

The United States Military Advisory Group In El Salvador

CSC 1996

SUBJECT AREA Foreign Policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: The United States Military Advisory Group in El Salvador, 1979-1992

Author: MAJ Paul P. Cale, USA

Thesis: That the United States Military Advisory Group in El Salvador helped an emerging democratic nation combat a communist supported insurgent threat. That U.S. Army personnel assigned to the Military Advisory Group, and those deployed to that nation for training, helped in transforming the Salvadoran Armed Forces (ESAF) into a professional military force.

Discussion: Did the expanded U.S. Military Advisory Group in the Republic of El Salvador achieve the political / military goals set for them by the United States Ambassador to El Salvador and the Commander, United States Southern Command, during the period 1979 through 1992?

The Government of El Salvador and the FMLN signed a United Nations brokered peace agreement in 1992 following twelve years of armed conflict. This agreement could not have been signed without the assistance of U.S. military aid, specifically the augmented Military Advisory Group.

What did they do? How did they do it? What did they achieve? Will the peace agreement last? What has the United States learned throughout this conflict? This paper will answer these questions.

Recommendations: That the U.S. military continue to deploy forces for unilateral and combined training in El Salvador. Further deployments will help in continuing to develop and strengthen the democratic principles now emerging in El Salvador.

**THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ADVISORY GROUP IN EL SALVADOR,
1979-1992**

BY:

MAJOR PAUL P. CALE

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	PAGE 1
CHAPTER II: BACKGROUD OF THE CIVIL WAR	PAGE 4
CHAPTER III: MILITARY ADVISORY GROUP-THE BUILD-UP	PAGE 8
CHAPTER IV: MILITARY ADVISORY GROUP-THE ACTIONS	PAGE 17
CHAPTER V: MILITARY ADVISORY GROUP-A LOOK BACK	PAGE 33
CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSIONS-THE FUTURE	PAGE 38
NOTES:	PAGE 41
BIBLIOGRAPHY:	PAGE 43

THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ADVISORY GROUP IN EL SALVADOR, 1979-1992

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The United States Government became involved militarily and economically in a life and death struggle against communism in the Republic of El Salvador from 1979-1992. The fall of the Somoza regime in Nicaragua as well as the threat of further communist expansion into Latin America helped lead the United States to war in this Central American country.

El Salvador is the smallest and the most densely populated country in Central America. Throughout El Salvador's history, marked imbalances in income distribution created sharp contrasts in standards of living and general quality of life between the powerful and wealthy elite and the poverty-stricken masses.¹ Like many countries in Latin America, El Salvador endured violent military governments marked by repression of the populace. Death squads, political killings, assassinations and human rights abuses were daily events in the early 1980s. The civil war had its historical roots in a rebellion that occurred more than sixty years ago. In January 1932, a violent rebellion raged in El Salvador. Prominent in the uprising was a dark-skinned communist known as "*El Negro*." His name was Augustin Farabundo Marti, for whom the FMLN would later be named. In a killing frenzy, with racial overtones, soldiers slaughtered anyone who looked Indian. *La Matanza*, the massacre, left approximately 10,000 Salvadoran citizens

dead. Marti was executed after standing trial at the conclusion of the rebellion.²

La Matanza never left the consciousness of the *campesinos* in El Salvador. A deep distrust of the privileged upper class, a distrust of the government, and most importantly a distrust of the military had been burned into the psyches of the working class for generations. Subversive elements that looked to ferment unrest amongst the people of El Salvador continued to draw on images of *la matanza*. Dissatisfied groups also looked for a way to bring change, violent or peaceful, to the power structure of their country. The civil war that followed the coup of the Administration of General Romero in October 1979, and which was exploited by Soviet, Nicaraguan and Cuban military assistance, ended with a peace treaty in 1992. The United States became militarily and economically involved in the conflict less than a decade after its defeat in the jungles of Vietnam.

This paper will be on the actions of the United States Military Advisory Group (MilGroup), located in the capital of the country, San Salvador, and its advisors who were located throughout the military districts of El Salvador. They were responsible for the training and the expansion of the El Salvadoran Armed Forces (ESAF). What would have happened if the U.S. had not become involved? What caused the creation of a newfound professionalism within the ESAF? Why did the militarily sponsored human rights violations significantly decrease as the civil war lengthened? Through my examination of the Salvadoran civil war I intend to answer these questions.

I propose to study the United States MilGroup in El Salvador during their civil war. I will explore the MilGroup and the political / military goals set for it by the U.S.

Ambassador (s) to El Salvador and the Commander (s) in Chief of Southern Command (CINCSOUTH) during the conflict.

CHAPTER II: BACKGROUND OF THE CIVIL WAR

At the strategic level, the insurgency in El Salvador began in the early 1970s. Since the beginning of the insurgency, the opposition's strategy of accomplishing their objective of restructuring the government was altered from time to time in recognition of changing political-military conditions.³ In 1979, General Romero was brought to power by the military because they thought he could maintain the status quo in El Salvador.⁴ Growing unrest in the country, both by landless *campesinos* and a new breed of young military officers who were genuinely concerned with what they perceived to be the "old style" of government led by senior military officers. The opposition to military governments during the 1970s was unrelenting and caused widespread civil unrest that was continually answered with brutal repression by the government.

The dissatisfaction continued to build during the 1970s. The opposition gained strength by observing the actions in neighboring Nicaragua. After 1977, opposition parties within El Salvador abandoned their reliance on elections. The Salvadoran government became more savage in their repression of the opposition in an attempt to stop the growing number of demonstrations, strikes, and protests.

The victory of the Sandinistas over the Somoza regime in Nicaragua helped spread the opposition's message that the time was right to topple the military regime in El Salvador. The developing situation at the end of the 1970s in El Salvador provided another opportunity for the expansion of communism into Central America. The Soviet

Union with her comrades in Cuba, and now in Nicaragua, decided to accept the challenge and back the growing insurgent movement. Political leaders in the United States understood that if the Salvadoran government did not reform its image and policies, it stood a good chance of being overthrown from within?⁵

The peaceful coup in October 1979 was accomplished by a moderate segment of the El Salvadoran Armed Forces (ESAF). The coup was well planned and the leaders had the consent of the majority of the military, while General Romero's inner circle was helpless to intervene. Dissatisfaction within ESAF led to the change of government. The coup triggered a round of political change that continued into the next decade. To make matters worse for the new coalition government in 1980, radical groups and some moderates opposing the government of El Salvador set aside their mutual differences to form the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR). This political coalition allied itself to the Faribundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) combining five *guerrilla* groups into a loose alliance that eventually numbered an estimated 12,000 fighters.⁶

The leaders of the coup sought to establish a *junta* following the historic model of Latin American politics. They focused on sharing power with key power centers in an attempt to establish a unity of effort around the military's proclamation to institute reform objectives. Without the ability to effectively establish its authority, the first *junta* disintegrated and was replaced by second one in January 1980. Napoleon Duarte was chosen to head the new government and he ultimately became the democratically elected President of El Salvador in May 1984.⁷

The Duarte government faced multiple problems. Varied opposition parties joined

ranks with the FMLN in 1980, and quickly became an extremely effective *guerrilla* organization. At this time the ESAF had slightly over 15,000 soldiers. An army of 15,000 men would find it difficult to effectively confront a *guerrilla* force of at least 7,000. In October 1979, the three biggest problems in the ESAF were: lack of equipment, lack of training, and most importantly a lack of preparation to confront a united military force.⁸

The Salvadoran armed forces had been their own worst enemy. Their continual abusive treatment and blatant human rights abuses of the citizens were seen as business as usual. Death squads ran rampant, and although both sides undoubtedly used these squads, the ESAF seemed to be more closely associated with them. Murdered bodies would show up each morning at two well known locations: El Playon, the lunar lava fields outside of San Salvador, and Puerta del Diablo, a tourist center in the mountains.⁹ Reporters, MilGroup members, and tourists could follow vultures to find the locations of these killing fields.

A half century of oppressive military rule, the basic denial of human rights to the working class and a concentrated system of land tenure combined during the late 1970s to ferment the crisis that led to the civil war.¹⁰ On the regional level, the ascendancy of the Marxist Sandanista regime in neighboring Nicaragua aggravated the already unstable political environment in El Salvador. If the trends were not turned around, either internally by the new government or externally in cooperation with the United States, the FMLN by co-opting the peasant population of the country stood a good chance of overthrowing the government.

To keep this from happening, both the Carter and Reagan Administrations acted

decisively. Washington not only supported the Salvadoran government, but also "declared war" on the spread of communism in Central America and indirectly on any country supporting communist expansion. President Carter concluded that the Sandinista government posed a threat to the stability of Central America and to United States interests in that region. After President Reagan took office in 1981, he adopted Carter's view and then went a degree farther. President Reagan considered the situation in El Salvador to be a target of opportunity for the Soviet Union in their continual attempt to spread communism into Central America. Until the Soviet Union was stopped they would continue to try to expand their influence throughout the Americas. The Reagan Administration could not allow that to happen; they made the decision to halt the advance of Marxism on the battlefields of El Salvador.¹¹ Ambassador Deane Hinton, U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador from 1982-1983, stated, "When I went down there, the mission given to me by the government, the Secretary, and to some extent directly from the President, was to make sure that the guerrillas and Communists didn't take over El Salvador."¹²

CHAPTER III:

MILITARY ADVISORY GROUP - THE BUILD-UP

United States military advisors deployed to El Salvador immediately after the Carter Administration made the decision to support the Salvadoran government with economic and military assistance. In addition to the U.S. Marine Corps guards and military personnel stationed at the American Embassy, the first advisors flew into El

Salvador in November 1979,¹³ one month after the coup that ended the Romero Administration.

The American press compared the sending of military advisors to El Salvador with the opening stages of the military build-up in Vietnam in the early 1960s. During the 1980s, the Reagan and Bush Administrations had to convince the American public that the conflict in El Salvador would not become "another Vietnam." The American support of the Government of Salvador with military personnel and financial aid, as prescribed in the "Nixon Doctrine", will be discussed later in this paper. Human rights violations within El Salvador, on both sides, and the threat of a "Vietnam type mission creep", remained fixed on American headlines throughout the 1980s.

The Salvadoran government in early 1980 faced two difficult and conflicting problems. First, they had to maintain the financial aid they were receiving from the United States by convincing the American people with the idea that they were fighting a communist insurgency. Second, they had to fight the insurgency with the only doctrine they knew: the use of brutal repression against their own citizens.

Human rights advocates berated the Salvadoran government for allowing the death squads to exist. At that time an event occurred that served to escalate the already bloody conflict. El Salvador always had a strong Roman Catholic identity. The majority of Salvadorans in the 1980s were Roman Catholic and church rituals permeated the nation's culture and society.¹⁴ On March 24 1980, the Archbishop of San Salvador, Oscar Romero (no relation to the former President), was murdered at his altar during mass. That event sparked the onset of open warfare in El Salvador.¹⁵ The Catholic Church in El

Salvador was seen by the government, and specifically the ESAF, as being openly supported by opposition parties. In the early 1980s, the most important intellectual force in the country was the Jesuit University (*La Universidad Centro Americana Jose Simeon Canas, UCA*). In San Salvador the Jesuits were ignored by local scholars because of the university's close association with the left.¹⁶ Near the end of the conflict, in November 1989, six Jesuit priests as well as a housekeeper and her daughter were murdered by military-sponsored death squads.

By November 1980, *guerrilla* bands became more organized and took their message to the people. Documentation obtained by the Salvadoran government showed that *guerrillas* had introduced 600 tons of weapons into El Salvador. The information also indicated that they were able to equip approximately 15,000 soldiers. The FMLN proclaimed that a final offensive would take place in January 1981. Although a final military victory was not achieved, the organizational structure of the FMLN and its ability to conduct effective military resistance indicated that the *guerrillas* were well supported and supplied from external sources. On January 7, 1981 an operational and planning assistance team (OPAT) arrived to provide assistance in protecting the harvest from the *guerrillas*. By the end of the Carter Administration, nineteen U.S. military advisors had been deployed to El Salvador.¹⁷

When President Reagan was sworn into office, his Administration began explaining to the American public the significance of the threat posed by the communist insurgency in El Salvador against United States national interests. This White House public affairs effort allowed the President to dramatically increase both the amount of

financial aid and the number of military advisors sent to that country.

A White Paper published in February 1981 offered definitive proof that the Soviet Union, Cuba, and their allies had been sponsoring the insurgent movement in El Salvador. The White Paper stated that this was another case of indirect armed aggression aimed at a small Third World country by Communist powers acting through Cuba.¹⁸ The support received by the insurgents was intended to help them overthrow the government of El Salvador. With the Soviet Union sponsoring one side and the United States sponsoring the other, El Salvador became the latest battleground for the "super powers" to settle their ideological differences.

On the February 17, 1981 Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig briefed members of NATO on the nature of the problem facing the United States in El Salvador,

Our most urgent objective is to stop the large flow of arms through Nicaragua into El Salvador. We consider what is happening is part of the global Communist campaign coordinated by Havana and Moscow to support the Marxist guerrillas in El Salvador.

The policy implications are already clear:

First, the U.S. Government (USG) supports and will continue to support the present Government in El Salvador. We intend to work with that Government with the objective of achieving social justice and stability in that strife-torn country.

Second, the USG. is convinced that neither stability nor social justice in El Salvador is possible as long as Communist subversion continues.

Third, we will not remain passive in the face of this Communist challenge, a systematic, well-financed, sophisticated effort to impose a Communist regime in Central America.¹⁹

While the United States sent financial aid and deployed military advisors to El Salvador the American Congress also debated the issue. Congress' biggest fear was that "mission creep" would set in and the American military presence would slowly transform

itself into a repeat of the disaster we faced in Vietnam. By March 1981, the number of military advisors assigned to the MilGroup was steadily increasing. The increase in the number of advisors deployed to El Salvador was not coordinated with the Salvadoran government.²⁰ I believe that the Administration coordinated directly with the El Salvadoran armed forces, and not the Salvadoran Government, due to a belief in the White House that the ESAF was actually running the country and not the members of the *junta* who were trying to establish their legitimacy. After the democratic election of President Duarte in May of 1984 the legitimacy of the Salvadoran Government had been established. As we shall see, by the mid-1980s, the leadership of the Salvadoran armed forces clearly recognized its subservience to a freely elected civilian government.

On March 3, 1981, President Reagan addressed the American people in an interview with Walter Cronkite. The definition of "military advisor" as well as any parallels between Vietnam and the insurgency in El Salvador was answered by the President,

You used the term military advisors. You know, there's a sort of a technicality there. You could say they are advisors in that they're training, but when it's used as advisor, that means military men who go in and accompany the forces into combat, advise on strategy and tactics. We have no one of that kind. We're sending and have sent teams down there to train. They do not accompany them into combat. They train recruits in the garrison area. And as a matter of fact, we have such training teams in more than 30 countries today, and we've always done that; the officers of the military in friendly countries and in our neighboring countries have come to our service schools - West Point, Annapolis, and so forth. So I don't see any parallel at all.²¹

The Reagan Administration, in March 1981, accepted a compromise with Congress that set a 55-man limit on the number of U.S. advisors deployed to El Salvador. The dual MilGroup mission, of reshaping the Salvadoran armed forces into a professional

military that respected human rights and in rapidly increasing ESAFs size, was thought by the MilGroup to require more advisors than the agreed upon limit. The limit was a political compromise that kept aid flowing into El Salvador. The 55-man limit may have been the best thing that happened to the ESAF during the 1980s. The limited number of advisors forced the Salvadoran armed forces to accomplish the military mission on the ground after the American advisors had trained them.

The initial group of military advisors deployed throughout the different military regions of El Salvador was appalled by what they saw and of the lawlessness that the citizens of El Salvador faced. The countryside resembled a state of anarchy with roving bands of soldiers terrorizing the population. The condition in El Salvador looked less like a war zone than it did a general collapse of civilization.²² Immediate attention would have to be placed upon increasing the professionalism of the Salvadoran armed forces by the American advisors. Training would be the vehicle to accomplish that mission.

This first contingent of 56 U.S. military personnel deployed to El Salvador by the end of March 1981, were broken down into the following functional areas:

6- MilGroup Staff at the U.S. Embassy (increased from 4)

5- Mobile Training Team (MTT) - working in the MilGroup, for administrative, logistics, and command purposes for the increased personnel.

6- Naval Training Team (NTT) - to assist the Salvadoran Navy in improving its capability to interdict seaborne infiltration of arms destined for the leftist guerrillas.

14- Helicopter training and maintenance personnel.

15- Small unit-training teams of five men each. To provide garrison

training for the Salvadorans new quick-reaction force.

10- Two OPAT teams of five men each. To aid each of El Salvador's five regional commands in planning specific operations.²³

Included in the initial group were Army Special Forces soldiers who had been specifically trained for that type of operation. Special Forces soldiers (green berets) were also in El Salvador to help train Salvadoran military personnel in communications, intelligence, logistics, and in other skills designed to improve their capabilities to interdict infiltration and to rapidly respond to terrorist attacks.²⁴ Counterinsurgency training was the primary mission given to the green berets assigned to El Salvador. Due to their extensive knowledge in many types of combat skills green berets found themselves providing training to the Salvadoran armed forces on a wide variety of subjects.

The Reagan Administration's acceptance of the 55-man limit on American advisors in El Salvador at times seemed only a way of satisfying Congress. Several times during the 1980s the American military presence in El Salvador exceeded the agreed upon limit. By the end of 1984, there were over 100 American military personnel in El Salvador. Three years later that number exceeded 150.²⁵ The actual 55-man limit related to the number of military advisors assigned to a one year tour in El Salvador. In addition, numerous Special Forces "A" Teams (12 men each) deployed to El Salvador to conduct unilateral training throughout the country. These teams deployed between six and twelve weeks and then returned to their unit of assignment in either the United States or Panama.

The State Department continued, through spring of 1981 to downplay the

comparison of El Salvador to Vietnam by citing statistics. Their publicly stated intention was to reduce the number of U.S. military advisors in El Salvador by the summer of 1981. The advisors were prohibited from accompanying Salvadoran armed forces on any type of patrol. The Department of State also mentioned that the United States had 525,000 military members in Vietnam in 1968 conducting combat operations. For every military training advisor the U.S. had in El Salvador there were 10,000 combat personnel assigned at the peak of the American commitment in Vietnam.²⁶

Financial aid given to the Government of El Salvador continued to rise throughout the early to mid-1980s. The fiscal year (FY) 1982 request brought the total U.S. military assistance to El Salvador, since FY 1980 to \$62 million, almost four times what had been provided over the previous twenty year period.²⁷ Even with the vast amount of aid that was flowing into El Salvador by the Summer of 1981, it appeared likely that the *guerrilla* movement, led by the FMLN, was on its way to success. The American advisory effort would need time to make its' presence felt in military victories. How long the Government of El Salvador and her armed forces could hold off the FMLN was impossible to predict.

Human rights abuses, primarily conducted by militarily supported death squads, almost caused a cessation of American support to El Salvador. In October 1981, the U.S. Senate established conditions for continued U.S. aid to El Salvador. President Reagan had to certify twice a year that the Salvadoran government was making marked progress toward controlling the ESAF and their known death squad activity and other human rights violations.²⁸ The "American way of war" did not condone human rights abuses.

Our democratic form of government was founded upon the pillars of freedom, liberty and justice for all. Communism, portrayed by the Soviet Union, was looked upon as "the evil empire." First Lieutenant William Calley, Jr. and his court-martial for leading the My Lai massacre was only ten years old.²⁹ America could not be associated with, or openly supportive of, a government that supported violations of human rights. The United States congress would not allow the moral high ground to be taken away from the United States by a right wing death squads operating in El Salvador. Congress ensured this did not happen by using the only means at their disposal, their constitutional control over American financial resources.

Evidence collected on the battlefield in 1982, confirmed that FMLN insurgents were backed by communist states throughout the world. Weapons captured by the ESAF were traced back to U.S. involvement in Vietnam. After the Ilopango raid in 1982, captured demolition materials were traced to Czechoslovakia. East German, Bulgarian, and Hungarian equipment was also recovered after military operations.³⁰ The Salvadoran armed forces and the MilGroup advisors believed that military equipment was being brought into El Salvador with the help of the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. President Reagan took every opportunity to get his message across to the American people about the significance of the situation in El Salvador. In March 1983, in a speech to the National Association of Manufacturers, Reagan stated, "If the FMLN were to win, El Salvador will join Cuba and Nicaragua as a base for spreading fresh violence to Guatemala, Honduras, even Costa Rica."³¹ Political members of the opposition in El Salvador were keenly aware that whether or not they would achieve their goals in El

Salvador was directly affected by how well President Reagan and his administration could get their message across to the American people.

President Reagan claimed that if American military aid to the Salvadoran government was terminated, the regime would collapse and El Salvador would fall into the hands of Communists.³² The "great communicator" was able to get his message across and with the 55-man military advisory detachment, the limited United States presence in El Salvador passed the muster of Congress and the American people.

CHAPTER IV:

MILITARY ADVISORY GROUP - THE ACTIONS

The United States Military Group in El Salvador faced two difficult tasks in helping the ESAF, and indirectly, the Salvadoran government to halt communist expansion into El Salvador. First, they had to reshape the ESAF into a professional military that respected human rights. This daunting task required a complete change in ESAF operations. Second, they had to rapidly increase the size of the ESAF so that it could militarily defeat the FMLN, an organization that proved to be competent on the battlefield and one that was well-trained and supplied. This task was difficult because of the Salvadoran propensity and desire to fight "big wars"; the thought of fighting a counterinsurgency or "small war" was alien to the conventional mind-set of the ESAF command.

During the early 1980s, the U.S. military had forgotten how to fight small or unconventional wars because of its focus on the Soviet threat and a possible large scale conventional conflict in Europe. Deficiencies in American doctrine, capabilities and personnel policies hampered efforts to assist the Salvadorans. After the defeat in Vietnam, the military services abandoned the subject of counterinsurgency. During the post-Vietnam period, the Army reduced the number of Special Forces Groups. These Groups were eliminated partially because counterinsurgency had fallen out of favor, but also due to budgetary constraints and the military wide personnel drawdown. The emphasis on a large-scale conventional war deterred incentives for the best talent in the

American military to request duty in El Salvador. Personnel managers in the Army did not guarantee the flow of high quality soldiers into El Salvador because they believed priorities were higher in other areas.³³

The first and most important task of creating a professional military in El Salvador, one that respected human rights and the concept of civilian control over the military, took years to accomplish. Without achieving the initial task, the second requirement of expanding the ESAF so that they could defeat the FMLN would not be necessary, because the primary problem would remain. What Americans found when they arrived in El Salvador was an ESAF without direction and with little inclination to deal with the reality of the situation. The ESAF of 1979 could be characterized as a force of 11,000 without a mission and sought enjoyment by abusing civilians. Challenging such traditions of military superiority and dominance over the populace required an immense effort. The leadership within the Salvadoran armed forces held dear the prerogatives and privileges that they came to expect with rank and status.³⁴

The American MilGroup was the mechanism that tried to help the ESAF remold itself in a more positive image. The MilGroup provided three things: material, training and advice that were necessary for the ESAF to change its mission focus. They acted consistently with the U.S. government policy as directed by the Ambassador. The MilGroup of the 1980s worked within the 55-man limit to the best of its ability. As difficult as it was to work within the limit, it became an advantage in the long run by forcing the ESAF to deal directly with their problems on the ground; the U.S. was not going to fight their war.³⁵ As a participant in the conflict in El Salvador, it is this writer's

opinion that the use of Special Forces advisors at the small unit level proved to be the best use of the "train the trainer" technique in attempting to solve the long term problem of creating an effective ESAF. The strength of the American advisors was in their ability to teach subjects they knew very well. Low intensity conflict required "hands—on" instruction followed by practical application communicated in the native language of those being taught. The ability of the advisors to live a very isolated existence in the same conditions as the men they trained was another strength of the advisors.

The most difficult task for the military advisors was attempting to show the ESAF how the U.S. military system operated using a mixture of enlisted members, non-commissioned officers and officers. In the opinion of this writer, military organizations in Central America and parts of South America are so centralized that non-commissioned officers and enlisted members are no more than cogs in the wheel. In El Salvador officers took care of all of the day-to-day functions of running the military and did not look kindly on the idea of sharing power or prestige. Within the ESAF the non-commissioned officer did not fit into a leadership role. When the platoon leader was not present, the platoon sat and waited for the officer to return to issue orders. Non-commissioned officers were not promoted based on their knowledge or leadership experience; they were promoted if remained in the army through re-enlistment. There was also a sharp division between officers and enlisted soldiers. Within their culture, and that of the Central American countries I have visited, officers and enlisted soldiers live markedly different lives. In marked contrast to American military organizations, the ESAF displayed little contact between officers and lower enlisted soldiers.

The officer system in El Salvador was known as the *tanda* system. Groups of officers remained together through their training, were commissioned together and were subsequently promoted to each higher grade together. The idea was to foster allegiance among the group of officers. Competition and initiative fell by the wayside as a side effect of the system. The *tanda* system had been producing 30 officers a year for a peacetime military and an army that numbered between 10,000 - 12,000. The number of officers had to increase to fit an expanded military of 40,000 soldiers.³⁶ American leadership, to the extent that it accomplished the goal of creating a new professionalism within the Salvadoran armed forces, had its biggest impact on the new breed of junior officer. Training of the junior officers served to drive a wedge between them and their superior officers who ascended the *tanda* system. A benefit of the officer expansion was that new officers were not as familiar with past ESAF traditions. Unfortunately some ESAF officers who were trained at the Regional Military Training Center (RMTC) in Honduras, or in Fort Benning Georgia, reverted to old traditions when they returned to their *cuartels* commanded by the senior officers.³⁷

Creating a new military would prove to be difficult. The Salvadoran government was on the verge of collapse, in the early 1980s, while the ESAF was on the verge of being defeated by the FMLN. Without the military and economic assistance the insurgent threat may have taken over the country. The United States tied its military aid and economic assistance directly to the issue of human rights. If President Reagan could not tell the American people that the state of human rights was gradually improving in El Salvador, Congress could force the American aid to be halted. Leaders within the

MilGroup were able to effect change in the ESAF by leveraging the possible cessation of military aid to El Salvador.

During the mid-1980s, changes began to slowly take place in the ESAF. Training and doctrine became ingrained in the senior leadership. Military advisors addressed a direct tie between professionalism, soldiering and human rights. The American advisors attacked training, doctrine and methods of fighting a counterinsurgency type of war with the soldiers they were training. They did not talk about human rights directly; rather, they talked about how to treat people and why it was important to get good intelligence from *campesinos* and captured enemy soldiers.³⁸ During the mid-1980s, public support was not in the hands of the civilian or military leadership. Without their support, the government remained in power only as long as the U.S. stayed involved.

Murdering of prisoners of war was another problem addressed by the American advisors. Due to the restrictions on advisors accompanying Salvadoran combat patrols the issue of the ESAF murdering prisoners of war was difficult to substantiate. As specific acts became common knowledge, the U.S. advisors tried to stress the importance of capturing prisoners. According to different sources, the ESAF had a policy between 1980-1982 of not taking prisoners. From the human rights perspective, if these violations continued the ESAF and the Salvadoran government stood to lose military and economic aid sent from the United States. The second reason not to murder prisoners and perhaps the most important as it pertained to the war effort was that intelligence could not be gathered from *guerrillas* who were being executed. When the ESAF began to treat their prisoners humanely, they would capture increased numbers of prisoners, obtain better

intelligence and present a more professional appearance to observers around the world.³⁹

It was a win-win situation for the ESAF. In my opinion, the benefits associated from humanely treating prisoners of war were the reason this illegal and immoral practice came to a stop.

The MilGroup tried to have the ESAF focus on winning the support of the people instead of chasing *guerrillas*. The idea was solid and would benefit the ESAF but it would take a large amount of time, an asset which the ESAF found in short supply. MilGroup advisors recognized that victory required the ESAF and the Salvadoran government to address the grievances of the Salvadoran people. A "National Campaign Plan,"⁴⁰ written by advisors and passed to the ESAF in early 1983, was the first effort to move from chasing *guerrillas* to winning the support of the people. The ESAF and the Salvadoran government eventually reduced the support received by the FMLN from the population. Non-glamorous techniques were difficult to set in motion and even more difficult for the ESAF to maintain. But those types of techniques worked best when defeating insurgent force was the goal.

President Reagan addressed Congress in April 1983 and spoke of improving situation in El Salvador, "Democracy is beginning to take root in El Salvador, the new government is now delivering on its promises of democracy, reforms and free elections." The President also praised the work of the MilGroup advisors in El Salvador, "The Salvadoran battalions that have received U.S. training have been conducting themselves well on the battlefield and with the civilian population."⁴¹

A better indicator that professionalism was taking hold in El Salvador was found

in statements made by ESAF officers in late 1987. Officers spoke eloquently of their need to overcome many mistakes they had made in the past concerning treatment of the Salvadoran people. Their first goal was to win the respect and confidence of their fellow countrymen. Steps were taken in the right direction such as having the ESAF participate in local civic action projects. Those projects showed the people that the Salvadoran government was attempting to back-up their promises of supporting the masses. Political violence also began to decrease. In 1980, when political violence reached its peak, there were an estimated 610 murders a month, by 1987 that number had dropped to a low of 23 murders per month.⁴²

The goal of increasing the size and of the ESAF took place simultaneously with the initial task of improving the human rights issue. MilGroup commanders attempted to get the ESAF out of their *cuartels* and into the field. Training that was conducted at the *cuartels* along with the experience that the ESAF gained during field operations helped to increase the confidence of the Salvadoran soldiers.

The creation of the Regional Military Training Center (RMTC) in Honduras was one of those efforts. The best situation would have been a centralized recruit training center in El Salvador but two obstacles stood in the way. The first obstacle was running a recruit center and staying within the 55-advisor limit. It would not have been possible to run a recruit training center in El Salvador and at the same time continue to carry out the rest of the advisory program in the country while at the same time remaining within the 55 advisor limit. Most training operations in El Salvador of any unit above company size became impossible due to the 55-man limitation. In 1981, the MilGroup brought a mobile

training team (MTT) to the *Atlatl* Battalion, outside of San Salvador. That battalion had consistently been regarded as the best fighting unit in the ESAF. The 600-man *Atlatl* battalion remained the only Salvadoran battalion, trained in El Salvador, by American soldiers. The U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Navy began sending trainers to El Salvador, to provide training for their counterparts. Once all American services became involved in El Salvador, the Army advisors found it increasingly difficult to maintain sufficient advisor strength to conduct training above the company level.

The second obstacle was that the ESAF also had to fight a war. Senior ESAF leadership would order battalions, which were engaged in training, out of their *cuartels* and send them into battle as a form crisis action response. Combat operations between the ESAF and FMLN forces taking place at a distant location would cause units conducting training to be moved to help the ESAF unit in contact.⁴³ Constant distractions, breaks in training, and the 55-advisor limit, effectively brought an end to large unit training in El Salvador.

To try to circumvent the 55-man advisor limit, some training took place in Panama, Honduras and in the United States. In 1981, the first group of 500 Salvadoran officer candidates was sent to Fort Benning Georgia to take part in a basic officer-training course. At the same time Salvadoran NCOs were sent to Fort Gulick, Panama to participate in training conducted at the School of the Americas. By the end of 1983, the U.S. had trained over half the ESAF officer corps, approximately 900 officers outside of El Salvador.⁴⁴ The expense of training NCOs and officers outside of El Salvador was enormous. It cost approximately \$8 million to train the *BELL 080* battalion outside of El

Salvador. MilGroup commanders stated that with that amount of money, they could have trained six to eight battalions in El Salvador.⁴⁵ In this case the cost to the United States was very high, but the 55-man advisor limit was still the correct course to take. The Salvadoran armed forces had to learn that they alone had to take the fight to the FMLN, the United States would not do it for them.

The United States, with the support and concurrence of the Honduran government, built and operated the RMTC in Honduras. The facility was another attempt of avoiding the 55-advisor limit. The U.S. saw only benefits in establishing the RMTC. Between 1983 and 1984 approximately 3,500 Salvadorans attended the RMTC at Puerto Castilla, Honduras. But the Salvadoran government disliked having "their aid money" spent in a country that they were at war with in 1969. In that vain, the Hondurans did not like their country being used to train soldiers from a neighboring country. Thus, the government of Honduras withdrew permission for the U.S. to use the RMTC in June 1985.⁴⁶ What seemed like an answer to the MilGroup concerning the advisor restriction in El Salvador, in the end did not overcome the deep seated mistrust Honduras felt about their Salvadoran neighbors.

Increased American aid began to turn the tide in El Salvador. After the failure of the FMLN during their "final offensive" of January 1981, the FMLN began to feel the weight of the newly strengthened ESAF. The growth rate of the FMLN exceeded the ESAFs through 1981; however, the reverse took place during the mid-1980s. The ESAF soon began to hold its own in combat operations with the FMLN. Bitter fighting took place between 1982 and 1985, but by the end of 1985 the ESAF was clearly a better

trained and supplied fighting force and began to control the battlefield. The FMLN strength was down to approximately 6,000 soldiers; they began to change their tactics from conventional attacks to a more hit-and-run type of small unit tactics.⁴⁷

With the immediate threat to the Salvadoran government past, the MilGroup advisors shifted their focus to the way the ESAF fought. The Salvadoran military could now go anywhere they wanted in the country and their confidence was increasing. The ESAF began to resemble the American military; and they began to develop a more aggressive attitude. The Salvadoran military that existed prior to the American intervention had disappeared, eclipsed by a force that was bigger, better equipped and hardened by years of combat.⁴⁸ The ESAFs increased mobility allowed them to rapidly move around combat zones and in so doing helped them wear down the FMLN. In addition, a marked change in small unit operations took place within the ESAF during the mid- 1980s. The centerpiece of successful counter-insurgency campaigns was small unit operations. Examples included sustained and aggressive patrols and ambushes in guerrilla-infested zones. In those types of operations targets did not include seizing pieces of terrain, but rather focused on insurgent leadership, their supporters, sources of supply and insurgent base camps.⁴⁹ American advisors attacked the small unit problem by forming elite long-range reconnaissance patrol (LRRP) teams that achieved impressive results. They not only achieved their missions, but the patrols also returned to their *cuartels* and spread the word that small unit tactics could be successful.⁵⁰

At an individual level, the impact that one highly trained American soldier could make was significant. Ambassador Thomas Pickering, U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador

(1983-1985) stated,

One of the key examples was that the whole civil defense program, when I was there, was in the hands of one Special Forces sergeant. He did a superb job. It was the sort of thing which, in other circumstances, you might have expended a company of Special Forces on. But the real reason why it got done well and right was because this guy had the conceptual approach, the training, the experience, and the background to put it rapidly on the back of the Salvadorans that he had trained to get it done... We had a good service from our people, in terms of Spanish language capability, where they were really needed in the Salvadoran military, and we tried to get people out of places where they were superfluous.⁵¹

The reality showed that military advisors had to work with very large units.

Generally one non-commissioned officer or officer worked with a Salvadoran battalion.

The strength of the individual American advisor was in a decentralized working relationship and the ability of that advisor to work directly with the *cuartel's* chain of command was also beneficial to the program.

By the mid-1980s the FMLN was no longer in charge in the countryside. This can be attributed to the overwhelming American military support, but also to the small unit initiative of American advisors who worked with the ESAF units in their military region. Colonel John C. Ellerson, Commander of the U.S. MilGroup in El Salvador from 1986-1988, described the changing military situation during his tenure as commander,

The people that we capture tell us that 24-36 hours tops, and they've got to be moving. Increasingly in the core areas of the country it's the terrorists that you kill. Their equipment is not in that good shape. Their uniform is not that good. He doesn't look like he has been living a very good life.

So again, the picture I want to create is there are 56,000 out and about and going anywhere they want. There is no place in this country now that the ESAF doesn't go, can't go, in those smaller operating units... Once in a while, we go to sleep at the switch, like in El Paraiso, and we get our nose bloodied, but by and large as we go along, they kill 10 of us, we kill 20 of them. They kill 2 or 3, we

kill 10. And we can replace our 2 or 3 a lot easier than he can replace his 10.

Beyond that, starting during Jim Steele's (former Cdr., U.S. MilGroup) the ESAF began to try to develop at each brigade a special operating force. . . you give them one or two weeks of training, and a patch of their own. A different patch, with a lot of colors; that is important. . . In 4th Brigade, I was talking to Gus Taylor (U.S. Army Special Forces Captain, Military Advisor) but the way he described this process was he went out and he waited and watched for a couple of weeks until he identified this crusty NCO who had a reputation for being mean and looked like it. Gus went over and grabbed him and said, "Would you like to be in a kind of a special outfit that goes out and kicks tail?" and the guy said, "Airborne;" then he said, "Well, who are the two badest asses in this brigade?" This guy points out these two fellows, and so Gus brings them over and puts the same question to them. And yes, they are all for that, and he asks them each to pick out the two badest asses that they know. And he did that process until he had 20 people. He put them through this two- or three-week course, gave them the patch, and then sent them out against those hard targets. And at the time I talked to him, that 20-man force had been accounting for about 60 percent of the total casualties inflicted by the 4th Brigade.⁵²

Individual advisors on the ground working with their Salvadoran units did a tremendous job on a daily basis. A reoccurring complaint from military advisors was the general lack of support from the United States. Advisors saw rules, regulations and bureaucratic inefficiency as being a hindrance to their ability to accomplish their mission. An especially irritating problem was the cumbersome and unresponsive system of security assistance. Authors of *American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador*, stated, "To the extent that funds *are* provided, the security assistance rules permit too little U.S. military control over how the money is spent... Security assistance for El Salvador becomes Salvadoran money once it has been appropriated by Congress."⁵³ This type of security assistance arrangement reduced the leverage the MilGroup could place upon the ESAF.

Military advisors were not the only American representatives in El Salvador. Peace Corps, USAID and other official and unofficial government agencies had

representatives in El Salvador. Although the MilGroup had to operate within the 55-man limit, other U.S. agencies did not. Hundreds of people associated with AID worked in El Salvador during the 1980s. In that respect the 55-man advisor limit worked to the benefit of the MilGroup. USAID seemed to flounder because their system seemed to lack organization goals.

The American use of overwhelming force to quell situations was occasionally at play in El Salvador. General Wallace H. Nutting, Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Southern Command from 1979 to 1983, stated that the United States had carrier battle groups steaming off of the Central American coast during the early 1980s. The use of such a force was a glaring display of excess force along with a poor appreciation of the situation on the ground. The cost of steaming a battle group for one day could have been better spent on a small boat capability for the ESAF.⁵⁴

Military advisors had recognition of how the war in El Salvador should be fought that was markedly similar to the recognition military advisors in Vietnam had twenty years earlier. The fact that President Reagan was willing to remain bound by the 55-man advisor limit, forced advisors to conduct "train the trainer" types of instruction. In Vietnam, the strategic center of gravity for the United States military was the enemy force. Americans expected to win by attriting those forces until they sued for peace. In El Salvador, American advisors convinced the Salvadoran military that the strategic center of gravity was the will of the people. Through the use of civic action programs, land reform measures, economic reforms and a professional and moral ESAF the Salvadoran government could expect to gain the respect and confidence of the population.⁵⁵ Another

benefit of the 55-man advisor limit was in forcing the Salvadoran government to take responsibility for accomplishing the above stated tasks.

The FMLN leadership recognized by early 1981 that their fight was no longer primarily against the ESAF, but had turned toward the resolve of the American people. A document captured by the FMLN in July 1984 stated, "The creation of favorable conditions to counter and defeat North American military intervention are intimately related with the level of politicization of the popular sectors and their integration into the revolutionary movement."⁵⁶

Actions of American military advisors in El Salvador during the 1980s, represented the first time since the 1950s an ability to support and maintain a friendly government by training and advising its forces, instead of taking an active combat role. LTC Victor M. Rosello, a senior U.S. military intelligence advisor with the MilGroup during the late 1980s stated, "If any single piece of advice can be extracted from the Salvadoran insurgency, it is this: Direct US combat intervention in foreign civil wars should always be the last option exercised. As demonstrated in El Salvador, there are other novel uses of military assistance which may take longer but may benefit all parties in the long run, and may far outweigh the risks incurred from direct US combat intervention."⁵⁷

The tremendous military and economic support provided by the United States to El Salvador was vitally important to her survival. American involvement in El Salvador was the first clear use of the "Nixon Doctrine" since the end of American participation in Vietnam. Prior to the "Nixon Doctrine" the United States furnished arms, men and

material to help other nations defend themselves against aggression. President Nixon, in the summer of 1969, decided on a new policy that in the future would bear his name. Nixon's new doctrine stated that the United States, "Would furnish only the material and the military and economic assistance to those nations willing to accept the responsibility of supplying the manpower to defend themselves."⁵⁸ The "Nixon Doctrine" was designed for use in Asian countries in the early 1970s, but its elements were a perfect fit for similar insurgencies a decade later in Central America. El Salvador represented an experiment. It was an attempt to reverse the record of American failure in waging counterinsurgency operations and an effort to defeat an insurgency by providing training and material support without committing U.S. soldiers to combat.⁵⁹ The "Nixon Doctrine" looked to support existing governments and attempting to give them the ability to defend themselves and defeat the insurgent threat.

While the "Nixon Doctrine" was being used in El Salvador, across the border in Nicaragua the newly coined "Reagan Doctrine" was being tested. President Reagan's doctrine was similar to Nixon's but was directed toward overthrowing established governments. The doctrine sought to support struggling resistance groups in their efforts to achieve freedom through the toppling of communist governments.⁶⁰ President Reagan's support of the "*contras*" in Nicaragua is an interesting story in its own light. Central America in the 1980s was a battlefield where the world's two super powers, the United States and the Soviet Union attempted to wrest the upper hand through their support of governments in San Salvador and Managua.

CHAPTER V:
MILITARY ADVISORY GROUP - A LOOK BACK

I focused on two reoccurring problems as I explored the MilGroup during the conflict in El Salvador. The first problem concerned the actions that advisors were allowed to take while they trained the Salvadoran military forces. Advisors found themselves restricted from observing the ESAF in the field when they were putting to use the training they had received. American advisors were allowed to train the ESAF at the *cuartels*, in designated training areas or outside of El Salvador, but they were restricted from accompanying them on actual combat patrols. The focus in Washington was in avoiding direct American involvement and subsequent casualties that would have followed. Leaders within the MilGroup did not publicly challenge those restrictions.⁶¹ The less favorable option would have been if the United States had allowed "mission creep" to take over which undoubtedly would have resulted in an increased American military presence in El Salvador.

The second problem concerned the one-year tour lengths that advisors served. The American Embassy in San Salvador fought hard to have the tour lengths extended for military advisors. Their argument was that one year was an insufficient amount of time to learn their job and then put that knowledge to use. Productivity of a MilGroup advisor, it was argued, was significantly less than one year. Leaders within the MilGroup believed that experienced advisors serving longer tours would provide an increased benefit to the Salvadoran armed forces.

The two problems cited were outside the control of the advisors on the ground.

Their task was in conducting training to the units assigned to them to the best of their ability. Perhaps the most important mission that they received was in changing the way the ESAF thought about fighting wars. After advisors became successful in altering how the ESAF dealt with human rights issues, their parallel mission of changing the way the ESAF fought, was easier to address. The ESAF initially had to face the reality that they were at one time responsible for the brutalities and human rights violations imposed on the citizens of their country. The support and impetus given to the democratic process by MilGroup advisors and the socio-economic reforms were essential to the survival of the Salvadoran government and the country of El Salvador.⁶²

General Carlos Casanova, Salvadoran Minister of Defense during the late 1980s, stated that without the support and aid received from Washington the ESAF would not have been transformed into a professional armed force. The emerging legitimacy of the military within El Salvador lent credence to the fact that the Salvadoran armed forces were fighting in support of the population and not against it. By the end of the 1980s the ESAF began to respect the democratic process and the legality of human rights for all of its citizens.⁶³ Whether this change took place because of the leverage that American aid placed on the Salvadoran government or because the Salvadoran military was ready to change is a question that remains difficult to answer.

Another sign that the American presence was achieving its goals or at least gaining respectability in the United States was in the press coverage received. During the American build up in the early 1980s, the fear of "another Vietnam" and of American "expansionism" dominated the news. By the end of the 1980s, the crisis in El Salvador

was rarely reported on the evening news. In May 1983 when Lieutenant Commander Albert Schaufelberger was assassinated, the story was featured on the cover of *Newsweek* magazine as "The First Casualty" of the war and an example of what could be expected in the future. When Army Special Forces Staff Sergeant Gregory A. Fronius died during a mortar attack at El Paraiso in February 1987, the press coverage was more restrained. Fronius' death was looked on as a tragic consequence of American policy.⁶⁴

While the United States Congress maintained control over financial resources allocated toward El Salvador, the Salvadoran government was forced to gradually accept changes that MilGroup advisors were advocating in the *cuartels* throughout the country. Hopefully, the Salvadoran Administration and the leaders of the ESAF saw the results and realized that without the support of their citizens, their power would remain limited. The Salvadoran leadership understood by the mid 1980s that the war was being fought on diverse fronts. Steps were taken to change the "Praetorian Guard" image of the ESAF and to transform into a professional organization that could fight the FMLN without alienating the population of El Salvador.⁶⁵

By the end of the 1980s the conflict became one of attrition. The ESAF was trained and capable of defending the country but was slowly becoming tired of the fighting. American military advisors had achieved their mission and short of actually fighting themselves, there was little more that they could do. The insurgency proved difficult for the ESAF to defeat outright, yet the task of the FMLN at this stage was far more difficult than that facing the ESAF. The effects of the prolonged conflict on the FMLN were significant. By the end of 1988, El Salvador had suffered the effects of a

nine-year insurgency led by the FMLN. Their strength of six to eight thousand armed soldiers in 1988, had been reduced to an estimated twelve thousand *guerrillas* in the field in 1984.⁶⁶ The support that the FMLN received from Nicaragua, Cuba and the Soviet Union diminished rapidly by the end of the 1980s and by the early 1990s was almost nonexistent. The fall of the Soviet Union put the final touches on the ability of the FMLN to fight an effective *guerrilla* war.

Peace negotiations between the FMLN and the government of El Salvador came at a time when both participants were tired of fighting and no apparent changes were being made to the balance of power on either side. As a result both sides looked for a way to end the conflict and to start on a path towards peace. The signing of the peace pact in January 1992, between the Salvadoran government and the FMLN was truly an historic event for El Salvador. The United States after spending an estimated six billion dollars to aid the Salvadoran government and the ESAF, wanted to terminate the conflict at the same time the insurgent's communist supporters were collapsing.

Negotiations that led to the peace accords were brokered by the United Nations. After the peace accord was signed, human rights lawyers, police and other observers were sent to El Salvador monitor its implementation. The U.S. was also involved in the aftermath of the peace process. Thousands of former soldiers and *guerrillas* received vocational training to help restart their lives. About 39,000 ex-soldiers and *campesinos* were given land that was primarily purchased by the United States government. The conflict claimed approximately 75,000 lives and touched the soul of the country.⁶⁷

El Salvador has remained at peace since the signing of the accords in 1992. With

continued support from the United States, the Salvadoran government has an excellent opportunity of entering the 21st century as a democratic nation and one that stands a solid chance of remaining at peace. I have no doubt that the American military intervention was worth the human and financial costs expended.

CHAPTER VI:

CONCLUSIONS - THE FUTURE

In 1996, four years after the signing of the peace agreement, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher visited El Salvador. His visit was meant to highlight "the transformation of El Salvador into an inclusive democracy."⁶⁸ The visit was the first by a U.S. Secretary of State to Latin America since 1986. America has an obligation, now more than ever before, to continue assisting the Salvadoran government in their creation of a democratic form of government. Issues such as land reform and the size and composition of the middle class have to be resolved if El Salvador is to continue on its path toward a true representative democracy.

The successful transition toward democracy in El Salvador is vitally important to United States security interests in Central America. Today every country in Central America is freely elected and answers to the collective will of their citizens. During the mid-1980s that was not the case. Our present national security policy of "Engagement and Enlargement" contains ideals that drew the United States into the conflict in El Salvador. America can not afford to let its efforts during the 1980s be wasted by neglect over the course of the next decade.

The U.S. military is ready to provide required assistance as one of several elements of national power that can be used to create a spirit of teamwork between our countries. Military advisors accomplished their missions of training, expanding, and creating a new sense of professionalism within the armed forces of El Salvador. On the

ground they were the agents directly responsible for stemming the tide of communism into El Salvador. Using the "Nixon Doctrine," the United States affirmed to the world that it would come to the aid of an ally in need.

Large numbers of soldiers are not required to fight counterinsurgency warfare. The few who are required have to be of the highest quality. The type of presence that the United States wants to create in these operations, stresses that trainers and advisors be well trained, hard working, and self-reliant. Special Forces soldiers, using experiences gained during previous deployments throughout Latin America, made up a significant percentage of the ground advisors deployed to El Salvador.

The task of teaching unconventional warfare in a low intensity scenario was difficult. The success in El Salvador provides evidence that by using experienced trainers, unconventional warfare can be taught successfully. The Reagan Administration was unwavering in its support of the Salvadoran government during the 1980s. Without that American support, I believe the Salvadoran government would have quickly fallen to the FMLN led insurgents in the early 1980s.

El Salvador's future is still undecided but the peace agreement signed in 1992 is holding. The Salvadoran military has a different role than it had in the past. It needs to continue being a positive force for change in El Salvador. The American presence in El Salvador has continued, humanitarian assistance has increased and the future for El Salvador appears bright. Future American military initiatives to El Salvador should serve to maintain the United States governments influence in this vital region of the world. These initiatives will provide the citizens, the government and most importantly, the

ESAF, with an example to follow and an ideal to strive for.

If the democratic promise of El Salvador is to take root and flourish, it must be given room for growth and time for new values to become imbedded in the consciousness of the Salvadoran people. Basic human rights for each citizen must remain secured. The hopes, dreams, and aspirations of its people are the foundation which must be used to lead El Salvador toward a future of democracy and freedom. By their example and their deeds, the advisors assigned to the United States Military Group in El Salvador during the 1980s played a significant role in giving El Salvador the opportunity to begin again.

NOTES

- ¹ Richard A. Haggerty, ed., El Salvador: A Country Study (Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1990), p. 49.
- ² Thomas P. Anderson, Matanza (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971), pps. 143-145.
- ³ Max G. Manwaring and Courtney Prisk, Strategic Country Assessment: El Salvador (Republic of Panama: USSOUTHCOM, 1988), p. 2.
- ⁴ Max G. Manwaring and Court Prisk, El Salvador at War: An Oral History from the 1979 Insurrection to the Present (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1988), p. 117.
- ⁵ Roberto Alvarez, et al., Report on Human Rights in El Salvador (New York: Vintage Books, 1982), p. xxiii.
- ⁶ A.J. Bacevich, et al., American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Foreign Policy, 1988), pps. 3-4.
- ⁷ Michael J. Hennelly, "U.S. Policy in El Salvador: Creating Beauty or the Beast?" Parameters, XXIII (Spring 1993), p. 66.
- ⁸ Manwaring and Prisk, El Salvador at War, pps. 57, 60.
- ⁹ Joan Didion, Salvador (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), pps. 19-20.
- ¹⁰ Alvarez, p. xix.
- ¹¹ Bard E. O'Neil, Insurgency & Terrorism (Washington: Brassey's Inc, 1990), p.9.
- ¹² Manwaring and Prisk, El Salvador At War, p. 111.
- ¹³ Alvarez, p. 189.
- ¹⁴ Haggerty, pps. 91, 246.
- ¹⁵ Alvarez, p. xxiv.
- ¹⁶ Didion, p. 82.
- ¹⁷ Alvarez, pps. 189-190.
- ¹⁸ Tommie Sue Montgomery, Revolution in El Salvador (Colorado: Westview Press, 1982), p. 179.
- ¹⁹ Marvin E. Gettleman, Patrick Lacefield, Louis Menashe, David Mermelstein, and Ronald Radosh, eds., El Salvador: Central America in the New Cold War (New York: Grove Press, 1981), p. 217.
- ²⁰ Manwaring and Prisk, El Salvador at War, p. 112.
- ²¹ Gettleman, Lacefield, Menashe, Mermelstein, and Radosh, eds., p. 266.
- ²² T. D. Allman, Unmanifest Destiny (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1984), p. 48.
- ²³ Gettleman, Lacefield, Menashe, Mermelstein, and Radosh, eds., pps. 225-226.
- ²⁴ Montgomery, p. 181.
- ²⁵ Bacevich, p. 5.
- ²⁶ Gettleman, Lacefield, Menashe, Mermelstein, and Radosh, eds., p. 268.
- ²⁷ Alvarez, p. 188.
- ²⁸ Charles O. Skipper, El Salvador After 1979: Forces in the Conflict (Virginia, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 1984), pps. 111-112.
- ²⁹ Richard Nixon, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1978), p. 499
- ³⁰ Manwaring and Prisk, El Salvador at War, p. 92.

NOTES (Cont.)

- 31 Skipper, p. 100.
- 32 Manwaring and Prisk, El Salvador at War, pps. 52-53.
- 33 Bacevich, et al., pps. vi-vii.
- 34 Bacevich, et al., p. 24.
- 35 Manwaring and Prisk, EL Salvador at War p. 407.
- 36 Manwaring and Prisk, El Salvador at War pps. 278-279.
- 37 Bacevich, et al., pps. 26-27.
- 38 Manwaring and Prisk, EL Salvador at War, p. 279.
- 39 Manwaring and Prisk, El Salvador at War, pps. 324-326.
- 40 Bacevich, et al., p. 6.
- 41 Allman, p. 399.
- 42 Bacevich, et al., p. 25.
- 43 Manwaring and Prisk, EL Salvador at War, pps. 234-236.
- 44 Haggerty, p. 224.
- 45 Manwaring and Prisk, El Salvador at War, p. 236.
- 46 Haggerty, p. 226.
- 47 Bacevich, et al., pps. 5-6.
- 48 Bacevich, et al., p. 28.
- 49 O'Neil, p. 130.
- 50 Manwaring and Prisk, El Salvador at War, p. 279.
- 51 Manwaring and Prisk, El Salvador at War, pps. 405-406.
- 52 Manwaring and Prisk, EL Salvador at War, pps. 306-308.
- 53 Bacevich, et al., pps. vi, 13.
- 54 Manwaring and Prisk, El Salvador at War, pps. 46 1-462, 40 1-402.
- 55 Tammy Arbuckle, "U.S. Co-In - El Salvador's Bad Example," International Defense Review, May 1990, p. 10.
- 56 Manwaring and Prisk, El Salvador at War, 264.
- 57 Victor M. Rosello, "Lessons From El Salvador," Parameters, XXIII (Winter 1993-1994), p. 103.
- 58 Nixon, p. 395.
- 59 Bacevich, et al., p. 1.
- 60 Robert Kagan, "Remember Nicaragua?" The Weekly Standard, 25 March 1996, p. 23.
- 61 Bacevich, et al., p. 10.
- 62 Manwaring and Prisk, El Salvador at War, p. 215.
- 63 Manwaring and Prisk, El Salvador at War, pps. 284-285.
- 64 Bacevich, et al., p. 34.
- 65 Manwaring and Prisk, Strategic Country Assessment: El Salvador, p. 12.
- 66 Skipper, p. 232.
- 67 Rosello, p. 103.
- 68 Thomas W. Lippman, "Christopher Finds New Latin America," The Washington Post, 29 February 1996, p. A17.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allman, T.D. Unmanifest Destiny. New York: Doubleday and Company, 1984.
- Alvarez, Roberto, et al. Report on Human Rights in El Salvador. New York: Vintage Books, 1982.
- Anderson, Thomas P. Matanza, El Salvador's Communist Revolt of 1932. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971.
- Arbuckle, Tammy. "U.S. Co-In - El Salvador's Bad Example." International Defense Review. Internal Security & Co-In, May 1990, pps. 8-11.
- Bacevich, A. J., James D. Hallums, Richard H. White, and Thomas F. Young. American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador. Washington, DC: Institute for Foreign Policy, 1988.
- Didion, Joan. Salvador. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983.
- Haggerty, Richard A., ed. El Salvador: A Country Study. Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1990.
- Hennelly, Michael J. "U.S. Policy in El Salvador: Creating Beauty or the Beast?" Parameters, XXIII No. 1 (Spring 1993), 59-69.
- Kagan, Robert. "Remember Nicaragua?" The Weekly Standard, 25 March 1996, pps. 21-25.
- Kissinger, Henry. White house Years. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979.
- Lacefield, Patrick, Louis Menashe, David Mermelstein, and Ronald Radosh, eds. El Salvador: Central America in the New Cold War. New York: Grove Press, 1981.
- Lippman, Thomas W. "Christopher Finds New Latin America." The Washington Post, 29 February 1996, p. A17.
- Manwaring, Max G. and Court Prisk. El Salvador at War: An Oral History from the 1979 Insurrection to the Present. Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1988.
- Manwaring, Max G. and Courtney Prisk. Strategic Country Assessment: El Salvador. Republic of Panama: USSOUTHCOM, 1988.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (Cont.)

Montgomery, Tommie Sue. Revolution in El Salvador: Origins and Evolution. Colorado: Westview Press, 1982.

Nixon, Richard. The Memoirs of Richard Nixon, New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1978.

O'Neil, Bard E. Insurgency & Terrorism. Washington: Brassey's Inc, 1990.

Rosello, Victor M. "Lessons From El Salvador." Parameters, XXIII No. 4 (Winter 1993-1994), 100-108.

Skipper, Charles O. El Salvador After 1979: Forces in the Conflict. Virginia: Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 1984.