query that represent opposite poles of the civil-military spectrum. One theory,³ in accord with Gen. Octávio Costa's opening quote, argues that the military never truly gave up power. Jorge Zaverucha, in *Rumor de Sabres*, applies that understanding to the Brazilian case. He contends that the Brazilian military, in reality, controls the state through an active tutelary role. Zaverucha argues that there is a strong likelihood of renewed intervention if military salaries fall to a certain "intolerable" level or if the nation experiences a socio-politico-economic crisis that would "require" the armed forces, as "guardians" of the state, to once again step into direct rule.⁴ The second theory, espoused by Wendy Hunter, concludes that the very essence of electoral politics--self-interest (i.e. the desire to be re-elected)--in Brazil's clientelistic

environment has not only neutralized military political influence, but has *de facto* alienated the military from the political arena altogether.⁵

Both arguments, however, are flawed. Zaverucha's "tutelary" theory, much of it based upon the Sarney presidency, considers civil-military relations so static that it appears to discount any real possibility of change. Hunter's argument, on the other hand, affords Brazil's democratic transition too much fluidity, interpreting events such as the 1988 Constitution as a paradigm of civilian dominance which, as will be discussed, was far from the case.

This chapter will attempt to demonstrate, through a close study of political and economic events, that contemporary Brazilian civil-military relations fall between the theoretical poles established by Zaverucha and Hunter. The Brazilian armed forces, in a post-Cold War world and globalized economy that has eliminated much of the need for internal and/or external defense, find themselves searching for a "raison d'être." Meanwhile those international factors have allowed civilian institutions to deepen their foothold in government. Zaverucha's thesis diagrams an *active* military and a *passive* civilian government. I argue, however, that those roles have reversed, yet not to the degree Hunter describes. Rather than it dictating policy, the military has found itself forced to negotiate or "bargain" for concessions in such a manner that benefits both itself *and* the civilian sphere. Events, thus, have shown that the military is still a political variable that not only needs to be addressed by any Brazilian executive, *but can actually be manipulated by the president for political gain*, taking advantage, ironically, of many of the same inherent national political characteristics that Hunter relies on as proof of her thesis of the military's waning role.

3.1 Research Approach

In studying Brazilian civil-military relations one first needs to address the event that set the stage for much of the debate on the civil-military question in the 1990's: the drafting of the 1988 Constitution. Relying on that document as a foundation, an analysis will be made of the last three Brazilian presidencies; that of Fernando Collor, Itamar Franco, and Fernando Henrique Cardoso. The rationale for selecting these three is that they, unlike President José Sarney (1985-1990), are the first post-authoritarian, *directly-elected* presidents (Itamar Franco, rose to the presidency due to the impeachment of President Fernando Collor). Thus, they, in theory, would seem to represent civilian politics in its most pure form, allowing for a more precise investigation of civil-military relations.

3.2 The 1988 Constitution

In 1988, the Brazilian people attempted to close a chapter of their authoritarian past by drafting a new constitution. However, depending on which interpretation one accepts, that document either demonstrated a new progressive departure from military influence or a continuation of military power within government. Wendy Hunter, in her 1995 *Comparative Politics* article entitled "Politicians Against Soldiers: Contesting the Military in Postauthoritarian Brazil," cites Brazilian labor's guarantee, under the Constitution of 1988, of an unrestricted right to strike as proof that the Brazilian military's influence had been neutralized by civilian politicians eager to appease potential voters. She explains that if the military had still been a strong political actor it would have been adamant about restricting labor unrest, after all, she concludes:

The socially disruptive effects of strikes--street protests, the destruction of property, the failure to deliver goods and services--are antithetical to the core military principles of order and discipline.⁶

Hunter's analysis of the reasons why labor control is desired by the military is absolutely correct, yet what she fails to acknowledge is that in that very same constitution the military was able to (through the use of permanent lobbyists) have their internal policing function written into the new "law of the land." The armed forces, in effect, guaranteed the perpetuation of an internal moderating role for themselves, similar to the one they had enjoyed since the late 1800's which had offered them the legitimate opening to justify their 1964 coup.⁷ The constitutional delegates were, therefore, able to satisfy their constituents while the military still had a rather ambiguous right to break a strike if it could be construed as posing a threat to internal order or security.⁸ It would be that type of "concession or compromise" politics that would most come to define Brazilian civil-military relations in the 1990's.

3.3 The Presidency of Fernando Collor de Mello (1990-1992)

With the first direct elections in nearly 30 years, the Brazilian people in 1989 rallied to the polls and chose the vibrant, attractive, young candidate Fernando Collor de Mello. Collor appeared to promise true change and a greater attempt at escaping the nation's military past. This latter sentiment was seemingly evident at the presentation of his new cabinet when his military ministers all appeared in civilian clothing; a clear departure from their obsessive affinity for barracks attire which distinguished them from "common" society. However, the question still remained as to whether this show of apparent civilian domination could be backed with actions in times of civil-military discord. What Collor's troubled presidency eventually proved was that the armed forces were not, in fact, completely subordinated to executive command according to a strictly democratic professionalist model, yet they were also not the active tutors of national political power Zaverucha had described. Instead the military under Collor began a process of adapting

itself to a new role which accepted the need for political negotiation, however reluctantly, with the civilian executive for the attainment of mutual gain.

3.3.1 Disbanding of *the Serviço Nacional de Informação* (SNI) (National Information/Intelligence Service)

In his first year as president, Collor, in a very publicized move, tackled the issue of the armed forces directly by disbanding the military-run intelligence agency, the *Serviço Nacional de Informação* (SNI). The SNI was replaced by the newly-created Secretariat of Strategic Affairs (SAE), whose director was to be a civilian. Such a radical decision apparently gave credence to the thesis that the military, in effect, had become victim to the whims of electoral politics.⁹ However, a true measure of post-authoritarian Brazilian civil-military power is only possible by an analysis of the underlying agreements and "deals" between both sides.

In disbanding the SNI, Collor fulfilled the expectations of many who had voted for him, since the power of successful electoral politics is about "supporting policies that recognize popular desires for change, at least in some highly visible areas."¹⁰ The SNI presence within the Executive was definitely a "highly visible area," thus how better to gain popularity than by defying the military and apparently succeeding.

Even a public protest by the former military chief of SNI appeared to be taken in stride by the energetic president. When Gen. Luis de Araújo Braga assumed command of the southeastern regional military district in May of 1990, he delivered a scathing speech praising his days as past chief of the SNI and the role of that organization. He harshly criticized those who referred to the SNI as "barbaric" or "abominable"; a less than subtle jibe apparently aimed at the president. The public awaited Collor's response which he reserved for a speech delivered five days later. Before 1200 Infantry soldiers and surrounded by senior officers, the civilian president stated:

You gentlemen represent the loyal and disciplined obedience to the man that, besides being the head of State and Government, by the free and direct choice of the

Brazilian people, is also, by Constitutional disposition, the supreme commander of our Armed Forces.¹¹

It truly appeared that civilian power was making a surge. However, it soon became evident that such bravado was merely for valuable opinion ratings. The reality of the situation involved a much more intricate negotiation not easily captured by television sound bites.

3.3.1.1 SNI Concessions

Brazilian presidents, like many other Latin American leaders, have to be experts in the art of negotiation. They have to contend with incredible deficits, an economy balanced on a tightrope, multiple clientelistic relationships, weak party bases, and a military that still considers itself, in many regards, greater than the state.¹² As Jorge Zaverucha has implied, it is implausible that the Brazilian military in 1990, enjoying a considerable degree of internal cohesion, and who for generations held a philosophy of being the *poder moderador* or moderating power, would merely *accept* attacks on its most prized possessions such as its internal security community.¹³ Collor was aware of this, thus his move was tempered by much shifting of personnel and resources that guaranteed that his decision would not be met with a high degree of military criticism.

The president's disbanding of the SNI was cushioned by a clever manipulation of offices that had, in part, already been occurring for years. Throughout the Sarney presidency (1985-1990), the Minister of the Military Staff Corps, Waldir Eduardo Martins, in an attempt to avoid both the threatening autonomy of the SNI¹⁴ and to guarantee greater military experience in intelligence, in case of SNI dissolution, had linked many generals to that agency. The result was that, with the disbanding of the SNI, many of those military officers (because of their experience and knowledge) maintained high positions within the newly formed civilian-led SAE while others simply returned to the barracks or offered their expertise to the Army's intelligence agency (CIE). The rest were channeled into the

Reserves. As for the active civilian agents in the SNI, they were guaranteed employment within the national government due to a loophole in the civil service law. The only real "losers" were the administrative support staff who were dismissed.¹⁵

Collor was also afforded added security in making his seemingly "rash" decision, because the military had long found the SNI a "double-edged sword."¹⁶ The agency kept a vigilant eye on potential subversion but the scope of their jurisdiction also reached the armed forces themselves. Nearly every military promotion was delayed by the need for an SNI investigation which tended to judge a candidate by political rather than merit criteria; thus defying the military's deeply-believed sense of being the only honorable (merit-based) means of social mobility in a country mired by clientelism.¹⁷

3.3.1.2 Electoral Politics: Both Sides Win

As for electoral politics, the disbanding of the SNI guaranteed Collor broad public support, greater freedom to operate (one less military official in his cabinet) and a potentially less-biased flow of information into the presidential palace, since the SNI (with its military chief) had been directly responsible for all executive intelligence.¹⁸ While the military maintained its presence to some extent in the security community, it did lose one avenue of access to the president. But, more importantly, its relative peaceful acceptance of Collor's decision bolstered the image of civilian-led democracy, and gave the general population one less reason to fear the armed forces. As one political scientist acknowledged:

[South American militaries] seek to avoid further politicization, factionalism, and corruption, institutional strains resulting from military rule. Many such armed forces also feel compelled to enhance their professional standing and repair their public image. Reacting in too heavy-handed a manner to civilian efforts to subordinate them would risk incurring negative public opinion and possibly civilian sanctions.¹⁹

The military's acquiescence, therefore, could be interpreted as a smart *political/public relations tactic*.

Finally, in an announcement whose timing seems to reflect a further concession by Collor, the new civilian-led SAE in 1990 recommended that the role of the military with regard to the nation's nuclear energy activities be expanded. The SAE proposed the construction of six nuclear reactors: 3 under the aegis of the Navy; 2 under the Air Force; and 1 under the Army.²⁰

3.3.2 The Military Re-defines Itself as an Interest /Pressure Group

The concessions behind the disbanding of the SNI seemed emblematic of a new era of civil-military relations in Brazil. Lacking a defined mission, and plagued by a tradition of small budgets (dating back even to when it was in power) (table 3.1), the Brazilian military has abandoned much of the "guardian" rhetoric that researchers such as Frederick Nunn have alluded to in their works.²¹ Instead the military appears to have adapted itself to a new role as an interest group, "seeking to influence the debate on defense appropriations, working, in particular, to solicit funds for both salaries and high-tech projects."²² Contrary to Zaverucha's thesis, the military's strength as a pressure group, seems not to emanate from the threat of a unified attempt at another military government. In the twenty years the military ruled the nation, it suffered from internal factionalism²³ and was unable to stabilize the economy²⁴ or increase its own armed forces budget. Military appropriations actually *shrank dramatically* during that period, even though the size of the military either remained constant or increased (tables 3.1 & 3.2). Instead, the military's influence appears based on a fear, shared by the senior command and the government, of "wildcat" coup attempts (mutinies) led by disgruntled officers which threaten both the institution of the military and the government's economic/political balance.

The importance of military cohesion for both the armed forces and the government was highlighted recently as current president Fernando Henrique Cardoso attempted to establish trade ties with the European Union. Negotiation on that issue was contingent upon the success of Cardoso's neo-liberal economic plan. Any disruptions in the barracks held the potential to damage the nation's still shaky reputation on the international scene, as many European officials, such as Helmut Kohl, remained skeptical as to the stability of that "Latin" state. Lacking the Cold War's pretense of legitimacy, contemporary military rumblings, regardless of their effective threat to civilian power, exacerbate domestic and international apprehension along the entire social spectrum. This aversion is, in many ways, a product of the post-Cold War globalization that has linked the world's business communities and economies more intimately than ever.²⁵

The military senior command, meanwhile, fears division of its armed forces into dissatisfied factions. This occurrence could not only disrupt the economy, but in the process threaten military hierarchy/order and tarnish the relatively "clean" reputation the armed forces enjoy as a body that seemingly represents an absence of the vices that frustrate so much of Brazilian society.²⁶

Table 3.1
 Military Expenditures as Percentage of GNP in Four Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Regimes:
 Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay,
 1972-1983

Year	Argentina	Brazil	Chile	Uruguay
1972	1.4	1.4	2.3	2.4
1973	1.7	1.4	3.7	2.4
1974	1.9	1.2	4.9	2.9
1975	0.8	1.1	4.8	2.7
1976	3.2	1.2	4.1	2.2
1977	3.2	1.0	4.0	2.4
1978	3.0	0.8	4.2	2.3
1979	3.2	0.7	3.6	2.4
1980	3.6	0.7	3.6	2.9
1981	3.9	0.7	3.7	4.0
1982	3.5	0.9	4.3	4.1
1983	2.7	0.7	4.5	3.3

Source: U.S. Government, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers*, 1972-1982 (April 1984), pp.17-49; and *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfer*, 1985 (August 1985), pp.52-88.

Table 3.2
 Armed-Force Size in Four Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Regimes: Argentina, Brazil, Chile,
 and Uruguay
 (in thousands)

Year	Argentina	Brazil	Chile	Uruguay
1972	140	410	75	20
1973	160	420	75	20
1974	150	435	90	25
1975	160	455	110	25
1976	155	450	111	28
1977	155	450	111	28
1978	155	450	111	28
1979	155	450	111	28
1980	155	450	116	28
1981	155	450	116	28
1982	175	460	116	29
1983	175	460	126	30

Source: U.S. Government, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers*, 1972-1982, and 1985, pp.17-49, and pp.52-88.

3.3.2.1 Pragmatic Politics: General Newton Cerqueira

General Newton Cerqueira, who during the military regime had been identified as a "hard-liner," recognized the new interest group mentality emerging in Brazilian civil-military relations and used it as his platform in running for the presidency of the Military Club of Rio in 1990. The Brazilian news weekly *Istoé* described Cerqueira as "dedicating special attention to less noble problems such as salaries, pensions, and medical coverage...."²⁷ His opponent, General Diogo Figueiredo, attacked Cerqueira for what seemed, according to Figueiredo, to be his opponent's attempted "unionization" of the armed forces. Figueiredo, opted to campaign on traditional military themes of national security and military prestige as an entity separate and superior to society.²⁸ The result of the election seems to be quite telling of the military's new outlook in the 1990's, with Cerqueira, the apparent "radical," winning.

Cerqueira drew national attention to himself not so much because his ideas were novel, rather because they stated publicly what to a certain extent had been, and is today, transpiring in Brazilian civil-military relations. The armed forces have, in effect, abandoned much of their traditional condescendence toward the civilian sphere, in order to reap practical returns.²⁹ The military leadership is acutely aware that, in light of the armed forces' dismal record in power and the new "world order,"³⁰ they can not afford to either overthrow government or to isolate themselves.³¹ As Wendy Hunter notes, in electorally-driven politics they would be low on the list of budgetary priorities.³² Admiral Armando Vidigal, in a recent public letter summed up this Brazilian military reality stating:

...[T]he only escape from the moral crisis is that which is determined by democratic means. *There is no other....*The military will contribute to that process by remaining loyal to the principles of the constitution, along with the whims of society. In that scenario, the fury of the legions *will only express itself through the vote*. In a politically mature society, this is the only alternative that is available to the legions. (emphasis mine)³³

The Brazilian armed forces thus acknowledge that they too must play electoral politics. Moreover, because of the very divided nature of Brazilian politics (parties in Brazil are infamous for their lack of loyal adherents)³⁴ the military has the potential to serve as a powerful political ally as would be evidenced during the presidency of Itamar Franco.

3.3.3 The Military Budget Under Collor

The budget is a polemical issue in any nation, however in Brazil, with the largest foreign debt in Latin America and a pattern of skyrocketing inflation, it assumes monumental importance. Under the 1988 Constitution, the budget for military salaries was to be gauged to that of the legislative and judicial branches. However, table 3.3 indicates that was rarely the case, as low salaries in the face of rising consumer prices made for very tight times within the barracks.

Table 3.3
Monthly Salary Comparison
(in Cruzeiros--1992)

Military	Executive	Legislative	Judicial
General 892	Minister 1,039	Deputy/Senator 1,152	Minister 1,319
Colonel 651	Executive Sec. 515	Director 1,167	Director-Gen. 948
Captain 401	Dept. Director 421	Leg. Assessor 1,167	N/A
Lieutenant 311	High-level Tech. 485	High-level Tech. 868	High-level Tech. 500
Sergeant 238	Secretary 117	Secretary 911	Secretary 555
Corporal 133	Driver 86	Driver 385	Driver 263

Source: *Istoé*, 10 July 91: pp.18-19.

Patrice Franko explains this unequal phenomenon, in part, by writing, "As countries face slow (or anemic) economic growth or have to transfer funds to service external debt, they must resort to cuts in military spending."³⁵ Franko does, however, acknowledge that in

nations such as Brazil, with strong institutionalized militaries, "the rate at which defense spending declines often takes place at a much slower rate than the cuts applied to other budget areas."³⁶ The latter was, in fact, the case during the Sarney presidency.

3.3.3.1 Mutual Sacrifice?

Nevertheless, by 1991 the military budget, traditionally small in Brazil (less than 2% of GDP),³⁷ had shriveled to 0.5% of the GDP.³⁸ A report released by the Staff Corps of the Armed Forces in 1992 calculated military losses in real salary alone of 850% that year.³⁹ In the midst of such financial devastation, the military, according to Franko, remained relatively passive primarily because the nation as a whole was suffering through a period of tremendous economic stress and in a post-Cold War environment, the excuse of greater salaries to fight subversion seemed out-dated. To support her argument she cites the following statement issued by Collor's Minister of Aeronautics, Lt. Brigadier Sócrates Monteiro in March of 1991:

While our Armed Forces clearly need to modernize their equipment, this will only be possible when the economy is stabilized.⁴⁰

That realism was also noted by Admiral Mário César Flores in his book, *Bases Para Uma Política Militar*, when he wrote:

Even with a growing economy...the priority of the Brazilian social and infrastructural debt will impede real increases in the military budget in the near future.⁴¹

The problem for Flores, as well as Monteiro, was their frustration with the fact that the Brazilian military budget had traditionally been one of the smallest per capita in Latin America, yet kept decreasing. This understanding was aggravated by the notion that, as Wendy Hunter cites, what little revenue the national government did have was divvied up

primarily for civilian "spoils," a natural phenomenon of Brazilian electoral politics; she notes:

The rampant pursuit of patronage resources by politicians not only clashes with the long-standing positivist impulse within the military to 'rationalize' the public bureaucracy. It also leads them into direct competition with military elites over state resources. Politicians are tempted to shift budget shares away from the military to civilian ministries better suited for pork barrel. Similarly, where military officers hold key posts in large state enterprises--strategic positions from which to build a network of political allies by distributing jobs and other benefits--patronage-seeking politicians will try to replace them. The competition for resources is thus another way in which the incentives unleashed by democratic competition militate against the continued entrenchment of the military in the political and economic fabric of the country.⁴²

Based upon both Franko's and Hunter's analyses, the military, appears to have very little choice or power to alter the "new" political-economic reality. Despite these arguments, events in 1991 and 1992 would prove that the armed forces still possessed a considerable degree of political influence.

3.3.3.2 Mutual Sacrifice + Tradition = Political Leverage

Three months after Minister Monteiro made his initial conciliatory statement, he demanded "salaries compatible with [the military's] functions as soon as possible."⁴³ How can one explain this apparent contradiction, which Franko overlooks? One possible answer appears to lie with the military's attempt to manipulate Brazilian popular opinion; a practice which, as Hunter cited, is an inherent feature of electoral interest-oriented politics, even though she only considered it as applying to civilians at the expense of the military. That the Brazilian armed forces could even consider attempting such a ploy is very much testament to the respect it still enjoys nationally (relative to other militaries with bureaucratic-authoritarian pasts, i.e. that of Argentina).⁴⁴

In a nation infamous for civilian political corruption; incredible economic disparity (which Francisco Weffort describes as "social apartheid")⁴⁵; and a history of military intervention, the well-publicized concept of "mutual sacrifice" between the traditionally

powerful armed forces and the "common people" had the potential to become a public relations weapon. In an electorally-driven system, this translated into a negotiating advantage. Both of Lt. Brigadier Monteiro's remarks reflect that understanding. Initially, as Franko noted, he conceded that the armed forces would accept financial sacrifice just like all Brazilians, evoking an image of military solidarity with the Brazilian citizenry. That move, I argue, garnered the armed forces a generous degree of popular respect (which it already had been cultivating since the SNI disbandment). This allowed Monteiro the opportunity, three months later, to play the more traditional military card: demanding salary increases, while remaining ambiguous as to what action the armed forces would take if the request was ignored. Monteiro here thus relied on the classical definition of the Brazilian military as "the purest image of society"⁴⁶ (i.e. less corrupt than civilian politicians); an image that the armed forces' recent willingness to accept "belt-tightening" had only enhanced (i.e. "we" sacrificed, but did "they"?). Apparently, Monteiro was hoping that the sympathetic civilian population would feel "justifiably" threatened or motivated (depending on the interpretation) by the unknown repercussions of his demand to pressure their own intransigent elected representatives to accede.

The results of the military's apparent strategy were borne out in a July 1991 national survey conducted by *Data Três* which noted that the majority of Brazilians favored apportioning the military a salary increase;⁴⁷ leaving unclear whether the outcome of the survey was a reflection of a popular fear of a military so downtrodden that it could be forced to coup or instead was a product of sympathy for the members of a once proud organization.⁴⁸ I argue that it was a combination of both. As Captain Jair Balsonaro concluded, "the army is patriotic but it is not an idiot."⁴⁹

3.3.3.3 Collor Responds to Demands (Almost)

Both Collor and Monteiro were most likely aware that the probability of another military government or even a broadly supported coup were unlikely, but the military did

have the potential to disrupt the president's already dire politico/economic program. In an environment where mere hints of national problems can send stocks and the currency on a downward spin, it was imperative for Collor to somehow placate the military leadership. Collor's armed forces ministers had to contend with rumors of sporadic revolts⁵⁰ from an increasingly disgruntled junior officer corps which felt slighted by both the *pátria* and its own senior command.⁵¹

Emblematic of the mutually beneficial role of contemporary Brazilian civil-military relations, Collor answered the military's demands in a way he appears to have hoped would offer him a weapon in his losing battle with the legislature. One year and a half into his presidency, Collor's economic and political agendas were in chaos. Interbranch antagonism over inflation, privatization, and the presidential ego opened what was soon to become an insurmountable rift between the executive and the congress.⁵² Isolated politically, Collor apparently viewed the military and its demands as an "ace" in the game of political poker.

Relying on presidential privilege, Collor in late June of 1991 issued a "temporary measure" finally instituting an armed forces salary increase. To the casual observer it would seem that Collor had caved in to military pressure. However, under Brazilian law, an executive "temporary measure" only becomes effective if the congress fails to act upon it within thirty days. Since military funding is normally a low legislative priority in Brazil, according to Hunter, much less when it is imposed by an unpopular president, the measure was defeated (to resounding applause in the legislative chamber).⁵³ The outcome was so transparent that one must question the motives behind such an ill-fated presidential decision.

The president's strategy was to appear sympathetic to the military's plight, all the while recognizing that the congress would never approve his measure. That branch's refusal, Collor hoped, would channel the armed forces' ire onto the congress, while affording him a valuable military alliance that could be tapped as leverage in later executive-

legislative negotiations, alluding to an *auto-golpe* scenario. Unfortunately for Collor, his gamble did not succeed, as many senior officers interpreted the temporary measure's defeat as further evidence of the president's weakness.⁵⁴

Nevertheless, a "secret executive budget" was discovered two months later, that appeared to be an attempt by Collor to keep the military, if not on his side, then at least neutral. This "budget" circumvented congress and allocated over \$5 billion Cruzeiros to the Secretariat for Strategic Affairs (SAE) (in which many military officers worked) and to the three branches of the armed forces (table 3.4).

Table 3.4
Fernando Collor de Mello's "Secret Budget"

SAE	\$5,200,000,000 (Cruzeiros)
Air Force	\$290,000,000
Navy	\$59,000,000
Army	\$9,000,000

Source: *Istoé*, "Poço sem fundo," 14 August 91: p.19.

3.3.4 Impeachment (1992)

According to many of the generals responsible for the intervention of 1964, the main impetus for their actions was a sense of social chaos and a direct threat to their institution.⁵⁵ If politics degenerate and "endanger the national honor and integrity," then it is assumed in traditional Latin American military circles that the "patriotic duty of the armed forces [is to] reimpose order."⁵⁶ Jorge Zaverucha noted that one of the scenarios in which the Brazilian military would abandon, what he felt, was its active tutelary role over government and resort, once again, to direct intervention was if Brazil experienced a "worsening of a socio-politico-economic crisis."⁵⁷ Based upon these criteria, the events of 1992 would seem to indicate that a coup was imminent. Fernando Collor, who had never been extremely popular with the armed forces, was embroiled in a scandal that threatened the nation's executive branch; inflation was climbing rapidly; Brazil's real growth rate for

that year was a dismal -0.9%;⁵⁸ and the nation's two major stock markets were plummeting, as was the already low value of the national currency, the Cruzeiro.⁵⁹ Furthermore, the armed forces, as an institution, was experiencing its worst economic crisis in over thirty years.⁶⁰ Yet, the military did not intervene; why?

The answer to that query, I contend, rests with a combination of explanations some of which have already been alluded to. First, in late May of 1992, Collor sent his Minister of Economics, Marcílio Marques Moreira, on a "damage control" mission to shore up key political and economic support that seemed poised to disappear in light of the unfolding executive scandal. Moreira not only contacted the nation's major industrial and business figures, but also those of the international community. Most importantly, for the purposes of this study, he personally went to the main barracks and met with all the ministers of the armed forces assuring them that their budget would be revamped that same year.⁶¹

The second possible explanation for the armed forces' acquiescence is that with impeachment apparently secure, the military could simply wait for Collor's vice-president, Itamar Franco, who had a reputation of being more amenable to the armed forces, to assume the executive. Such a strategy of restraint would enhance the military's appearance to the public which, in turn, could prove useful in subsequent bargaining. Even Collor's minister of the Army, Gen. Carlos Tinoco, the most conservative of all the military cabinet members, appeared to have understood the advantages of this new civil-military relationship when he stated:

The Army, more than ever, will maintain itself within the strict confines of the its constitutional duties. *And it takes great pleasure in hearing the praises that this stand has garnered from all the sectors of national life and from the international community itself.* (emphasis mine)⁶²

It may also be argued, contrary to Zaverucha's prediction, that had impeachment not been such a certainty, the military might still have refrained from intervention for the following reasons. First, as 1964 proved, a temporary intervention may not be enough to

satiate military officers who may feel that there is no civilian or group of civilians competent enough to whom power could be handed over.⁶³ This possibility must have weighed on the minds of the senior command as elements within the Brazilian officer corps still recalled the institutionally-threatening factionalism created by their twenty years in power.⁶⁴ As Guillermo O'Donnell noted:

Although there is a high probability of internal cohesion when the military is dedicated to a strictly professional conception of its functions, this probability is bound to diminish as the military assumes and exercises governmental power.⁶⁵

Second, with an economy that was cited as one of the, if not the, worst in Latin America, the armed forces, cognizant of their prior catastrophic economic record in government (in 1982, they were actually forced to admit publicly "that the country was on the verge of insolvency"),⁶⁶ may have concluded that a coup in 1992 would have been akin to taking over a "sinking ship" and should they not be able to produce economic success on their "watch," they would only risk further tarnishing their reputation.⁶⁷ Finally, contrary to the *auto-golpe* strategy of President Fujimori in Peru, military rule in today's post-Cold War world, has a greater probability to suffer from a lack of legitimacy. Unlike an authoritarian civilian regime, a military government would at some point be perceived as solely a "military dictatorship" with all the accompanying connotations of human rights violations, lack of civil liberties, etc..⁶⁸ Ironically, those same "evils" may be part of a civilian dictatorship as well, but the mere fact that it is a civilian government somehow filters many of those negative images.⁶⁹

3.4 The Presidency of Itamar Franco (1992-1994)

The Itamar Franco period in Brazilian history will, unfortunately, most likely be remembered for the president's numerous social blunders.⁷⁰ Yet, less memorable but more important was Franco's civil-military negotiating that manipulated both the Brazilian armed

forces' history and their new interest/pressure group orientation,⁷¹ eventually reaping political rewards for the nation's next president, Fernando Henrique Cardoso.

Assuming the presidency in October of 1992, Franco had the monumental challenge of trying to salvage an economy in shambles.⁷² He had no success (the economy actually worsened) until he transferred renowned sociologist, Fernando Henrique Cardoso from his post as Minister of Foreign Affairs to that of Minister of Economics.⁷³

Cardoso's ultimate success in the economics office was based upon a program of currency conversion, massive spending cuts, increased privatization, and greater world market inclusion; all features that seemed anathema to much of the Brazilian military establishment. This apprehension was only aggravated by the fact that Cardoso had been exiled in 1964 and had upon his return been "the" representative of the intellectual opposition.⁷⁴

3.4.1 The Military as an Interest to be Courted

In 1993 Cardoso proposed a series of major reductions in government expenditures, yet assured the military that it would be left untouched. However, Cardoso soon found himself forced to renege on his promise and by year's end indicated that the military would not escape the economic ax with what would, in essence, amount to a 40% cut in their budget of \$21 billion Cruzeiros. The Brazilian armed forces, which already received the least amount of money per capita of all the major nations in Latin America and beyond (table 3.5), reacted fervently.

Table 3.5
Military Expenditures Per Capita
(in US\$)

USA	Gr. Britain	Chile	Argentina	Mexico	Brazil
902	395	55	35	10	7

Source: *The Military Balance--IISS 1992/1993*

In what was perhaps their strongest criticism of civilian government since turning over power in 1985, the head of the Military Staff Corps severely chastised Cardoso for his austerity program. President Franco, realizing that military support in a tortuous political environment such as Brazil's could prove valuable, intervened to prevent a major showdown between the military and his government. Franco guaranteed that the armed forces would be spared the budget cuts and that they would be able to secure their pet projects such as the nuclear submarine and space programs.⁷⁵

3.4.1.1 The PT and the Military?

The importance of military support became clear early in the 1994 presidential election year when the military's traditional arch-rival, the socialist Workers' Party (PT), published a study that was highly sympathetic to the armed forces. The study demonstrated that the military did not have the capacity, in its then state of financial malaise, to defend the nation should an emergency arise. Furthermore, the PT also began abandoning its traditional aversion to national conscription. This abrupt about-face was concisely summed-up by a general in the Staff Corps: "There is no mutual good-feeling in the coming-together of the PT and the military. It's pure pragmatism."⁷⁶ Nevertheless, the PT, who in January of 1994 appeared to be the party closest to the next presidential victory, piqued the military's interest because it appeared to be the only organized and effective political entity that recognized the need for an increase in the military's budget for the national good.

3.4.1.2 Building an Executive-Military Alliance, Part I

With the new leverage garnered from the PT's declaration of support, the military now became a pivotal chess piece in the game of electoral politics. With presidential

elections scheduled for October of 1994, rumors of Fernando Henrique Cardoso running against the PT's immensely popular Luis "Lula" Inácio da Silva began to circulate in the early months of the year. In February of that year, in a decision whose timing seems to suspiciously indicate an attempt to regain military backing that may have slipped to the PT,⁷⁷ Franco had his Minister of the Army announce publicly that the armed forces would that year receive the first of four annual US\$200 million payments to purchase new equipment.⁷⁸ What is particularly striking about this declaration is that Franco himself did not make the announcement, which had he done so, would have further increased his popularity among the men in arms. Apparently, in a time of tremendous national "belt-tightening," the last thing the President desired was to be seen on national television giving anyone or any organization \$800 million U.S. dollars.

3.4.1.3 Building an Executive-Military Alliance, Part II

The loosening of funds for military expenses was only the first step of political "deal-making" between the executive and the armed forces. One week after the momentous military budget announcement, Franco disclosed that he was shuffling his cabinet. General Rubens Bayma Denys, who had been a member of Sarney's inner circle, was appointed Minister of Transportation. That selection brought the grand total of military representatives in the presidential palace to seven (table 3.6).

Table 3.6
 Military Officers in Cabinet of Itamar Franco

Chief of the Military Staff Corps	Adm. Arnaldo Leite Pereira
Minister of the Army	Gen. Zenildo de Lucena
Minister of the Navy	Adm. Ivan Serpa
Minister of the Air Force	Gen. Lélío Lobo
Minister of the SAE ##	Adm. Mário César Flores
Chief of the Secretariat for Federal Administration **	Gen. Romildo Canhim
Minister of Transportation **	Gen. Rubens Bayma Denys

Source: *Istoé*, "Tucanos e quepes," 9 March 94: p.26.

##Brazil's intelligence agency which was originally formed under Collor for the purpose of replacing the military-run SNI.

**Not traditionally military appointments

This apparent "militarization" of government was rather alarming to many within the civilian sector, but the logic of it soon became evident.

3.4.2 The "Real" Plan

Fernando Henrique Cardoso's political aspirations, as well as the hopes of the Brazilian nation, were soon revealed to be hinged upon a currency conversion and indexation plan known as the "Unit of Real Value" (*Unidade de Valor Real*) or *Real* Plan, that was to be implemented in 1994. However, for that plan to have any hope of success it would first need to be approved in the congress and bypass any legal challenge in the judiciary. Unfortunately for Cardoso, the *Real* plan's conversion factor would result in a 10.94% real salary loss for the members of the legislative and judicial branches.⁷⁹ Thus, the plan was delayed as an interbranch battle ensued. It was at this point that the deals between the military and the executive reaped rewards.

By increasing the number of military officers in his presidential cabinet, Franco had fortified the executive branch with representatives of an organization that was supposed to earn as much as the judiciary or the legislature by law. However, as table 3.3 noted, that had rarely been the case in the previous four years. The military, thus, had little to lose

under the new economic plan. Therefore, when the legislative and judicial branches stalled implementation of the *Real* plan due to issues of their own salary, they were confronting an ambiguous executive-military alliance which did not seem to bode well for their continued existence. This anxiety was only exacerbated by such comments as that made by the Minister of the Military Staff Corps: "If it's a confrontation between the branches that they [Legislature and Judiciary] want, then the military is ready."⁸⁰ Ultimately, the judicial obstacle was overcome and after continued negotiation the *Real* Plan was implemented in July of 1994.

3.4.3 The Changing Definitions of *Poder Moderador*

The political "war games" conducted by Itamar Franco altered the course of the 1994 presidential campaign, allowing Cardoso's *Real* Plan the leeway necessary to be effective. The plan drastically reduced inflation and created relative economic stability, given Brazil's recent economic history. This, in turn, reaped electoral rewards for the Economics Minister in the October presidential election. What Franco's negotiations demonstrated was that the military had not necessarily become a non-factor in contemporary Brazilian electoral politics. Much to the contrary, the armed forces appeared to have learned to take advantage of their position as the armed segment of a post Cold War democratic society by imposing themselves as valuable political allies or uncomfortable foes. They have, in effect, re-defined the meaning of *poder moderador*. No longer do they "moderate" politics as a type of mythical guardian solely capable of discerning evil and purity.⁸¹ Instead they can moderate power because of the disruptions they can cause to political and economic strategies. As General Newton Cerqueira realized during his aforementioned campaign for presidency of the Military Club of Rio, the contemporary Brazilian military's existence is dependent on involvement within the civilian political system that many officers in the past had so despised.⁸²

3.4.3.1 "Delegative Democracy" and the Zaverucha and Hunter Theories

Franco's intervention and his later negotiations with the military would be one more example in a series of events that further gave credence to the thesis that the military remains an influence in Brazilian politics, yet not to the degree Jorge Zaverucha believed. If the military was still the all-powerful dictator of government policy, as that Brazilian social scientist argues, particularly policy vis-à-vis the armed forces, then one must ask why a unified military would allow its traditionally small budget to be cut over the last half decade to such extreme levels, forcing even basic military practices and services to be discontinued?⁸³ Moreover, why would senior elements within the armed forces, such as General Cerqueira, recognize a need to re-define the military's mission with relation to the political sphere, if, as Zaverucha claimed, it already enjoyed a privileged insider position? Thus, the static conception of military tutelage appears invalid.

Nevertheless, in order to accept Hunter's diametrically-opposed theory, that the military is no longer a political actor, one would need to defy both facts and logic. Hunter argues that Brazilian politics (primarily with reference to the legislature) are prone to rational choice individualism with little or no conception of party line and/or party loyalty and much less, any interest in "wasting" valuable patronage funds on the armed forces. Much of her evidence is valid. Indeed party politics in Brazil are notoriously fickle and clientelism and patronage are inherent features. As Joel Migdal has noted, in states with weak institutions, political self-preservation may be too overriding a temptation:

...an inadequate power base for the state makes it a tempting prize for those who do have some organizational backing, either in society at large or even within one of the state's many tentacles. But the prize is often chimerical, for what aspiring leaders seize is not the capability to transform their societies in accordance with their goals, but simply seats coveted by others. Just to preserve their seats, they must adopt means that foreclose the use of power to fulfill their original purposes. Instead, substantive policy issues are pushed to the back burner.⁸⁴

Yet, in this context, how is the Brazilian president expected to succeed, *for his constituency is the nation?* As Robert Dahl noted, "a key characteristic of a democracy is the continuing responsiveness of the government [read: the President] to the preferences of its citizens...."⁸⁵

Because of that very dilemma, and in light of the military's adaptation to a more interest-group format (abandoning abstract themes in order to gain practical concessions), it will be very difficult for a Brazilian president to resist the temptation to bargain with the armed forces. Migdal elaborates: "Lacking the means to mobilize sustained and organized internal support, leaders of weak states [i.e. states with weak institutions] must increasingly turn their attention to staying in power...."⁸⁶ Accordingly, the military may win a periodic perk, through bargaining, costing the president relatively little, yet winning him an executive-military alliance that could reinforce his negotiating position vis-à-vis the fractious legislature. That legislature may interpret the president's implicit alliance as a threat (*auto-golpe?*) to their institution and may opt to take a short-term loss, (i.e. work with the president) in return for the promise of the being able to preserve their patronage trough. Guillermo O'Donnell dubbed this sort of executive phenomenon, which appears to be authoritarian rule under the guise of democracy, "delegative democracy." Under this concept, the will of the people is embodied in the president's ability to "get things done" at the national level, regardless of the manner in which that is accomplished. Hunter acknowledges this type of presidential strategy, but dismisses it as a symptom of a weak individual in the executive. Yet, her analysis of the Brazilian congress presents a system so divided among individual interests, that any president, regardless of his strengths or weaknesses, may be forced at one point or another to resort to using the military as a type of "swing vote."

3.5 The Presidency of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1994-?)

Fernando Henrique Cardoso has demonstrated that he understands the importance, perhaps more than anyone, of negotiating with the military. His *Real* plan has been considered one of the world's economic success stories.⁸⁷ It has nonetheless required much belt-tightening, from which the armed forces have not escaped. The military's budget situation, regardless of the \$200 million yearly allocation for equipment is still quite dismal. Humorous stories of its plight abound, such as soldiers who in 10 weeks of basic training are only allowed to fire five real bullets or the more serious tale of Brazil's inability to meet United Nations' peacekeeping efforts due to a lack of funds.⁸⁸ However, what differentiates this sacrifice from that of the Collor presidency is that Cardoso has brought Brazil to the cusp of the "elite club" of world powers. Under Cardoso the National Treasury's receipts grew by 18% in real terms during the first seven months of 1995 and the consumer price index improved from 41.3% in January of 1994 to 1.4% in January of 1995.⁸⁹ Meanwhile, on the international scene, no longer is Brazil regarded as *the* nation with unfulfilled potential. Instead, it is now being referred to as the "engine of the Mercosur accord," and Cardoso appears to want to expand upon that distinction by recently leading negotiations in Europe to sign a free trade agreement between Mercosur and the E.U.. In addition, there is growing talk of Brazil's entry into the United Nations Security Council.⁹⁰

3.5.1 Human Rights Accusations: Handle With Care

Despite its relative acquiescence in terms of its budget, the military in Brazil, like its neighboring Argentine counterpart, does not tolerate accusations of human rights violations very easily. The military's self-written Amnesty Law of 1979 is one example of that aversion, but more telling has been the unspoken agreement amongst politicians not to delve too deeply into human rights investigations.⁹¹ Cardoso, the radical scholar turned

politician, riding on a wave of popular support, appeared, less than one year into his presidency, poised to defy that tacit understanding.⁹² Reflective of his past as an intellectual critic of the military government, he was revered by those who suffered under that regime's persecution as their greatest hope for closure to that troubling time. Therefore, in August of 1995 the Brazilian government took definitive steps towards admitting responsibility for the disappearance of 136 Brazilians between 1964 and the establishment of the Amnesty Law of 1979. Cardoso moved to publish the names of the "disappeared" and agreed to pay reparations ranging from (R)\$100,000 to \$150,000 to the families of the victims.

The dilemma for Cardoso, however, was how to reconcile the interests of a vocal segment of the civilian population along with his own personal inclinations with that of the armed forces that were, in essence, being accused of wrongdoing for what many within the military felt was a "just war." Brian Loveman, describing the military's logic behind such an assertion, notes:

At war, the rules of war apply. The basic rule of war is that the enemy may be killed....If political opponents become "enemies" in a war, undeclared or declared, their extirpation is no longer a violation of human rights or even a common crime but rather a legitimate function of armies engaged in combat.⁹³

With that mind-set, Cardoso's announcement touched off minor barrack revolts in bases around the nation. The matter had the potential to unravel and threaten the fragile political and economic balance Cardoso had tried so hard to build. Reacting quickly, the president set upon a course of internal diplomacy, first by stating:

As the Head of State and of the Government, elected by the people, and as the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, it is up to me to assume, for the State, the responsibilities of transgressions committed against the law or human rights.⁹⁴

In making such a pronouncement, Cardoso, deflected the responsibility of the "disappeared" away from the military. However, this act masked a more complex series of negotiations between the executive and the armed forces.

Cardoso's military cabinet-members proved to be effective allies in averting a possible civil-military crisis. The minister of the Army personally took the President to Rio's military headquarters so that the high command could be directly assured that publication of the disappeared list would not lead to torture investigations. Meanwhile, frustrated officers were "advised" by the military cabinet to retire and collect their pensions. What truly added to the quality of the civil-military "deal" was Cardoso's signing, less than two weeks after the start of this incident, of a temporary measure which guaranteed the armed forces a 20% salary readjustment along with an added, undefined "provisional gratuity."⁹⁵ Unlike Collor, whose aforementioned temporary measure attempt was doomed to failure, Cardoso enjoyed enough support within the legislature to make such a tactic feasible.

The "disappeared" episode perhaps more than any other incident in recent Brazilian history, succinctly defines the bargaining nature of contemporary civil-military relations. Cardoso needed to prove (for present and future electoral success) that he could stand by his principles and accommodate the desires of the civilian population, in areas other than economics; while the military needed a pay increase. Thus, the President and the military compromised. Each was victorious: Cardoso proved himself a champion of those whose voices had been silenced, while the military could take refuge in knowing that accusations of torture would be muted and they would, in return, be given a salary bonus.

3.6 Conclusion

It is not in the army that one can find the remedy for the ills of the army, but in the country.

De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*

The armed forces in Brazil seem to be evolving along with transformations in their country. Thirty years ago, the thought that the military would have to compromise with a government that enjoys little or no respect in the barracks was inconceivable. At that time, the world was trapped in a Cold War mentality where "threats" to national sovereignty could come, not only across borders, but also from within. In the mid-1990's, however, talk of "subversion" is laughable. Moreover, borders themselves have less significance as expansion of the "global market" has made traditional enemies now intimate trading partners (e.g. Brazil and Argentina). Much of the Brazilian military's "metamorphosis" is also a product of its painful experience in government, where all the shortcomings of the armed forces were placed in the spotlight. Today, military contempt for civilian power has to be weighed against the damage a potential intervention could cause the military institution itself; as one senior officer concluded, "We [the military] have more than enough problems of our own."⁹⁶

This new understanding, while weakening military dominance, has strengthened Brazilian civil institutions' position, albeit within a defective political system. The legislature, mired by disunity, appears non-inclined to continue supporting a military that offers it little in return. The executive, confronted by a multiplicity of national and international demands, would also prefer to ignore the armed forces. Nevertheless, the president is cognizant that to allow the military's economic plight to deteriorate excessively may pose problems for the smooth functioning of his policies. Dissatisfaction within the military may create uncontrollable rifts in the armed establishment potentially leading to sporadic, violent protests. Thus, the Brazilian executive appears content to allow the legislature to tear away at the military's budget, until demands by the armed forces reach a

breaking point. In that scenario, and unlike the traditional "tutelary" model, the civilian president gains an "active" bargaining position vis-à-vis the armed forces. The military's threat to him stems from a possibility of a break in its chain of command (factionalism/mutinies); a danger of more paramount importance for officers as it imperils the fundamental pillar--hierarchy--of the military institution. With that "active" negotiating advantage, the president is able to manipulate the military by allocating economic "band-aid" measures or by affording the armed forces leeway to pursue their internal, autonomous interests such as strategic defense of the Amazon.⁹⁷ These concessions can be doled out with little or no short-term cost to the executive and can actually profit the president by creating a military predilection for him (alliance) over the intransigent, divided legislature.

Of course, the long-term repercussions of executive-military alliance-making remain to be seen. Bargaining in civil-military relations "involves cooperation versus defiance."⁹⁸ This concept, by its very definition contradicts the democratic professionalist military model (the United States paradigm) that many scholars see as a goal for a true democracy. In a democratic professionalist armed forces, both civilian authority and democracy are held as mission priorities.⁹⁹ When the president resorts to allying himself with the military he reinforces the historically accepted notion, on the part of the armed forces and many of those prominent in Brazilian society, that liberal democracy is somehow inappropriate for that Portuguese-speaking country.

Executive-military negotiation, in circumventing the congress, violates a principal tenet of the federalist democratic code: constitutional separation of powers and checks and balances. If Brazilian parties are not strengthened, this "delegative democratic" practice will most likely continue. If so, the nation runs the risk that (a) the president may eventually monopolize governmental power or (b) the military may become more demanding in its pre-requisites for supporting the executive. The former [a] has already occurred in Peru under Fujimori and to a degree in Argentina under Menem. While the latter [b] raises the threat of the armed forces developing an ethos of "conditional

subordination," whereby the executive may find himself forced to concede more than he would like. Samuel Fitch notes:

Under certain circumstances...civilian leaders may be able to impose a substantial degree of democratic control without institutionalization, for example where the political context leaves the military no other alternative. Under these conditions, however, democratic control is likely to be unstable and transient; circumstantial changes in the political context--a prolonged bout of hyperinflation, the death or discrediting of the president, or increased political violence--may re-open old options or new alternatives for military intervention.¹⁰⁰

Though this chapter has shown that a military coup seems unlikely in this "new world order," it has also demonstrated that contemporary Brazilian civil-military relations retain a considerable degree of ambiguity. Civilians, today, cannot be considered prisoners to military dictates. Nevertheless, the armed forces remain political actors. Should civil-military bargaining escalate, this ambiguous co-existence may perpetuate an inclination to authoritarianism (civilian, military or both) with uncertain ramifications for the Brazilian people.

¹Such as Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, eds., *Transitions From Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

²Brian Loveman and Thomas Davies eds., *The Politics of Antipolitics, The Military in Latin America*, 2nd.ed., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), p.5. See also Howard Wiarda, *Politics in Iberia: The Political Systems of Spain and Portugal*, (New York: Harper Collins, 1993).

³See Jorge Zaverucha, *Rumor de Sabres*, (São Paulo: Atica, 1994); see also João Quartim de Moraes, Wilma Peres Costa and Eliézer de Oliveira, *A Tutela Militar*, (São Paulo: Vértice, 1987); and Clovis Brigagão, "Autonomia Militar e Democracia: O Caso Brasileiro," Mimeo, 1985.

⁴Zaverucha, p.11.

⁵See Wendy Hunter, "Politicians Against Soldiers: Contesting the Military in Postauthoritarian Brazil," *Comparative Politics* (July 1995): pp.425-443.

⁶Hunter, p.432.

⁷Admiral Mário César Flores, *Bases Para Uma Política Militar*, (Campinas: Unicamp, 1992), p.62.

⁸President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, as recently as May of 1995 relied on the military to break a nationalized oil workers' strike. João Martins Filho and Daniel Zirker, "The Metamorphosis of Military Tutelage in Brazil." Paper presented at the XIX International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association, Washington, DC; September 28-30, 1995; p.3.

⁹Hunter, p.427.

¹⁰Hunter, p.429.

¹¹*Istoé*, "O general do capuz: comandante que defende SNI fala sozinho sobre o que outros oficiais pensam," 16 May 90: pp.22-24.

¹²For a discussion of the weakness of Brazilian democratic institutions vis-à-vis the economy, see Lourdes Sola, "Estado, transformação econômica e democratização no Brasil," in Lourdes Sola, ed., *Estado, mercado e democracia: Política e economia comparadas*, (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1993).

¹³See Zaverucha.

¹⁴Alfred Stepan has noted that one of the key factor contributing to the abertura process was the increasing independence of the SNI which many officers soon came to view as a "monster" that could in effect, threaten the military's institutional prerogatives. Alfred Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp.25-29.

¹⁵*Istoé*, "O general do capuz: comandante que defende SNI fala sozinho sobre o que outros oficiais pensam," 16 May 90: p.23.

¹⁶Stepan, pp.25-29.

¹⁷Stepan, p.26.

¹⁸Alexandre Barros, "The Brazilian Military in the Late 1980's and Early 1990's: Is the Risk of Intervention Gone?" in Louis Goodman, Johanna Mendelson, and Juan Rial eds., *The Military and Democracy: The Future of Civil-Military Relations in Latin America*, (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1990), p.181.

¹⁹Wendy Hunter, "From Confrontation to Accomodation: Civil-Military Relations in Post-Authoritarian Argentina and Chile," Paper presented at the XIX Meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Washington, D.C.; Sept.28-30, 1995; p.6.

²⁰*Istoé*, "Átomos armados," 19 Sept 90: pp.38-40.

²¹Frederick Nunn, *The Time of the Generals: Latin American Professional Militarism in a World Perspective*, (Lincoln: Nebraska, 1992).

²²Patrice Franko, "De Facto Demilitarization: Budget-Driven Downsizing in Latin America," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 36.1 (Spring 1994): p.55.

²³ As J. Samuel Fitch notes, "military governments have not proven to be more cohesive or coherent than their civilian counterparts" Abraham Lowenthal and J. Samuel Fitch, eds., *Armies and Politics in Latin America*, (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1986), p.34. For good first-hand accounts by military generals of the internal divisions created in the senior command because of military rule, see Gláucio Soares, Maria Celina D'Araujo, and Celso Castro, *Os Anos de Chumbo: A Memória Militar Sobre a Repressão*, (Rio de Janeiro: Relume Dumara, 1994).

²⁴The military is primarily to blame for the enormity of the Brazilian debt. Many of its late 70's development projects, considered "pharaohonic" were funded with borrowed cash. By 1990 the total Brazilian debt was calculated at U.S.\$116.2 billion. *World Bank*, World Debt Tables, 1991-1992 (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1992): p.25.

²⁵ *Istoé*, "Cartão de crédito," 27 September 95: pp.24-25.

²⁶ A 1985 United States Information Agency survey noted that the Brazilian armed forces ranked above the

congress, the judiciary, parties and the president in terms of public trust. Cited in Howard Wiarda, *Latin American Politics: A New World of Possibility* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1995), p.98.

²⁷ *Istoé*, "Sindacalização: Disputa mostra que caserna quer discutir salário," 9 May 90: p.24.

²⁸ See Nunn.

²⁹ Admiral Mário César Flores in 1992 wrote: "It would be...of no use [on the part of the military]...to foster grandiose unrealistic and unnecessary strategic concepts...which do not reflect the disposition of society." p.120.

³⁰ Economic as well as political.

³¹ Jorge Domínguez notes: "[A]uthoritarian regimes can provide certain assurances to economic actors for some time but democratic regimes can provide assurances for the long-run provided the government and opposition are committed to the same broad framework of a market economy." Jorge Domínguez, ed., *Technopols: Ideas and Leaders in Freeing Politics and Markets in Latin America in the 1990's*, (forthcoming, 1996).

³² Hunter, "Politicians...," pp.429-431.

³³ *Istoé*, "A cólera das legiões será aplacada?" 28 December 1994: p.107.

³⁴ Ronald Schneider, *Order and Progress: A Political History of Brazil*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), p.365.

³⁵ Franko, p. 42

³⁶ Franko, p.42.

³⁷ *The Economist*, "Let them eat guns," 2 November 1991: p.61. Brazilian GDP for 1991 was \$478 846 (millions of US dollars in constant 1990 prices). *Statistical Yearbook, Fortieth Edition*. (New York: United Nations, 1995), p.155.

³⁸ *Istoé*, "Partido verde em ação," 10 July 91: p.19.

³⁹ Foreign Broadcast Information Service--Latin America (FBIS-LAT) (1992) "Borja Hears Complaints About Military Salaries," *O Globo*, 15 April, in FBIS-LAT-92-076 (20 April): 18.

⁴⁰ *Veja*, "Estamos preparados," 13 March 91: p.86.

⁴¹ Flores, p. 118.

⁴² Hunter, "Politicians...," p.429.

⁴³ *Istoé*, "A caserna bate o pé," 12 June 91: p.12.

⁴⁴ Barros, pp.178-179.

⁴⁵ Francisco Weffort, *Qual Democracia?* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1992), p. 102.

⁴⁶ Nunn, p.118.

⁴⁷ National survey conducted in July of 1991 asked "Do you believe it appropriate for the military to be

granted a salary increase?"

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	NUMBER
Males	64%	25%	11%	539
Females	62%	23%	15%	575
TOTAL	63%	24%	13%	1,114

Source: DataTrês as cited in *Istoé*, 10 July 91: p.21.

⁴⁸Some sampling of reasons given by those polled as to why they favored a military salary increase included such remarks as: "they're also children of God like the rest of us" and "they risk their lives." *Istoé*, "Partido verde em ação," 10 July 91: p. 21.

⁴⁹*Istoé*, "Vespeiro cutucado," 8 May 91: pp.20-21.

⁵⁰*Istoé*, "Partido verde em ação," 10 July 91: p.20.

⁵¹It was noted in 1991, by a capt. in the Reserves, that the Brazilian Army had proportionately more generals than the United States Army; a factor some junior officers felt was partly to blame for the military's financial woes. *Estado de São Paulo*, "Armed Forces Said Experiencing Raison D'etre," 8 December 91: p.4 (as cited in Franko, p.54).

⁵²Lourdes Sola, "Estado, transformação econômica e democratização no Brasil," p. 240, in Lourdes Sola, ed., *Estado, mercado e democracia: Política e economia comparadas*, (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1993).

⁵³*Istoé*, Partido verde em ação, 10 July 91: p. 16.

⁵⁴*Istoé*, Partido verde em ação, 10 July 91: p.16.

⁵⁵See Gláucio Soares, Maria Celina D'Araujo, and Celso Castro, *Visões do Golpe: A Memória Militar Sobre 1964*, (Rio de Janeiro: Relume Dumara, 1994).

⁵⁶Colonel Manuel Rodríguez Solís, *Deontologia Militar (Tratado de los deberes militares)*, comp. Colonel Juan José Solís Morales, (Guatemala: Ministerio de la Defensa Nacional, 1964), p.35.

⁵⁷Zaverucha, p.11.

⁵⁸*Interamerican Development Bank--Annual Report 1993*.

⁵⁹*Istoé*, "A conta do desgaste," 3 June 92: p.26.

⁶⁰Salaries were so low that many officers were forced to work second jobs in order to support themselves and their families. One such officer, an Army captain, admitted having sold sandwiches on the beach during the weekends. *Istoé*, "Partido verde em ação," 10 July 91; p.20.

⁶¹*Istoé*, "A conta do desgaste," 3 June 1992: p.26.

⁶²*Istoé*, "Longe do barulho: oficiais preferem não se envolver na crise," 9 September 92: p.23.

⁶³Interviews with senior officers involved in the 1964 coup reveal that the military's first president, Castello Branco, intended to return power to civilians as early as 1966-67, yet he was out-flanked by the more conservative, hard-line faction of Gen. Costa e Silva. The result, as is well-known, was 18 more years of military government. See Gláucio Soares, Maria Celina D'Araujo, and Celso Castro, *Anos de Chumbo* (noted previously).

⁶⁴See Soares, D'Araujo, Castro, *Visões do golpe*.

⁶⁵Guillermo O'Donnell, "Modernization and Military Coups: Theory, Comparisons, and the Argentine Case," in Lowenthal and Fitch eds., *Armies and Politics in Latin America*, p.113.

⁶⁶An example of the multiple economic problems brought on by the military is that of the national growth rate which fell from 9% in 1974 to 4.8% in 1978, while the foreign debt jumped from (U.S.)\$32 billion to \$43.5 billion in the span of one year ('77-'78), yet the military in 1981 chose to "push aheadalong essentially the same lines." Schneider, pp.277, 289 and 295.

⁶⁷Brazil's economic problems of 1992-1993 were so acute that they were cited as the sole cause for Latin America's regional inflation rate increase. Had Brazil not been included in the regional study, Latin America would have actually experienced an easing in inflation figures. *Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1993, Vol.1*, (Santiago, Chile: United Nations, 1994) p.19.

⁶⁸J. Samuel Fitch, "Armies and Politics in Latin America: 1975-1985," in Lowenthal and Fitch eds., *Armies and Politics in Latin America*, p.32.

⁶⁹Similar to Guillermo O'Donnell's concept of "delegative democracy," whose basic premise is that in some nations the mere election of the president is interpreted as giving the president "carte blanche" to pursue politics the way he or she thinks best. Guillermo O'Donnell, "Democracia delegativa?," *Novos Estudos*, CEBRAP 31 (São Paulo, Oct. 1991) as cited in Francisco Weffort, *Qual Democracia?*, p.105.

⁷⁰President Franco appeared at the 1994 Rio Carnival intoxicated and accompanied by a known prostitute. *Istoé*, 2 March 94: p.30.

⁷¹As outlined earlier by Gen. Newton Cerqueira. A notion contrary to their historical distinct, superior arbiter role under which cooperation with civilian politics was despised as violating elaborate conceptions of prestige and honor.

⁷²Consumer prices in 1992 in Brazil were calculated at 1, 149.1% while in 1993 the situation only worsened rising to 2, 289.1%. To emphasize the impact of these numbers it is essential to note that no Latin American country for those same years had consumer price figures over 60%! *Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean 1993, Vol.1: Economic Trends in Latin American and the Caribbean*, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, (Santiago: United Nations, 1994), p.51.

⁷³The economy was so bad that FHC at first did not want to touch the Economics ministry, opting instead to be the Minister of Foreign Affairs, which actually helped him for his economics role, allowing him to cultivate many international contacts. See Domínguez (forthcoming).

⁷⁴See Domínguez.

⁷⁵*Istoé*, "Quepe no topete," 15 December 1993: pp.23-25.

⁷⁶*Istoé*, "O vermelho e o verde," 12 January 1994: pp.22-24.

⁷⁷The first payment had originally been scheduled for 1993 but had been shelved by the government. *Istoé*, "Fim do regime," 2 March 94: p.67.

⁷⁸*Istoé*, "Fim do regime," 2 March 94: p.67.

⁷⁹*Istoé*, "Itamar chama a guarda," 30 March 94: pp.34-36.

⁸⁰*Istoé*, "Itamar chama a guarda," 30 March 94: pp.34-36.

⁸¹Rouquié, p.285.

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- ⁸²*Istoé*, "Em busca da doutrina," 6 September 95: pp.26-27.
- ⁸³In 1991-1992, barracks began sending soldiers home after half days because the military couldn't afford to provide lunch. Franko, p.52.
- ⁸⁴Joel Migdal, "A Model of State-Society Relations," in Howard Wiarda, ed., *New Directions in Comparative Politics* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), p.55.
- ⁸⁵Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), p.1.
- ⁸⁶Migdal, p.55.
- ⁸⁷See Domínguez.
- ⁸⁸*Istoé*, "Forças mal armadas," 6 September 95: p.28.
- ⁸⁹Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, *Economic Panorama of Latin America: 1995*, (Santiago, Chile: United Nations, 1995), p.27.
- ⁹⁰*Istoé*, "Cartão de crédito," 27 September 95: pp.24-25.
- ⁹¹Illustrative of this seeming "agreement" is the apparent lack of any government investigation into numerous discoveries, during Collor's presidency, of mass graves dating back to the military regime. *Istoé*, 3 April 94: p.26.
- ⁹²Cardoso's father was a military general and even though Cardoso was arrested and exiled to Chile for three years in 1964, he was allowed to return and given the freedom to establish his own opposition think tank, which would most likely not be possible without the immunity gained from family ties.
- ⁹³Brian Loveman, "Human Rights and Protecting the *Patria*: An (Almost) Military Perspective." Paper presented at the XIX Congress of the Latin American Studies Association, Washington, D.C.; Sept. 28-30, 1995; p.7.
- ⁹⁴*Istoé*, "Desaparecidos entram em cena," 6 September 95: p.24.
- ⁹⁵*Istoé*, "Desaparecidos entram em cena," 6 September 95: p.26.
- ⁹⁶*Istoé*, 2 September 92: p.20.
- ⁹⁷See Daniel Zirker and Marvin Henberg. "Amazônia: Democracy, Ecology, and Brazilian Military Prerogatives in the 1990's." *Armed Forces and Society* (Winter 1994), pp.259-281.
- ⁹⁸Hunter, "From Confrontation...", p. 3
- ⁹⁹J.Samuel Fitch. "Military Role Beliefs in Latin American Democracies: Context, Ideology and Doctrine in Argentina and Ecuador." Paper delivered at the XIX Congress of the Latin American Studies Association, Washington, DC; Sept. 28-30, 1995; p.11.
- ¹⁰⁰Fitch, p.2.

CHAPTER 4 DEFINING DEMOCRACY IN ARGENTINA VIA CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

In analyzing Brazilian civil-military relations, the measuring standard was the United States model of a professional military subordinated to democratic civilian control. However, as the Brazilian case illustrated, the democratic discourse is not uniform worldwide. An analysis of Argentina reinforces that understanding. Argentine political scientist Atilio Boron has noted that nowhere in the Argentine constitution can one even find the word "democracy."¹ Ultimately what has emerged in both Brazil and Argentina is an amalgam of liberal democratic principles adapted (mutated?) to a particular political reality. In this environment, some elements of a democracy are accepted and implemented while others remain alienated as symbols of weakness.

In Argentina, President Raúl Alfonsín was elected in 1983 with a commitment to open democracy and a mandate of bringing the military to justice. His campaign platform declared: "Democracy cannot live in this country while the Armed Forces set themselves as the arbiters of sovereignty, and with an Armed Forces that place their own corporate interests above their professional obligations."² The first post-authoritarian executive, Alfonsín hoped to create a strong democratic foundation for the future of Argentina. This new Argentina, he hoped, was to be imbued with respect for the separation of powers and with intrinsic military subordination. Thus, in Alfonsín's perception, civil-military bargaining would not be a necessity. Severely fractured, the disgraced and humiliated armed forces appeared, in 1983, to be in no position to contest this new executive outlook.

Alfonsín's optimism hinged on one key issue: the speedy and neat resolution of human rights trials. Without it, nothing else would be possible. The dilemma for Alfonsín was that his conception of justice would only prosecute the men in charge (the military *junta* members) during the *Proceso de Reorganización Nacional* and amnesty the vast majority of lower and middle-ranking officers whom he felt were simply following orders. However for the thousands of families of those who had been kidnapped, tortured and

murdered in the quest for ideological conformity, orders to terrorize were not warranted and could not be excused. These families clamored for vindication; for the punishment of the murderers of their individual son, daughter, parent, and so on. President Alfonsín, adamant about eliminating any hint of elite "deal-making," abided by the separation of powers ultimately allowing the multiplicity of civilian legal claims through the judiciary to determine the course of his presidency. Ironically, the national zeal to punish the military establishment re-united the divided armed forces and led to a succession of military rebellions that ultimately forced Alfonsín, reluctantly, to the civil-military bargaining table. In a nation still reeling from the nightmare of the military government, this "surrender," on the part of the president, coupled with his failing economics was disastrous. Eventually, the exigencies of faithfulness to democratic rule took their toll on Raúl Alfonsín leading him to retire in 1989.

Alfonsín's self-defeating passion for democracy ultimately displayed his many weaknesses and led, in part, to his collapse as a viable national leader. His successor, Carlos Menem, learned from those mistakes and has taken a determined reverse course. Menem has actively negotiated with the armed forces, circumventing laws created to curb such a practice. His revisionist approach to the military appears to be one more example of his political psyche. Viewing politics as a zero-sum game, Menem sees centralized power as the ultimate end and democracy as a mere detail. Conforming to the O'Donnell delegative democracy model, Menem favors accomplishments, rather than democracy. He sees these as the ultimate measuring stick of his presidency. The public appears to agree, as he was elected to a second term in 1995.

4.1 The Presidency of Raúl Alfonsín: Prioritizing Democracy

Elected in 1983, Raúl Alfonsín faced a military that was at its lowest point in Argentine history. Economic failure, rampant internal divisiveness, and the shame of the

Malvinas fiasco had taken a heavy toll on the armed forces.³ Moreover, public condemnation of the armed establishment was intense. Alfonsín realized that this was the ideal time to eliminate the military's "reserve domain" of power within Argentine society. Negotiation with the armed forces, Alfonsín hoped, would soon become a thing of the past. His goal, as well as that of the nation, was the subordination of the armed forces to civilian authority and the creation of a vibrant democracy; a relatively novel concept to the Argentine people.⁴

Shortly after he took office, Alfonsín began his quest for greater military accountability. He reduced the defense budget by half, forced two-thirds of the army generals and one-third of the navy admirals into retirement, and discharged three-quarters of the conscripts. In addition, he cut the salaries of officers and NCO's. He also created a civilian Ministry of Defense overseeing the different service branches. As a result of Alfonsín's initiative, the National Security Doctrine which had originally fed the flames of military intervention in the 1970's was repealed.⁵ This did not, necessarily, represent the emergence of democratic civil-military relations, yet as Samuel Fitch noted, "the lack of a clear anti-democratic alternative [was] at least a modest step forward relative to the 1960's and 1970's."⁶

For the elimination of the National Security Doctrine to have any true effect, Alfonsín and his party, the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR), realized that any internal military policing function needed to be excised. The Internal Service Regulations of the Argentine Army in 1983 still defined the military's role as:

...safeguarding the highest national interests of the Nation...to defend its honor, its territory, the Constitution of the Argentine Nation and its law, guaranteeing the maintenance of internal peace and insuring the normal operation of its institutions.⁷

The highly subjective definition of "internal peace" had been used too often as an excuse for military coups. Thus, debate began in 1984 to create a National Defense Law to clear up any dangerous ambiguity. The law, which was eventually passed in 1988, "stated

unequivocally that internal security and political intelligence was banned for the armed forces."⁸ Toward this same end, Alfonsín also replaced all the military officers in the nation's intelligence agency, the Secretariat of State Intelligence (*Secretaría de Inteligencia de Estado*--SIDE) with civilians.

4.1.1 Human Rights: The Burden of History Becomes Heavier

In one of his most anticipated post-authoritarian acts, Alfonsín repealed the military's self-amnesty shortly after taking office. The President viewed this decision as essential, as only through a trial of the *Proceso* leaders would the nation rid itself of the burden of the past. Unfortunately for Alfonsín, that same act released the collective repression of the nation and ultimately led to his political demise.

Alfonsín was cognizant of the special role in Argentine politics and society that the military had occupied for years. He foresaw that a military hunted by civilians for human rights violations would only close in on itself and become defensive; defeating the psychological purpose of the trials. The president felt that the military needed to self-examine its role in the "dirty war" to purge itself of the seeds of evil that had led it to commit such atrocities. Thus, he initially allowed military courts to determine the fate of its own officers. However, the military hearings proved problematic since many officers considered the eradication of subversion as the only "victory" of the entire *Proceso*. This was clearly evident in official military literature published as late as 1983. In what the military entitled its "Final Document of the Military *Junta* Regarding the War Against Subversion and Terrorism: The Fundamental Concepts," the armed forces stated:

It is addressed, first of all, to us, the people of the nation victim of an aggression [subversion] it did not deserve, invaluable and dedicated participant in the *final victory*.⁹ (emphasis mine)

The military courts were unable to reach a decision, but nevertheless concluded "that the 'orders' issued by the *juntas* during the *Proceso* to combat terrorism were 'unobjectionable.'"¹⁰

Faced with the military's judicial intransigence, Alfonsín created the National Commission on the Disappearances of Persons (CONADEP). This body began the arduous process of civilian trials of senior officers accused of human rights atrocities. Eventually five of the nine military junta members were found guilty and imprisoned.

4.1.1.1 The Media Factor and Pandora's Box

The demise of the *Proceso* also represented the end of media censorship. A long-restrained press hungry for the truth that it had been denied, televised the *junta's* trials and delved deeper into the buried facts of the cases ultimately discovering multiple tales of military atrocities.¹¹ The very visible defiance with which many of the accused conducted themselves during the hearings along with the descriptions of torture and murder pressured the nation's representatives to push for the extension of the human rights trials to junior officers. Such a move, both Alfonsín and the military realized, had incredible ramifications. Alfonsín had felt that only the *Proceso* leadership was truly culpable as the rest of the military was simply carrying out orders. However, gruesome revelations brought to the national attention whipped the populace into a frenzy.¹²

Since officers had been rotated frequently during the dirty war to avoid prolonged contact with "subversives," hundreds were implicated in the repression.¹³ Alfonsín, struggling to control the nation's shaky economy, decided that the democratic course of action he had allowed to unfold now required some control. In December of 1986 he submitted to Congress a *Punto Final* bill (Spanish expression meaning "final stop"). This bill imposed a 60 day deadline for submission of any new military indictments.

4.1.2 Military Factionalism: Irreconcilable Differences?

Unfortunately for Alfonsín, *Punto Final* backfired dealing the civilian government a harsh blow. Constrained by a 60 day time period, civilians rushed to the courts to file law-suits against as many officers as possible. In the span of those two months, 400 officers were indicted. This occurrence exacerbated the military's fears that it would be decimated. Therefore, unlike the Brazilian military, clear-cut factions that had been dividing the armed forces since the time of the *Proceso* became extreme. Mid to lower officers who were most implicated in the human rights violations felt abandoned by the senior command which appeared more concerned with keeping the military unified.¹⁴ The senior leadership realized that there were few solutions for the trial dilemma. A concerted military coup would have had little if any civilian support, thus further discrediting an already vilified institution in the public's eye. Moreover, the senior commanders, like most Argentines, considered the *Proceso* enough meddling in civilian affairs. They wanted to put it behind them so as to repair the wounds within their institution.

Without active senior support, many of the accused mid-level officers instead sought leadership in the fundamentalist faction of the armed forces. The fundamentalists viewed the world as a battle between good and evil, where the threat of subversion was omnipresent. Their mission was the restore a messianic-like "Truth." The fundamentalist leaders, Lt. Col. Aldo Rico and Col. Muhamed Seineldín, desired a stronger military voice in Argentina's foreign policy.¹⁵ They yearned for a tutelary role where the armed forces would be actively involved in government initiative. Nevertheless, most of the officers that sought refuge amongst the fundamentalists upon passage of the *Punto Final* law did not accept the group's dogma, but felt that it was the only voice of support and defense available within the armed forces "family."¹⁶

4.1.2.1 The Fundamentalist/*Carapintada* Rebellions: Enter Bargaining

The fundamentalist faction eventually mutinied during Holy Week of 1987. The senior leadership, many of whom agreed with the basic principle of the rebellion-- termination of human rights accusations--did not participate, but resisted putting down the mutiny. Unlike the coup of 1976, the mutineers had no intention of overthrowing government, particularly since they would have had no public support and most likely no institutional backing from the armed forces as a whole. Instead theirs was a forceful show of solidarity among officers who felt they were being deprived of recognition for their valor during what they perceived as a just war. Rebellion leader, Lt. Col. Aldo Rico stated "To all Argentines of good faith: Do not be fooled, this is not a coup, it is an internal Armed Forces problem."¹⁷ Yet, it was a "problem" that very much was related to the civilian government.

Despite massive civilian public demonstrations against the uprising, Alfonsín appears to have bargained with the military. Soon after the incident, Congress passed the "Due Obedience Law" which granted judicial immunity to nearly all mid-level officers. Patrice McSherry, echoing the sentiment of many Argentines at the time, notes that Alfonsín may not have needed to accede to military demands.¹⁸ However, Alfonsín's rationale may have been two-fold. First, he had never wanted to try the lower echelons of the military and second: if he refused to cooperate with the armed forces at that juncture, they would remain a thorn in his side and divert his attention away from equally, if not more, pressing issues such as the economy which during the Easter Week rebellion was undergoing a series of "draconian" shocks.¹⁹

As was the case for the civilians with the trials of the officers, once Alfonsín began the bargaining process it was difficult to control the pent-up demands on the part of the fundamentalist faction. Between 1987 and 1988 two more uprisings occurred, yet only the latter was of any real consequence. With passage of the National Defense Law in 1988, the

military's internal security role was, for the most part, officially eliminated. This only exacerbated fundamentalist antagonism. As a result, in Dec. of 1988, the largest of the three mutinies erupted that had as goals the pardon of all imprisoned *Proceso* participants, higher salaries, and the expulsion of numerous senior officers. Once again Alfonsín negotiated with the armed forces. Shortly, thereafter they received a salary increase and the Army Chief of Staff was removed.

To understand why Alfonsín seemed to so easily accede to military demands one needs to examine the greater socio-political and economic picture in 1988. Inflation was nearing 400% a year and early political polls predicted a Peronist party victory in the 1989 presidential elections. Both of these factors, combined with the fact that theirs was the first democratically-elected government in years, led to a "sense of desperation" within Alfonsín's Radical party and in the nation as a whole.²⁰ With the government under mounting pressure to resolve the nation's problems, the rebellious faction added to the chaos, yet it was also the easiest problem to deal with. With a few concessions, Alfonsín resolved one dilemma and could move onto the next. Of course, it is important to note that even though the overburdened Alfonsín conceded to most of the military requests, he did not agree to the mutineers' central demand: full pardons for all *Proceso* officers.

4.1.2.2 "Catch-22"

The bitter irony of the human rights trials and the resultant rebellions was that had there been no wave of indictments of junior officers, the Argentine armed forces would most likely have accommodated themselves to obeying constitutional authorities. The senior leadership, and the majority of the officer corps, unlike the fundamentalist faction, was more interested in mending the divisions of its *Proceso* past than in contesting civilian prerogatives. This understanding was succinctly reflected in the comments of one Argentine officer in 1985:

The armed forces [should stick to] an ascetic, integrated professionalism, [to] their professional tasks....The armed forces should not govern; [they] can't govern; [they] don't know how to govern....As many times as they have tried, the military always ends up losing the most. When [the armed forces] dedicate themselves to their professional tasks, [they] don't have time for other things.²¹

Besides not being able to govern, the Malvinas debacle demonstrated to the world that the Argentine military was not even capable of winning a conventional war; the basic purpose of any armed forces. The military command felt their institution needed to re-focus on that essential mission. The resignation brought on by this realization explains, in part, why the armed forces accepted drastic cuts in their size and budget without much complaint. Alfred Stepan elaborates:

Empirically such an absence of military contestation would be most likely to occur within the overall context of a sociopolitical situation that approximates the "restoration" path of redemocratization. In such a path the military might accept a reduction of their prerogatives without contestation if such a pattern of low prerogatives were seen as an integral part, by both the military and the civilian leaders, of the overall model of governance and of civil-military relations that is being restored.²²

Yet, Alfonsín was incapable of maintaining that sense of shared purpose that Stepan alludes to. The president's respect for the separation of powers between the executive and the judiciary restricted his control of the course of "redemocratization." Allowing the human rights trials to multiply, against his personal judgment, he (as the embodiment of civilian society) attacked a "high prerogative" area of the military. The trials, in combination with constant verbal assaults in the media and on the streets, led the military to close in upon itself; to prepare for what many within the institution perceived as their "last stand."

Ultimately, Alfonsín's sense of being a democratic pioneer would cost him his presidency. He had refused to intervene in the proceedings of the judiciary until it was too late. Wendy Hunter, in an analysis that seems particularly apropos, has paralleled civil-military relations in Argentina with the international relations model of the "chicken game."

Extrapolating Hunter's model, one concludes that had Alfonsín pre-empted the civilian judicial onslaught by limiting the trials to just the military *junta* initially, he may never have needed to accommodate the military ("to swerve"). In not doing so he was eventually forced to bargain with the military. Yet the military itself "swerved" in this scenario because the uprisings tore away at its foundation of discipline and hierarchy and threatened its future as an integrated institution.²³ Nevertheless, in the face of a broken economy and with little national respect, Alfonsín resigned in 1989 and opened the door for the election of a Peronist, Carlos Saúl Menem.

4.2 The Presidency of Carlos Saúl Menem: Prioritizing Accomplishments

Carlos Menem was elected in a period of incredible uncertainty. The economy was plummeting, the military was challenging civilian directives, and with the end of the Cold War, a "new world order" was on the horizon. Menem interpreted most of the problems he inherited from Alfonsín as a product of indecision and lack of strong leadership.²⁴ Menem's particular conception of power was steeped in a corporatist mentality that required near absolute centralized control. He viewed the Argentine presidency as a vehicle to move the nation forward, however not necessarily towards greater democracy. His personal, almost authoritarian leadership, would not have been possible in 1983, yet by the late 1980's and early 90's national instability was so severe that drastic measures were called for. The problem for Argentina, however, is that the crisis of the early 90's has since disappeared, yet Menem's authoritarianism continues.

4.2.1 Menem's Political Identity: Keys to the Kingdom

For any analysis of truly contemporary civil-military relations in Argentina, one must first understand the political psyche of Carlos Menem. Unlike the Brazilian

experience, he has been his nation's only post-Cold War president. For that reason alone he would warrant a deeper discussion. Yet, Menem is more noteworthy not for his endurance in the executive, rather for how he has maintained that power. Once this becomes clear, one will be able to see the rationale for his dealings with the military.

Numerous Argentine scholars have noted that Menem represents an eccentric mix of the old and the new in politics. He displays strong populist tendencies, derived from his Peronist party background, while at the same time he promotes neo-liberal ideology. He has become a world "player" in terms of international politics and business, yet displays some of the most conservative tendencies traditionally associated with the "backwoods" provinces of Argentina. If one were to label Menem, perhaps the best description would be that coined by Atilio Boron who referred to the president as a "neo-conservative."²⁵

Menem's "neo-conservatism" may appear internally contradictory, yet there is a strong central belief that undergirds Menemista politics: personalism and a Thomistic/corporatist philosophy. Upon close examination, Menem appears to have transplanted many of the traits of the traditional regional *caudillo* (rural landed patriarchs who controlled political and economic life in most of Latin America) to the national level. Boron outlines the president's understanding of politics and his role vis-à-vis society in three levels:

- 1.Society is a natural organism where all the parts must co-habitate in harmony. If not there will be anarchy.
- 2.Social conflict is merely an expression of personal interests clashing. There are no 'structural contradictions' or 'unresolvable antagonisms.'
- 3.No solution is possible without approval of the center.²⁶

This tripartite model has fit neatly into the uncertainty of a post-Cold War Argentina, with the levels building upon themselves.

Like the *caudillo* who resolved any problem in his province personally, Menem has taken it upon himself to solve the issues of the military, the economy, and social unrest. He has bypassed the institutional support that is available to him through his party (which currently holds a majority in congress) and defied the authority of the legal system

to "go it alone." Apparently feeling that the world had drastically changed since Alfonsín assumed the presidency in 1983, Menem chose to accommodate the transforming reality. Rather than abiding by notions of democracy which were not ingrained in Argentine society-- and which seemed, to Menem at least, to have brought about Alfonsín's downfall--Menem sought instead to apply his own brand of politics to the chaotic world of the immediate post-Cold War. As international relations theorist David Campbell describes, the political vacuum of the time allowed for such an approach. Campbell writes:

The nexus between the moment of these events and the power of this mode of analysis is to be found in the contention that we live in a distinctive political time marked by the absence of a corresponding political space; that is to say, the activity of politics is no longer (assuming it once was) concomitant with the enclosure of politics (the state). Indeed, these changes and our ability to comprehend them is both made possible by, and helps constitute, the political contours of the late-modern period; contours that might be characterized in terms of the globalization of contingency, the erasure of the markers of certainty, and the rarefaction of political discourse....This globalization of contingency, this irruption of contingency, not only renders problematic the traditional spatializations of power (e.g. states, alliances, political parties), it renders problematic the discursive practices which have made those spatializations of power possible.²⁷

Menem has ruled largely by decree which is compatible with his notion of society as having no "unresolvable antagonisms." The president feels that only he, as the center of national political life mandated by the electorate, can solve any problem. This sentiment is only deepened with greater strides toward complete neo-liberalism. The "downsizing" of the state and the lack of a doctrine of government arbitration make him appear to be "the" axis upon which political society resolves.²⁸ Finally, like the *caudillo*, maintenance of his personalistic rule requires doling out of privileges; in other words, clientelism. He is known as a "good payer of political favors;" a reputation that has become evident in his interaction with the armed forces.²⁹

4.2.2 Menem: Personality v. Institution

Menem has effectively silenced the military issue in Argentina, yet his methods for doing so may leave an unwanted legacy. He has not only bargained for political "space," as Alfonsín reluctantly was forced to do in the end of his regime, he has, in effect, consolidated the military around him as an individual rather than around the office of the president. His example of decree rule, along with his concessions to the armed forces, cannot in any way serve as a model for democratic professionalism (obedience to democracy and civilian authority) among the men in arms.

The military, both its leadership and the fundamentalist faction, looked to Menem in 1989 as the resolver of their long-standing complaint regarding human rights trials, yet for different reasons. The senior leadership wanted the issue settled hoping that the fundamentalists (also known as *carapintadas*), who had been tearing the institution apart, would then fade from prominence. The command corps realized that the rebellious officers resented any senior efforts of accommodation on the issue of the trials. That resentment translated into a serious discipline problem as the natural order of the military hierarchy was threatened. Meanwhile, the leaders of the fundamentalist faction expected the resolution of the trial dilemma to be a first step toward a greater voice in government, in other words, active tutelage.

4.2.2.1 Military Amnesty

The *carapintadas* sought to gain Menem's favor by making it known that they would "defend his victory with arms." How much this threat helped Menem's campaign is questionable, however it may have instilled fear in the Radical party congressmen who would have to deal with Menem as president (much like Franco's Real plan executive-military alliance in Brazil).³⁰ As a consequence of this military backing and a reflection of

the president's personalist approach, Menem, soon after his election, issued two sweeping pardons of nearly all the *Proceso* officers, imprisoned or under indictment. What Alfonsín had feared doing because of both a respect for democracy and of possible electoral repercussions, Menem quickly dealt with.

The rationale for Menem's pardons is clearly understood using Boron's tripartite model. First, Menem viewed society as a natural organism. In this organism all the entities must co-habitate, yet within their individual spheres. The military, both in the *Proceso* and during its various mutinies had overstepped its "place" in society. It had tried to effect civilian policy. On the other hand, civilians had overextended their bounds in hunting the armed forces through the civil judiciary.

Second: Menem felt that he could resolve any social problem because all problems resulted from confusion and were not representative of a structural defect (there could be no structural defect because society was an "organism"). Therefore, he did not view his pardon as a symptom of continued military dominance, rather (in simplistic terms) he saw it as a solution to a misunderstanding. Menem, like the Hobbesian Leviathan, was looking out for the greater good of the whole; in this case Argentina.

Third: No solution would be possible without Menem's involvement. Parties and the other institutions of democracy had failed during Alfonsín's tenure to resolve the lingering military problem. Menem's intervention, more importantly than resolving the issue, affirmed his "essentiality" in Argentine politics. Like the *caudillo's* ranch where no decision could be made without the *caudillo's* cognizance, Argentina was Menem's "ranch." Menem would take credit for a grand accomplishment on the part of the military, yet he was also prepared to bear the brunt of civilian hostility. Regardless, in Menem's understanding both sides' reactions would serve the same purpose: they would re-affirm his preeminence in Argentina's existence, casting an imposing shadow on the congress, parties, and the judiciary.

Beyond all the machinations of the Menem political psyche, the president was afforded political maneuverability in issuing the military amnesty because of the sentiment of the nation in 1989-1990. A 1990 national opinion poll found that 70.6% of the population of greater Buenos Aires disapproved of the pardons, yet the survey also highlighted Argentine's more immediate concerns. With inflation skyrocketing--1800% for 1990 and national un- and underemployment at an unprecedented 16%³¹--the military was low on the list of people's priorities (table 4.1).

Table 4.1

Question: Which of the following problems do you consider most grave?

December 1990--Federal Capitol and Greater Buenos Aires

	Capitol %	Greater Buenos Aires %
Low salaries	27.6	26.8
Military issue	00.5	03.3
Administrative corruption	21.6	18.0
Foreign debt	05.0	02.5
Education	13.0	10.0
Inflation	04.0	10.3
Bankruptcy	03.8	09.0
Human Rights	02.5	01.5
Unemployment	14.3	10.3
Drugs	04.3	07.5
Health	03.5	01.0
Total	100	100

Source: Rosendo Fraga, *Menem y la cuestión militar*, (Buenos Aires: Centro de Estudios Unión para la Nueva Mayoría, 1991), p.149.

Once the pardons were issued, military contention was muted. Fundamentalist leaders such as Lt. Col. Aldo Rico and Col. Muhamed Seineldín had hoped to build a political movement within the military upon the general amnesty, however both were soon disappointed. As the senior military leadership had been aware of for years, the *carapintadas'* real cohesion had resided in the fear of imprisonment for what they felt was a just war; not in any nationalistic/tutelary political ideology. Emblematic of this sentiment, interviews conducted by Samuel Fitch in 1985 and again in 1992 of over 100 Argentine officers found that none favored the "guardian of national security/tutelary model." Furthermore, only 1% in 1985 supported a "conditional subordination model," with that

figure dwindling to 0% in 1992.³² One officer, in a 1992 interview, rejected the potential for future military intervention in Argentina with a reference to the complexity of the new "globalized" world:

This is not the role of the armed forces, not in Argentina. [These are] different situations, different levels of culture, different transitions, and different political classes. The Argentine military has been burned; they want nothing to do with politics.³³

The officers may feel that they want nothing to do with politics, but Menem has made them very much a part of his political agenda.

4.2.2.2 The Military: Vehicle for Menem's Political Identity

Concurrent with his neo-liberal economic philosophy, Menem has reduced the size, budget, and holdings of the armed forces. U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament statistics calculated a decline in the military budget from 3.9% of the Argentine GDP in 1989 to 1.9% of GDP in 1991.³⁴ Menem has also eliminated the national conscription system and sold much of the military's property using the money to off-set military debt and to modernize a stream-lined armed forces. Such presidential moves, particularly the elimination of the draft, would appear to threaten traditional military prerogatives. Yet, a 1992 poll indicated that only 4% of Argentine officers viewed Menem negatively, in stark contrast to the 88% disapproval rating that Alfonsín mustered during his term.³⁵ What explains this great disproportion? The explanation lies in Menem's political philosophy, much of which is based on a system of bargains (favors with the implicit understanding that loyalty is required).

Considering himself the axis upon which Argentine society revolves, Menem has pursued a series of negotiations with the armed forces that have, in the words of Patrice McSherry created a "guardian democracy via executive-military alliance." Unlike the

Brazilian situation with its still cohesive and respected military, most Argentines do not view the armed forces positively.³⁶ New revelations recently about the "dirty war," saturating the media on a daily basis, have done nothing to ameliorate that situation.³⁷ Moreover, most scholars agree that the Argentine armed forces, once the issue of human rights trials was over, purged itself of most, if not all, its fundamentalist/interventionist faction. In such a national context and with such an internal institutional mentality it would seem highly unlikely that any coup, whether a concerted effort or a "wildcat-type" affair would have any chance of success.³⁸ As Paul Zagorski notes:

Risk-benefit analysis has clearly swung against intervention. Today if the armed forces disagree with the government on policy, those disagreements do not entail the survival of the armed forces as an institution. Nothing on the horizon has the salience for the military that the rights issue did. Nothing is likely to induce the same degree of unity of military opinion. Nor is any other issue liable to evoke a similar willingness among officers to risk their careers and undermine military obedience. Military unrest may have compelled the government to back down on the rights trials, but it was also a wrenching experience for the armed forces themselves. Few officers seem willing to repeat it.³⁹

As proof of this analysis, a 1990 rebellion by fundamentalist officers who wanted a greater say in government policy was quickly crushed by the military itself.

Contrary to Brazil, even contention on budgetary issues is low-key. The military in Brazil adapted to an interest-group existence because it could still appeal to the public as a symbol of order and relative purity. However, the Argentine armed forces do not have that option. With no desire of intervention and with little public appeal, the armed forces appear to have very little leverage with which to bargain with civil society. Yet, Menem has pursued a series of acts that have on the one hand cushioned the budget cuts and more ominously, on the other hand, centralized greater power under the president.

4.2.3 Negotiating a Civil-Military "Intimacy"

The political world according to Menem has walked a fine line between democracy and authoritarianism. Much of Menem's actions in the executive, such as his hundreds of decrees, have clearly violated democratic norms. His interaction with the military has only added to the sense of authoritarianism. On a pure level of appearances, Menem has taken nearly every opportunity to both socialize with and praise the military establishment. He has gone so far as regarding the dirty war (a period during which he spent 5 years as a political prisoner) a valiant and noble endeavor. Whereas Alfonsín was seen as the alien enforcer of civilian mandates, Menem's social approach has opened very basic avenues of civil-military communication. This new intimacy has been formalized with numerous civil-military deals and manipulations that cast even greater doubt on the future of democracy in Argentina.

4.2.3.1 Internal Intelligence

Menem's efforts in the area of internal intelligence have been particularly troubling in the context of a nation that still mourns the deaths of thousands labeled as subversives. The issue of national intelligence is one of distinct resonance in all nations with authoritarian histories. In Brazil, President Collor's disbandment of the military-run SNI appeared to release society from one more bond of military repression. Of course, as has been shown, the shuffling of armed forces personnel neutralized much of the effect of that political move. In Argentina, with its much more violent past, President Alfonsín eliminated the remnants of military presence in the Secretariat of State Intelligence (Secretaría de Inteligencia de Estado--SIDE) by replacing all of the military personnel with civilians. Menem, however, has reversed that decision and has once again appointed military personnel to many posts within SIDE. This remilitarization has not been restricted

to the lower-levels of the internal security community. Menem also appointed a retired army colonel to the position of Subsecretary of the Interior⁴⁰ and a retired Navy officer as second in command at SIDE.⁴¹

4.2.3.2 Internal Security

The increased military presence in SIDE has been paralleled by a re-introduction of an internal security role for the armed forces which began soon after Menem's inauguration. Facing incredible hyperinflation and civil unrest, particularly in the form of looting, Menem issued Decree #392 which authorized a military combat role to suppress what the order ambiguously termed "internal commotion."⁴² Reflective of the trepidation still associated with any hint of a military return to domestic vigilance, members of both the Peronist and Radical parties vehemently criticized this move.

In the wake of the terrorist bombing of the Jewish-Argentine Mutual Association in July of 1994, Menem once again decreed a greater domestic function for the military. His creation of the Secretariat of Security and Protection of the Community, or the *Supersecretaría* as it is more widely known, incorporated both civilian and military intelligence, despite legal restrictions on internal intelligence by the military. Although formally a body for the combat of international terrorism, the *Supersecretaría's* activities, Patrice McSherry notes, in reality, "have been directed toward worker protest and other domestic conflicts."⁴³ Moreover, the head of the *Supersecretaría* is a former Air Force officer and on its payroll there are numerous retired *Proceso* officers. Yet, the vital feature of the *Supersecretaría* is that it was created by Menem, without congressional approval, and is solely under his personal authority.

4.2.3.3 Manipulating the Budget

Numerous scholars have concluded that the military in nations such as Argentina or Brazil no longer are factors in politics because of decreased budgetary outlays.⁴⁴ However, as the Brazilian case highlighted, official budget numbers can be a deceptive indicator of the civil-military balance. Menem has shown that he is well aware of that phenomenon and has manipulated the national appropriations in line with the military's renewed internal role. The military budget shrunk from 3.9% of GDP in 1989 when Menem was inaugurated to 1.9% of GDP in 1992, during a period of impressive growth in domestic output making the military's appropriation smaller than the statistics bear out.⁴⁵ Like Collor in Brazil who maintained a "secret budget," Menem has compensated for the military financial shortfall by increasing the security community's outlays over the objections of the congress. In 1992 SIDE received (U.S.)\$115 million and in the difficult economic time of 1995 that figure had risen to (U.S.)\$250 million; 30% more than authorized by the legislature. By contrast, the highest allocation to SIDE during Alfonsín's tenure was (U.S.)\$54.5 million in 1989.⁴⁶

4.2.4 "Unequal Civilian Accommodation"

While Fernando Collor and Itamar Franco both looked to the military as a national ally in dealing with a fractious party structure in the legislature, Menem's rationale for appealing to the armed forces cannot be based upon the same institutional weaknesses. Argentina has long had a history of strong party identification, rather than the self-interested, rational choice system Wendy Hunter describes Brazilian parties as. Furthermore, Menem's party currently holds a majority in the congress. Instead Menem's negotiations with the military draw upon his political thought. He did not merely re-introduce the military to an internal security function, he did so making sure it was under

his direct control. Menem now had the physical power to mediate social "misunderstandings" so as to return Argentine society to its state of "harmony."

Of course, the great dilemma for Argentina is the future of Menemista policies vis-à-vis the armed forces. Menem's *caudillo*-like approach to democracy plays into the mind-set of many within military. Atilio Boron's tripartite model outlining Menemista thought emphasizes the president's Aristotelian understanding of democracy. Menem, unlike his predecessor Alfonsín, appears to believe in a definition of democracy very similar to the one proffered by Argentine Colonel Hugo Pascarelli in justifying the "dirty war."

Pascarelli believed that "democracy, true democracy, was based on natural law and order; egalitarianism debased democracy, for it leveled society and ignored the natural differences between human beings."⁴⁷ Accordingly, Menem, through decree rule, has stunted any movement toward a democratic professional military model where both democracy and civilian authority are respected equally. At best, the Argentine armed forces can be said to represent a classical professionalist framework where civilian leadership is obeyed, yet democracy has little authority. More disturbing, however, is the potential for the armed forces to assume a "praetorian guard" nature around the individual figure of Menem.

Alfred Stepan, writing in 1988, forewarned of the dangers of such an occurrence:

Another vulnerability of the 'unequal civilian accommodation' position is that a polity could become transformed into a nondemocratic civilian-headed garrison state because of exploitation by the executive of the prerogatives the military retained in the system. An additional basic weakness of this position is that the lack of regime autonomy from the military implied in such high military prerogatives could delegitimize the new democracy in the eyes of civilian and even political society.⁴⁸

The long-term consequences of this "unequal civilian accommodation" remain to be seen.

4.3 Conclusion

Both Raúl Alfonsín and Carlos Menem, regardless of their contrasting definitions of leadership or democracy, shared a commonality: they both bargained with the armed

forces. Alfonsín attempted to avoid such a scenario, yet he was a victim of his nation's history. His was a time of revolution; an imprisoned people had overthrown their captors and now demanded retribution. Alfonsín learned the difficult lesson that in periods of revolution traditional concepts may become too inflexible to deal with the changing reality. Alfonsín pledged faithfulness to a lofty goal of democratic respect for the separation of powers and for the will of the people, yet even in what is considered the "model for the world's democracies," the United States, that obedience is at times sacrificed when there is a call for strong leadership (Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War and FDR in WWII to cite just two examples).

Carlos Menem learned from Alfonsín's weaknesses and has slowly erased much of Argentina's international pariah status through his aggressive neo-liberal project. Under Menem, Argentina entered the MERCOSUL trade bloc and has posted decent economic figures, although there have been periodic shocks. Nevertheless, one must ask at what cost this success came at. His sweeping amnesty for the *Proceso* officers nullified the Argentine judiciary's authority and his extensive rule by decree, rather than through the congress, has done little for solidifying concepts of "checks and balances." Moreover, by reestablishing an internal role for his armed forces, which were much more weak and vulnerable than their Brazilian military counterparts, Menem has sacrificed a golden opportunity to establish, perhaps permanently, a model of democratic professionalism within the armed forces. Instead, his belief in delegative democracy or "getting the job done," has resulted in an unsettling centralization of power. In terms of civil-military relations, this has resulted in, to use the McSherry term once again, a "guardian democracy" where the memory of authoritarianism lingers on.

¹Atilio Boron, "Los 'Axiomas de Anillaco.'" La visión de la política en el pensamiento y en la acción de Carlos Saúl Menem" in *El Menemato* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Letra Buena, 1991), p.58.

²William C. Smith, *Authoritarianism and the Crisis of the Argentine Political Economy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), p.269.

³From 1971 to 1985 Argentina's external debt had increased by \$41 billion; with capital flight representing 63.3% of this rise. Smith, p. 271.

⁴William Smith notes: "From 1930 to 10 December 1983, when Raúl Alfonsín assumed the presidency, Argentina had 24 presidents, sixteen of whom were army generals. The period witnessed 26 successful military coups, and hundreds of attempted coups. Only two elected presidents, Justo and Perón, both generals, successfully completed their constitutionally mandated terms of office....Raúl Alfonsín was only the third president to occupy the Casa Rosada [presidential home] by means of free elections unmarred by proscriptions...." p.267.

⁵Peter Snow and Luigi Manzetti, *Political Forces in Argentina, Third Edition* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1993), p.113.

⁶J.Samuel Fitch. "Military Role Beliefs in Latin American Democracies: Context, Ideology and Doctrine in Argentina and Ecuador." Paper delivered at the XIX Congress of the Latin American Studies Association, Washington, DC; Sept. 28-30, 1995; p.63.

⁷Quoted in Fitch, p.14.

⁸J. Patrice McSherry, "Institutional Legacies of Military Rule in Argentina." Paper presented at the XIX Meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Washington, D.C.; Sept.28-30, 1995; p.16.

⁹Brian Loveman and Thomas Davies eds., *The Politics of Antipolitics, The Military in Latin America, 2nd.ed.*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), p.205.

¹⁰Snow and Manzetti, p.42.

¹¹Snow and Manzetti, p.115.

¹²For a good account of military violence and torture see Martin Edwin Andersen, *Dossier Secreto: Argentina's Desaparecidos and the Myth of the Dirty War* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993).

¹³Silvio Waisbord, "Politics and Identity in the Argentine Army: Cleavages and the Generational Factor," *Latin American Research Review* 26.2 (1991): p.163.

¹⁴Ernesto López, *El Último levantamiento*, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Legasa, 1988), p.67.

¹⁵René Celaya, "La Política militar: Ambiciones y conflictos," *El Complot militar* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Dialectica, 1987), pp.34&37.

¹⁶Noemi Crocco, wife of former Lt. Colonel Aldo Rico stated: "The military is never abandoned; it is always united and reinforced. It becomes a kind of fortress when we are insulted from the outside." As quoted in Waisbord, p.163.

¹⁷López, p.77

¹⁸McSherry, p.15.

¹⁹In February of 1987, wage and price freezes were implemented to control renewed inflation. Under this new series of controls, known as the "Australito," "Alfonsín...shifted to more orthodox and increasingly draconian measures, including extremely high positive interest rates, which rekindled inflationary pressures while simultaneously causing unemployment to rise and threatening to plunge the nation into deep recession." Smith, pp.282-283.

²⁰Smith, p.284.

²¹Fitch, p.11.

²²Alfred Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), p.98.

²³Wendy Hunter, "From Confrontation to Accommodation: Civil-Military Relations in Post-Authoritarian Argentina and Chile." Paper presented at the XIX Meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Washington, D.C.; Sept. 28-30, 1995; pp.17-18.

²⁴Julio Villalonga, "Menem y las fuerzas armadas," *El Menemato*, p.212.

²⁵Boron, p.58.

²⁶Boron, p.62.

²⁷David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), pp.19-20.

²⁸Boron, p.66.

²⁹Joaquín Morales Solá, *Asalto a la ilusión: Historia secreta del poder en la Argentina desde 1983* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Planeta Argentina, 1990), p.330.

³⁰Morales Solá, p.330.

³¹Smith, p. 299

³²The 1985 survey consisted of 67 officers, while 1992 had 43 participants. Fitch, p.18.

³³Fitch, p.49.

³⁴NA, "Gasto militar latinoamericano," Informe, Area de Relaciones Internacionales y Military, FLACSO-Chile, Agosto 1994, p.4 (Fitch, p.30).

³⁵Fitch, p.31.

³⁶A poll conducted by a conservative think-tank last determined in 1990 that only 32% of the population of Greater Buenos Aires had a positive view of the armed forces. Rosendo Fraga, *Menem y la cuestión militar* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Centro de Estudios para la Nueva Mayoría, 1991), p.154.

³⁷Retired Naval officer Adolfo Scilingo in 1995 revealed that he had actively participated in the "executions" of dozens of political prisoners. He described how as many as 2000 bound and alive victims were dropped from military planes into the ocean.

³⁸Wendy Hunter writes, with reference to a "chicken game" analysis of civil-military bargaining: "To the extent that the Menem government eliminated former rebel groups and diminished greatly the likelihood that new factions would arise, it rendered the hierarchy less able to invoke the second level of the game as an effective bargaining chip." Hunter, p.19.

³⁹Paul Zagorski, "Civil-Military Relations and Argentine Democracy: The Armed Forces under the Menem Government," *Armed Forces and Society* (Spring 1994): p.434.

⁴⁰Fraga, p.86

⁴¹McSherry, p.21.

⁴²McSherry, p.18.

⁴³McSherry, p.20.

⁴⁴Scholars such as Patrice Franko, Wendy Hunter, Paul Zagorski, etc...

⁴⁵Total 1989 GDP, in millions of U.S. dollars at constant 1990 prices was 141,260. Total 1991 GDP at same standard was 153 941. *Statistical Yearbook*, (New York: United Nations, 1995), p.153.

⁴⁶*Clarín*, "Los gastos reservados en la picota, 1 March 1995 and *Página 12*, "Los espías no se fijan en gastos," 1 January 1994 as cited in McSherry, p.21.

⁴⁷Frederick Nunn paraphrasing Argentine Col. Hugo Pascarelli from the colonel's "Características fundamentales del valor del hombre y de la sociedad: Situación en el mundo de hoy," *RCID* (February 1979): pp.22-35.

⁴⁸Stepan, p.101.

CHAPTER 5 EPILOGUE

Civil-military relations in Latin America in 1996 remain enigmatic. In the late 1970's civilian governments were the exception, today they are the norm. Based upon this observation, one would conclude that the military in Latin America has distanced itself from internal politics. However, as Machiavelli reminds us, appearances need not reflect reality. Chile, an apparently thriving civilian state, still has not completely emerged from the shadow of General Pinochet. In Peru, the military actively supported President Fujimori as he abandoned any shred of fidelity to democratic institutions with his *auto-golpe*. Venezuela, a nation with a long twentieth-century history of military non-involvement, experienced various military coup attempts in the 1990's as it descended into its current state of financial crisis. In Mexico, the ruling PRI has come to rely extensively on the military in the mid-1990's to crush popular resistance in Chiapas. Meanwhile Brazil and Argentina, as this study has demonstrated, continue to struggle with the vestiges of military authoritarianism.

As José Álvaro Moisés noted, democracy is not necessarily a natural result of the end of authoritarianism; it requires a concerted effort by civilian protagonists, the military and the populace.¹ This study, more importantly than its exhibition of contemporary civil-military relations, casts doubt as to the dedication of Brazilian and Argentine civilian leaders to pursuing democracy. The degree of that commitment will, ultimately, determine the future of civil-military dialogue and, as a result, the future of government in those two South American states. Will Brazilian and Argentine leaders rely on formal democratic norms regardless of the policy costs or instead resort to political "arm-wrestling" with the legislature, using the military as muscle (with unpredictable consequences)? For now, the answer seems to favor the latter. All of the post-authoritarian presidents of Brazil have bargained with the armed forces for political advantages within their nation's democratic framework. As for Argentina, Carlos Menem has taken civil-military negotiation to a new

level by not only compromising with the military but actually reversing legal limitations to internal military involvement. These actions call into question the viability of the liberal-democratic paradigm in the southern cone of the Americas.

The post-authoritarian presidents of Brazil and Argentina (particularly Franco and Menem) have demonstrated that democracy is valuable as an abstract concept, yet the achievement of political results may outweigh its worth in practice. These leaders appear to believe, as Adam Przeworski noted, that authoritarianism (read: result-oriented gov't) and democracy (read: representational government) may be interchangeable within the same regime. Przeworski wrote: "There exist combinations where the threat of repression is sufficient to counterbalance the weakness of representational government."² Francisco Weffort added, in what can be applied to both the Argentine and Brazilian cases, that "[i]n the Brazilian political tradition, the idea that democracy is only one possible instrument of power among many, only a means, is so deeply rooted that it is difficult for us to conceive of democracy as an end in itself."³

In Argentina Raúl Alfonsín assumed the presidency prioritizing democracy. Facing multiplying demands for justice in the form of military trials, Alfonsín's commitment to democracy (the will of the people) soon proved antithetical to the requirements of his office: determined leadership necessary in a period of transition. The trials exposed Alfonsín as indecisive and diverted his attention from the nation's most pressing issue, the economy. As an old Brazilian proverb reminds us, "voting doesn't fill your stomach."

Carlos Saúl Menem opted for stronger leadership, reflected from the very beginning with his relation to the military. Menem's organicist/corporatist vision allowed him to concede on the issue of the military trials and focus on the nation's economy where he has had mixed success. Menem's authoritarian style has been criticized in various quarters, both nationally and internationally, yet in the most relevant arena--the electorate--he was favored with re-election in 1995 and is rumored to be seeking a third term.

In Brazil, democratic institutional weaknesses threatened to result in legislative chaos and gridlock. Fernando Collor, Itamar Franco, and Fernando Henrique Cardoso have all, in one way or another, bypassed those flaws by directly negotiating with the armed forces. The results of such questionable deals have been the implementation of the neo-liberal Real program, which has lifted Brazil from the abyss of inflation, as well as the compensation plan for those named in the nation's "disappeared" list. Both of these events mark memorable political success stories; not much of an incentive for fidelity to constitutional channels.

There are, of course, inherent risks to executive-military bargaining and alliance-making. The fact that the president, be he Argentine or Brazilian, deems it vital for his interpretation of the national "good" that a particular bill be passed or decree enforced over the objections of the congress and the courts--with the armed forces' backing--merely transfers the Thomistic apology for authoritarianism from the armed forces to the executive. Like the military of the 1960's and 70's, the president may feel that he alone knows what is best for the nation as a whole, regardless of the constitutional rights of the elected legislature or the judiciary. By forging alliances with the military, the executive not only perpetuates an active internal role for the armed forces, he also shows by his example that democracy is not necessarily a priority and that there are always those individuals who need not abide by constitutional constraints. In such a context, it may be challenging for a Brazilian or Argentine officer to rationalize his own obedience to constitutional limits on *his* historical power. If, for example, the global economy plummeted and the nation was in upheaval, why should this officer refrain from exercising his traditional *poder moderador* ?

On the other extreme, executive-military bargaining also has the potential to bolster military fidelity, yet, not to the office of the president, but rather to the individual in the executive at the time. A financially needy armed forces may cling to a leader who finds more effective ways to ameliorate their plight. Such a personalistic allegiance, as the Menem presidency illustrates, creates the potential for civilian-led authoritarianism and sets

a troubling standard for future presidents to meet. Should Menem's successor decide to once again curtail military prerogatives, how will the armed forces react? Their response, as the Brazilian case noted, may not necessarily result in a military overthrow of government, but at the very least could divert executive attention from other areas of concern. Presidential policy could, thus, be hampered resulting in uncertain electoral ramifications for the executive and his party.

In the decade or so since government was returned to civilians in Argentina and Brazil, a plethora of scholarly articles and books have been published dealing with political transition and consolidation of democracy. If this thesis has been at all successful, it will hopefully have shown that consolidation in Brazil and Argentina remains incomplete. As Lawrence Graham noted:

[p]olitical analysts often use the criterion of two successive transfers of power from one civilian president to the next as sufficient to establish a consolidated democracy, but such an assessment overlooks the problem of institutions and the power of traditional elites to limit democratization.⁴

Until Brazilian and Argentine institutions are sufficiently strengthened to confront both the after-effects of their authoritarian pasts as well as the distinct problems of emerging industrialized powers (economics, global markets, jobs, pollution, crime, drugs, etc.), executive-military bargaining for political reality seems inevitable.

¹José Álvaro Moisés, "Dilemas da Consolidação Democrática no Brasil," José Álvaro Moisés and J.A. Guilhon Albuquerque eds., *Dilemas da Consolidação da Democracia* (São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 1989), p.119.

²Adam Przeworski, "Como e Onde se Bloqueiam as transições para a democracia?" in *Dilemas da Consolidação da Democracia*, p.26.

³Francisco Weffort, "Why Democracy?" Alfred Stepan, ed. *Democratizing Brazil: Problems of Transition and Consolidation* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p.332.

⁴Lawrence Graham, "Rethinking the Relationship between the Strength of Local Institutions and the Consolidation of Democracy: The Case of Brazil," in Ilpyong J. Kim and Jane Shapiro Zacek eds. *Establishing Democratic Rule: The Reemergence of Local Governments in Post-Authoritarian Systems* (Washington, D.C.: In Depth Books, 1993), p.228.

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