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Foreign
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Latin America Review

8 March 1979

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8 March 1979

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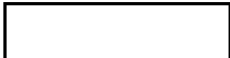
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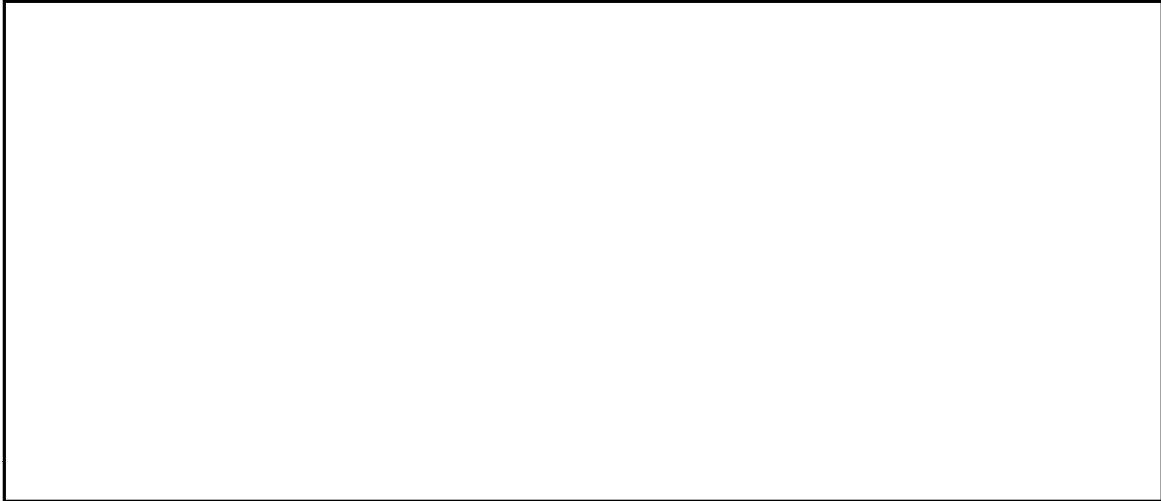
LATIN AMERICA REVIEW



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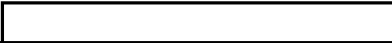
Brazil: Challenges for the New President



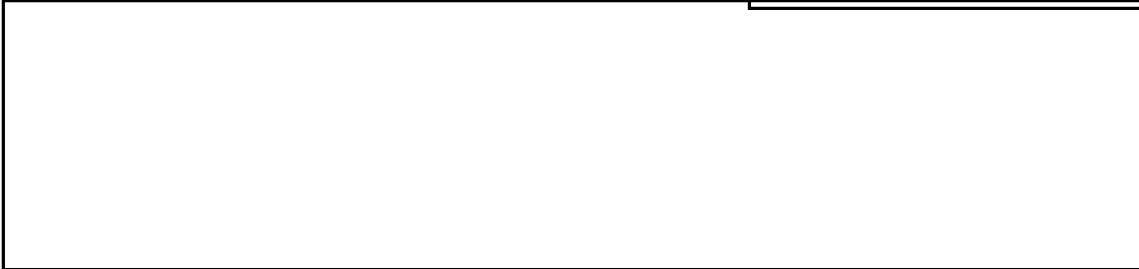
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President-elect Figueiredo, who will be inaugurated next week, is expected to continue the process of political liberalization, possibly even giving way to an elected civilian when his own term ends in 1985.



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El Salvador: An Analysis of the Central

Electoral Council



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Many of El Salvador's problems are an outgrowth of the military government's suppression of legitimate political opposition and its subversion of the nation's democratic electoral process.



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[Redacted]

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The Turbay administration's war on drug traf-
fickers is producing impressive results, but
the momentum of the effort is likely to falter
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capped local enforcement agencies. [Redacted]

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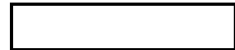
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Brazil: Challenges for the New President



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Next week's inauguration of Joao Baptista Figueiredo, fifth in a line of generals to lead Brazil since 1964, could mark the beginning of the end of military rule. Figueiredo is widely expected to continue the political liberalization begun by outgoing President Geisel, possibly even giving way to an elected civilian when his own terms ends in 1985. The coming period would be difficult under any circumstances, but it is likely to be further complicated by mounting economic problems, which pose increasingly tough policy choices and afford a diminishing margin for error.



Joao Figueiredo¹

Unclassified ©

Political Liberalization

1, 3
The overriding political question facing the new President is how to manage the liberalization process, which to date has resulted in the virtual cessation of press censorship, a dramatic reduction in security excesses, and major steps to curb the regime's arbitrary, highly authoritarian decree powers. Because of changing circumstances and the government's own actions, there is a generalized expectation that the role of civilians in national decisionmaking will increase substantially and that the armed forces' dominance will correspondingly recede. The new President, Geisel's personally chosen successor, has been billed from the start as the man who will consolidate Geisel's reforms. Figueiredo promises, though with few specifics, that he will "make Brazil a democracy" and some of his countrymen believe he will be the last military president.



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For a number of reasons, the generals appear willing to give up the active exercise of power:

- By tradition the military does not thirst for power, and the length and scope of its current intervention are unprecedented.
- They would like to divest themselves of full responsibility for governing an increasingly complex society with a host of intractable social and economic problems.
- Important civilian sectors, including those that originally supported the takeover in 1964, have clearly withdrawn their support; they are tired of stringent controls on national life, and the regime's recent economic performance falls well below the accomplishments of the boom years of 1968-1973.

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The new government will define the nature--and limits--of liberalization as it goes along. The process is certain to be complicated because:

- It is, in effect, experimental, and both civilians and military men will continually be testing and groping for ways to relate to each other in a changed environment.
- There is still a significant, though small minority within the military hierarchy that will eagerly seize on any excuse to argue forcefully against the liberalization of the political system.
- The regime, having rescinded its most sweeping decree powers, will have somewhat diminished authority with which to handle political challenges from increasingly vocal politicians, human rights groups, labor unions, students, and liberal churchmen.

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Challenges

Figueiredo's first serious challenge will come from labor, which in the last year or two has expressed its grievances more actively than at any other time since

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the military takeover. [redacted]

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[redacted] Already, metalworkers, bankworkers, doctors, and teachers, among others, have defied the ban on strikes to demand higher salaries, largely but by no means exclusively in the economic heartland of Sao Paulo. Some, like the influential metalworkers, have won their demands. [redacted]

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1,3
Labor is not only seeking to regain lost purchasing power. In effect, the unions, long the docile subordinates of the Labor Ministry, are seeking a more equitable relationship with the central government. This challenge to the regime's political authority and to its power to curb inflation through wage restraint is bound to be disturbing to the generals, whatever their thoughts on liberalization. Nonetheless, the government has so far taken a conciliatory line toward labor and seems determined to continue in this vein, if at all possible. [redacted]

1,3
Politicians also present a special kind of preoccupation. In last fall's congressional balloting, as in other, previous elections, opposition candidates fared very well, especially in the urbanized, economically more advanced sections of the country. The last election produced gains for the nationalist and leftist wing of the opposition party. Many ambitious congressmen will want to make a personal impact on certain issues, and many questions lend themselves to exploitation--inequitable income distribution, the role of foreign investment, inflation, jobs, and liberalization itself. [redacted]

1,3
Both the newly invigorated congress and the regime will be entering essentially untested waters. For the bureaucracy's part, defining a new relationship with the legislature--until now a rubberstamp--will be difficult. Moreover, given the changed makeup of the Congress, there is the potential for serious civil-military antagonism. [redacted]

1,3
Whatever the regime chooses--or feels obliged--to do politically will be greatly affected by steadily more difficult choices facing a country beset by resurging inflation, a large foreign debt, and critical dependence on foreign oil. Figueiredo has formally

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outlined his program, which, aside from a restated pledge to continue liberalization, is heavily economic. Among his priorities are:

- A serious effort to reduce inflation, now running at over 40 percent, to about 30 percent, chiefly by cutting government spending "substantially."
- Returning to private hands those public sector companies and services in which "state ownership is not essential to correct market imperfections or protect national security."
- 1, 3 -- Measures to revitalize agriculture, bring down or at least stabilize food prices, and produce exportable surpluses.
- Changes in the tax structure, along with other credit and fiscal devices to reduce "significantly" income and regional disparities.
- A concerted effort to deal with foreign debt by increasing domestic savings in both the private and public sectors. [redacted]

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1, 3 Even before he takes office, the economic policies of Figueiredo have been dealt a serious blow by simultaneous flooding and drought conditions now affecting large parts of the country. Though the damage has not been fully evaluated, it is clear that large amounts of produce and cropland have been destroyed, reducing significantly what is available to export, reducing badly needed sources of foreign exchange, and putting upward pressure on domestic prices. Moreover, transportation networks and storage facilities have been hard hit, making it even more difficult--and costly--to market unaffected goods. [redacted]

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1, 3 Once Figueiredo takes office there may be somewhat more cordiality in Brazil's relations with the United States. He is replacing the testy, nationalistic Foreign Minister Silveira with another career diplomat known for his evenhanded views and low-key manner. Moreover, during last year's visit by President Carter, Figueiredo went out of his way to praise him as a man with

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whom he looked forward to "doing business." Nonetheless, it is certain that the President and his advisers share the concern of their predecessors over US policies in the areas of trade, nuclear nonproliferation, and human rights. They will be on the lookout for signs of renewed pressure in these areas.

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Outlook

1,3 The effects of Figueiredo's presidency will be felt long after he leaves office. If the next few years produce serious tensions, the military will be tempted to dig in rather than let go. Such a decision would not merely dash the raised hopes of civilians; it could produce a violent popular reaction with lasting and serious consequences. If the Figueiredo years go well, however, national confidence will be buoyed and the likelihood of stability greatly increased.

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El Salvador: An Analysis of the Central Electoral Council*



It is difficult--perhaps impossible--to isolate a specific cause for the complex and interrelated social, economic, and political problems currently challenging El Salvador. Many of these problems, however, are an outgrowth of the military government's suppression of legitimate political opposition and its subversion of the nation's democratic electoral process.



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The ruling National Conciliation Party--composed of the politically conservative armed forces and the wealthy elite--has retained and even increased its power since 1961 by manipulating and distorting a constitutionally sound electoral law and by corrupting the powers of the Central Election Council, the regulatory body charged with governing national and municipal elections. Fraudulent practices have increased during each subsequent national and local election and were particularly conspicuous in the 1972 presidential race. This resulted in a decision by the National Opposition Union--a coalition of opposition parties led by the Christian Democrats--to abstain from the 1978 legislative and municipal elections.



The ruling party's systematic, and generally blatant, electoral fraud has created a political vacuum that is increasingly being filled by leftist and terrorist groups. The activities of these groups, in turn, have added to the country's prevalent problems of overcrowding, unemployment, and uneven income distribution. If unchecked, the growing forces of frustration, desperation, and violence could lead to an insurgent-sparked rebellion or a rightist coup.



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25X1 Many observers believe that the only solution to these problems lies in fostering a "political opening" and allowing the legal opposition to participate freely in honest elections. Opposition leaders contend, however, that such elections are impossible as long as the Central Electoral Council is a political tool of the military government rather than the impartial regulatory entity it was intended to be. The role that the controversial Council plays in the next round of elections may well determine the fate of participatory democracy in El Salvador. [redacted]

How the Council Works in Theory: Electoral Process

Article 35 of the constitution stipulates that:

"The Central Electoral Council shall consist of three members* elected by the Legislative Assembly, one of whom shall be chosen from each of the lists (of three names) submitted by the executive power and the Supreme Court of Justice. There shall be three alternate members elected in the same manner. Their term of office shall be three years." [redacted]

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25X1 As the principal overseer of elections, the Council is responsible for registering candidates and monitoring the voting for the presidency and the 54-seat National Assembly. [redacted]

There are three lower echelons within the Council:

- Junta Electoral Departamental--responsible for the 14 department-level elections.
- Junta Electoral Municipal--responsible for the 261 municipal-level elections.
- Junta Receptora de Votos--responsible for the polling places throughout the country, where hand-marked ballots are cast. [redacted]

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*Current membership is: Council President Carlos Alberto Aguilar Chavarria, Carlos Araujo Aleman, and Miguel Angel Mejia Aviles.

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25X1 The Council names three members to each of these "subsidiary juntas." Theoretically, the Council as well as the "juntas" are to include representatives from the various political parties and "distinguished" impartial observers. [REDACTED]

The Junta Receptora de Votos tabulates the ballots and passes the results to the next appropriate municipal or departmental junta. Eventually all "score cards" are reviewed by the Council and winners are announced. Municipal slates are determined by simple majority vote, but a proportional representation system is used to elect deputies to the National Assembly. [REDACTED]

How the Council Works in Practice: Electoral Fraud

Most members of the political opposition agree that the electoral laws and the concept of the Council are basically sound. What they object to, however, is the way in which the ruling party has deliberately misinterpreted the law and blatantly used the Council to prolong the military's control of the government. [REDACTED]

According to the opposition, fraud and corruption begin at the very top of the electoral process within the Council's hierarchy and its substructure. Rather than being selected from a list of names representing the various political factions, the three Council members are appointed directly by the President. The Council panel, which is politically indentured to the ruling party and protective of its interests, in turn appoints only party loyalists to the subordinate juntas. [REDACTED]

Although it has stacked the deck in terms of over-seeing the election, the ruling party employs further measures to ensure victory. For example, the government fabricates "legal roadblocks" to hamper the opposition and exerts its influence on the media to stifle the opposition's political views. Campaign speeches at public gatherings are banned, and opposition groups often find they cannot get paid announcements in the press or on radio and television. In addition, rules concerning the registration of candidates and the eligibility of voters are so strictly--in some cases, absurdly--enforced that fielding a slate of prospective officeholders or casting an individual's ballot can be made virtually impossible.

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Even if a candidate manages to get through the tedious and complex registration process, the slightest irregularity can result in disqualification. [REDACTED]

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After the list of opposition candidates has been narrowed, the Council goes to work on the list of voters. In some instances, voter sheets consist of bogus names-- individuals who are later recorded by the Council as having cast a ballot for the ruling party. In other cases, particularly in the cantons, a campesino whose name is actually on the voter registration list for that district will be told by the Council representatives that he is ineligible. Such ineligibilities are based on "legal technicalities"--e.g., the name on the voting list has been misspelled and does not match the name as it appears on his cedule. These campesinos, who are often overawed by officials to begin with, seldom question the authority of the Council panel, especially when there are scores of armed members of the Nationalist Democratic Organization (ORDEN)--a 70,000-strong civilian paramilitary force loyal to the ruling party--encircling the polling place. [REDACTED]

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The mere presence of ORDEN members is an implicit message that undoubtedly serves to "encourage" many of the locals to back ruling party candidates. Opposition leaders maintain that the ORDEN forces often employ explicit measures--such as harassment and physical abuse--to guarantee that votes are cast for the ruling party. [REDACTED]

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Even if a voter makes it past all of the obstacles, the Council can usually find some pretext--e.g., the pencil mark designating the voter's choice does not fill the entire box, or conversely, it extends beyond the box--to declare the ballot invalid. [REDACTED]

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The final outcome, according to the opposition, is a perfectly controlled election that excludes serious political rivalry and at the same time regulates the amount of token opposition needed to characterize the election as free and competitive. By failing to publish any statistics on the results of the election, the Council prevents its fraudulent methods from becoming public record. [REDACTED]

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The Question of Reform

Led by the Christian Democrats, leaders of the political opposition have stated that before they will participate in future elections, the members of the Council must be replaced by representatives of contending parties or by reputable individuals enjoying the confidence of all parties. They also announced that a "quota system" or token representation is unacceptable. Moreover, they have agreed that emphasis must be placed on the spirit, not just the letter, of the law. According to one opposition leader, revision of the electoral laws and reformation of the Council will only be effective if the government judiciously interprets and applies the laws. [REDACTED]

Members of the Catholic Church as well as many prominent businessmen affiliated with the National Association of Private Enterprise (ANEP) have expressed their support for the opposition, stating that a "political opening," reform of the Council, and a return to electoral integrity are imperative if the country's rapidly growing political and economic deterioration is to be halted. [REDACTED]

This coalition of concerned individuals has engaged in sporadic dialogue with President Romero and other cabinet members over the question of reform and the prospects for meaningful participation in the 1980 legislative-municipal and 1982 national elections. Perhaps some military leaders, who undoubtedly recognize that nonparticipation by the established opposition in last year's election adversely affected the government's mandate and credibility, may be in favor of continuing that dialogue. [REDACTED]

Time, however, is becoming a crucial factor. If the opposition is to participate in the next election, it must begin preparing well in advance. Large numbers of rank-and-file opposition party members have already abandoned what they believe to be the moribund democratic system and are lending their support to the more radical, illegal groups such as the extreme leftist Popular Revolutionary Block, a front organization for one of the nation's leading terrorist groups. [REDACTED]

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If the Christian Democrats and others, either independently or as part of the opposition coalition, fail to proffer a slate of candidates in 1980, the government could strip the parties of their legal standing, since the constitution provides for such action if a party abstains in two elections. Some within the government believe that the 1976 disqualification of candidates was a brilliant "legal move." They would undoubtedly like to see the dialogue fail, thereby paving the way for the ruling National Conciliation Party to become the only consequential legal-political organization in El Salvador.

25X1 [REDACTED]

Prospects

Some opposition leaders have been privately pessimistic all along about the dialogue and chances for a "political opening." They contend that President Romero's seeming willingness to participate in talks about electoral reform has been merely a ploy to placate Washington's concern over the repressive and authoritarian tendencies of the military government.

Recent events--particularly the incident at San Antonio Abad on 20 January 1979 in which government security forces are alleged to have brutally murdered a priest and three members of a religious study group suspected of being revolutionaries--have intensified the distrust and disdain that a growing number of Salvadorans feel toward the Romero regime. This poisoned atmosphere has seriously imperiled the dialogue's chances and has clearly lessened the likelihood that an early settlement will be reached.

25X1 [REDACTED]

The military's inherent distrust of civilian politicians and its intransigence over the past 40 years further dim prospects for a settlement. The select core of military leaders who wield political power has become the ruling elite and is not anxious to lose the various privileges and profits associated with its position. Moreover, there are large numbers from among the traditional oligarchy and conservative upper middle class who, because they see the armed forces as guardians of the status quo, want the military to retain and even tighten its governmental control.

25X1 [REDACTED]

25X1 [REDACTED]

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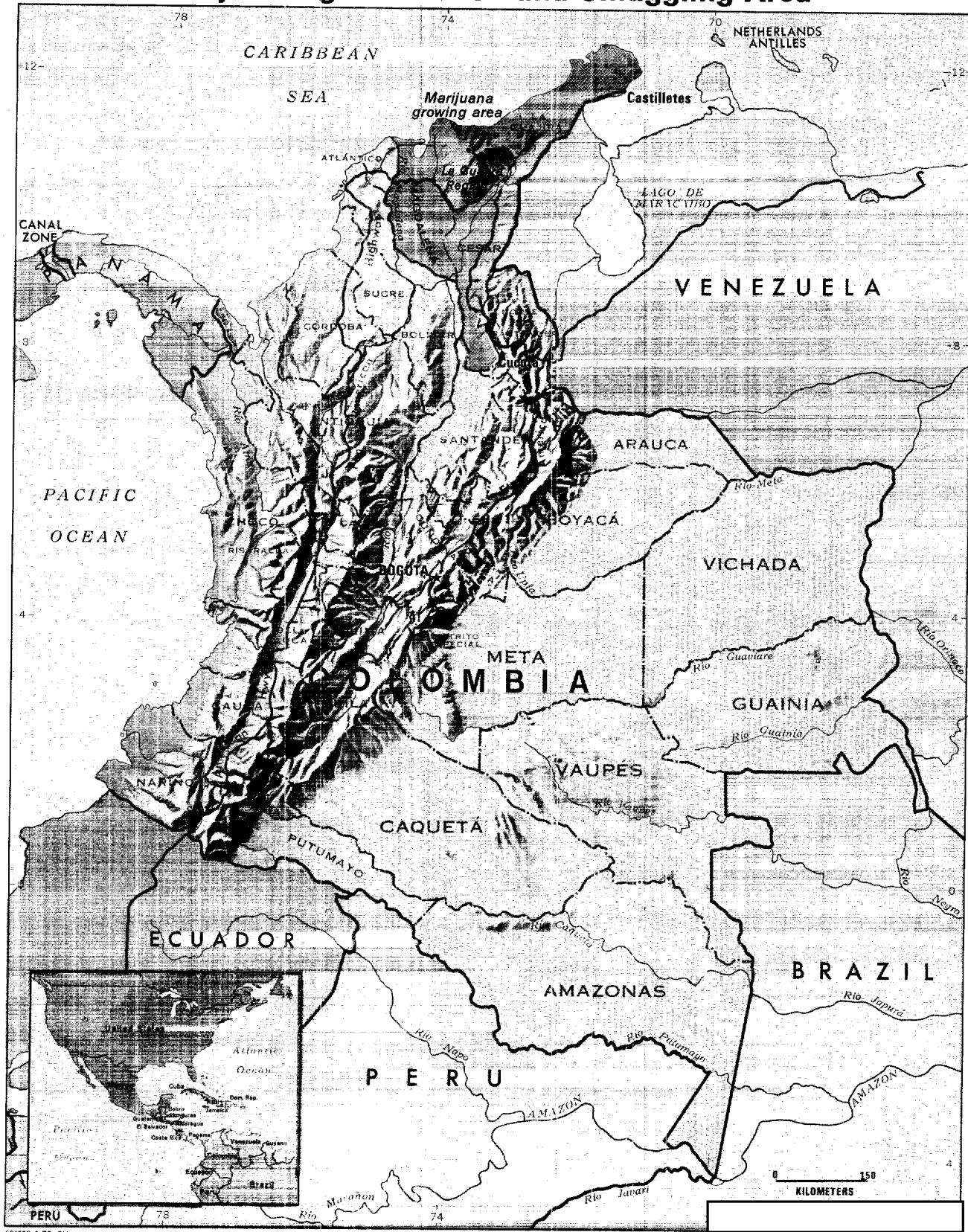
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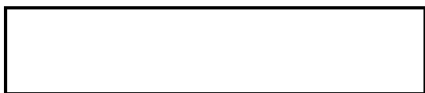
Colombia: Major Drug Production and Smuggling Area



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Colombia: Problems Threaten Success of Drug Cleanup



1 The Turbay administration's war on drug traffickers is producing impressive results, especially considering the monumental Colombian drug problem and the handicaps under which enforcement agencies work. The momentum of the effort, however, is likely to falter without outside help. As of early March, Colombia's ability to sustain the campaign appears doubtful. Funds are running out, and the operations are taking a toll on the antiquated equipment and technical resources at hand. Some seeming successes are unraveling because of legal loopholes, poor coordination, interservice rivalry, and retaliatory strikes from the drug network.

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3 President Turbay, encouraged by the disruption to the drug traffic that has already been accomplished, seems determined to keep the effort alive. He now has Venezuela's agreement to cooperate in the border area, and he probably expects that Washington will see its own interests served by providing the material and technical help required to continue the campaign. The traffickers seem to believe the threat will pass, however, and are merely rerouting or delaying their operations. Since their assets are plentiful and diffuse, they can easily absorb the damages occasioned by a temporary assault.

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The Guajira Campaign - Phase One

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2 Four months after the Turbay government opened its attack on the cultivation and smuggling of drugs in the Guajira Peninsula, "Operation Fulminante" still holds promise of being an effective drug control exercise. Evidence of the government's will to suppress the traffic and to impose the law in traditionally renegade regions is abundant in the many arrests and seizures of drugs and transport equipment. A less quantifiable but equally important achievement lies in the operational lessons learned. In several cases where recurrent problems have developed, corrective action is being taken. A decree

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issued on 24 February, for example, orders the destruction of airstrips used for drug trafficking. It also closes some loopholes in the judicial process that allowed easy release of accused offenders. [REDACTED]

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5 Further evidence of the campaign's effectiveness comes from the traceable alteration in the traffickers' shipping routes and from the unrest reported throughout the illicit organizations. Disruption appears to have occurred mostly at the middle and lower levels, but the protected upper group--many of whom were large contributors to Turbay's presidential bid--reportedly feel betrayed and in a retaliatory mood. [REDACTED]

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3 An additional positive aspect of the campaign is Venezuela's growing disposition to assist. The Perez government recognizes that Venezuelan territory and airspace are being increasingly used by the traffickers, particularly as Colombia increases the risk along traditional routes. The new Herrera administration, which takes office on 12 March, will continue to cooperate closely with Colombian drug control efforts. [REDACTED]

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The Obstacles

1 The handicaps which the Guajira effort has overcome are imposing, making it all the more remarkable that Operation Fulminante has scored the victories it has. The rate of success in subsequent phases of the Operation seems likely to decline, however, unless Colombia's resources are improved. Across the board, equipment and training for the campaign are poor or worse, the trucks, ships, and aircraft needed to execute plans are often out of commission or simply not available, and communication between units frequently breaks down. Moreover, the troops used in the campaign seem ill prepared for the physical hardships they have encountered in the field--lack of fresh water, pests, unappealing food, and lack of recreation. [REDACTED]

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1 Colombian officials must also cope with all the adverse conditions confronting harbingers of law in a traditionally autonomous--virtually outlaw--region. Local inhabitants are accustomed to official neglect, and the ambitious among them have turned this to their advantage. Social and economic conditions in this backwater of

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Colombia have developed in a manner hospitable to the illegal drug trade and dangerous to the lawman. The trafficker is often experienced, wily, and extremely adaptable to changing situations. His elusiveness and resiliency have created morale problems for the security forces. Beyond these regional problems, the enforcers must contend with the corruption that pervades the entire Colombian system, including the military and police. State and local politicians, judges, and security personnel suborned by the drug trade manage to undercut much of the enforcement effort. [REDACTED]

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Turbay's Expectations

President Turbay probably assumes that Washington fully understands the uphill battle the Colombian Government has undertaken, and that appreciation for the hard work--whose ultimate result is interdiction of drugs destined for the United States--will show up as an assistance package. Without US support, it seems unlikely that Turbay can continue to justify a high priority for drug enforcement in the hinter-land when Colombia has so many pressing social and economic problems in more politically important areas of the country. [REDACTED]

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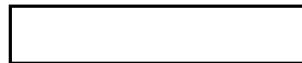
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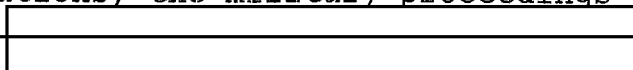
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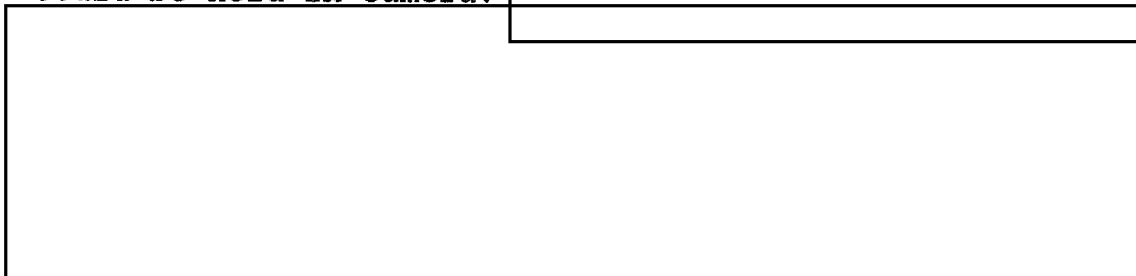
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ECUADOR: Former Government Minister General Bolivar Jarrin will be tried by a military court for complicity in the assassination of national political leader Abdon Calderon last November. Jarrin was dropped from the cabinet the following month when it was learned that Calderon was killed by thugs working for the Government Ministry. By trying Jarrin in a military rather than a civilian court--where his codefendants have been arraigned--the government probably is seeking both to protect the reputation of the military and to minimize the possibility that Jarrin will implicate other government leaders. Because of such considerations, the military proceedings could be held in camera.



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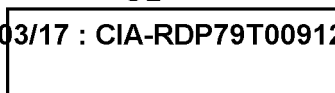


CUBAN CHRONOLOGY
(UNCLASSIFIED)

For February 1979

- 2 February Cuban Vice Minister of Foreign Trade German Amado Blanco signs 1979 trade protocol with the Soviet Union amounting to more than \$6 billion.
- Mozambican President Machel meets with Cuban Foreign Minister Malmierca in Maputo.
- 2-6 February Communications experts from 10 countries meet in Havana to discuss broadcasting and news reporting facilities to be used at the Nonaligned Summit in September.
- 3 February Ramon Castro meets with the director of the Balbona agricultural project in Hungary.
- 3-10 February Cuban delegation representing the State Committee for Economic Cooperation visits Panama to discuss an exchange of technical assistance between the two countries.
- 5 February Manuel Pineiro, chief of the PCC America department, meets with Gilberto Vieira, Secretary General of the Colombian Communist Party, in Havana. Vieira meets with Carlos Rafael Rodriguez on 6 February.

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- 5 February President of the People's National Assembly Blas Roca explains electoral process in televised interview. He says the process of nominations will continue until 25 February. The direct election will be held on 8 and 15 April.
- 6 February Fidel Castro sends congratulatory message to Chadly Bendjedid on his election to head the Algerian National Liberation Front replacing Boumediene.
- 7 February In a press interview, Chairman of the South Yemen Supreme Council and party chief Isma'il denies existence of Soviet bases and troops and Cuban forces in his country.
- 8 February Fidel Castro addresses Party Central Committee meeting in Havana. He reports status of principal economic development tasks and resolutions adopted at the seventh plenum. Havana press reports that this meeting was attended by 4,700 party members.
- Lionel Soto, chief of the party's foreign relations department, meets with Colombian Communist Party Secretary General Vieira in Havana.
- Forty-three Jamaican youths graduate from construction skills course in Cuba. This is the second group of Jamaicans trained in Cuba.
- 11 February New York Times reports that the Cuban Navy has received its first submarine and two hydrofoil torpedo boats from the Soviet Union.
- Fidel Castro attends fourth boxing tournament between the US and Cuban teams in Havana's Sports City coliseum.

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- 12 February Israeli Prime Minister Begin warns in an interview that it is possible that soldiers from Cuba will enter South Yemen and endanger Saudi Arabia.
- Politburo member Pedro Miret meets with delegation from Lebanese National Movement visiting Cuba at the invitation of the PCC. Fidel Castro meets with delegation on 20 February.
- 14 February Cuban Construction Minister Levi Farah meets with Libyan counterpart in Tripoli. Construction cooperation protocol between the two countries signed on 15 February.
- 14-16 February Fifth meeting of Latin American regional commission of World Tourism Organization held in Havana.
- 15 February PCC Secretariat member Jorge Risquet meets first group of Che Guevara teaching detachment returning from one-year tours in Angola. Risquet says entire group has taught 30,000 people in Angola.
- Cuban Vice Minister of Foreign Trade Ricardo Cabrizas speaks to Group of 77 meeting in Arusha, Tanzania. Cabrizas says, "The US economic blockade of Cuba is how imperialism treats countries that are trying to develop."
- 17 February Fidel Castro chairs closing session of JUCEPLAN-sponsored economic planning meeting in Havana.
- Cuban Foreign Ministry issues statement denouncing the Chinese buildup on Vietnam's border.
- Prensa Latina calls President Carter's visit to Mexico "a serious failure."

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- 18 February Cuban press runs feature "China: The Escalation of Treason."
- 18-28 February Cuban Minister of Construction Levi Farah visits Iraq. Tours several provinces and meets with members of the Revolution Command Council. Construction agreement is signed.
- 19 February GRANMA editorial condemns Chinese attack on Vietnam. Compares Chinese maneuver to Hitler's moves against Poland. "We are willing to even give our own blood to Vietnam."
- 20 February In a report submitted to Congress, the Carter administration demands that Cuba curtail its military activities in Africa and plan to pay \$2 billion for seized US properties before there can be any consideration of resuming diplomatic relations.
- Carlos Rafael Rodriguez addresses national radio festival in Havana and stresses solidarity with Vietnam.
- National Assembly President Blas Roca meets with Soviet Ambassador Nikita Tolubeyev, who is paying a farewell call.
- GRANMA prints Fidel Castro's message to the Ayatollah Khomeini. Castro calls Iranian struggle a "reaffirmation of Iranian independence and a stimulus for developing countries and the nonaligned movement."
- 21 February Fidel Castro addresses a mass rally of solidarity with the Vietnamese people in Havana.

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- 21 February -
1 March Army General Raul Castro and military delegation visit the Soviet Union. Castro receives the Order of Lenin from Brezhnev. Meets with Defense Minister Ustinov. Castro presents the Jose Marti Order to Chairman Kosygin.
- 23 February PCC Secretariat member Raul Valdes Vivo and delegation meet with Premier Pham Van Dong in Hanoi.
- 26 February The Construction Ministry conducts its annual review meeting in Havana. Politburo member Ramiro Valdes chairs the meeting. The training plan for the coming year was discussed. It calls for the incorporation in schools of 25,000 persons demobilized from military service so that they can be trained as qualified workers and mid-level technicians.
- Cuban UN Representative Raul Roa says that "Chinese aggression against Vietnam is a betrayal of the cause of socialism and communism."
- Havana Domestic Service carries comment on Secretary Blumenthal's trip to China as showing "US support for China's invasion of Vietnam."

All of the information in this article is unclassified.

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Approved For Release 2006/03/17 : CIA-RDP79T00912A001000010020-6

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