A New Civil-Military Pragmatism in Latin America

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Introduction

The Latin American armed forces find themselves squeezed between two conflicting forces in Latin America. The first is regional in nature. It is the assemblage of diplomatic organizations and treaties, and multilateral and bilateral trade and investment agreements that have posed limits on military influence in politics. Combined these efforts have lowered the ceiling on military intervention, rendering coup attempts short-lived or non-existent. The second is domestic in nature. Democracies are under stress. The victims of either poor governance, poor economies, or both, many democratic systems are showing signs of fatigue, fragility, and a few have even experienced momentary breakdown. Crises of governance and/or crises of the economy have fueled doubts about the problem solving abilities of those in power, and in some cases, of the system itself. Public opinion polls indicate there is a declining resistance to authoritarian solutions to the region's ongoing problems.

In this environment, the military is caught in the middle while being tugged in opposite directions. On the one hand, it is dissuaded from assuming the burdens of office at a time of unprecedented, widespread hostility to military praetorianism. Regardless of the severity of the crises, it would rather let civilians pay the political cost for failure while it remains in the barracks. On the other hand, it is finding it difficult to resist calls from governments and citizens to leave the barracks in order to lend a problem-solving hand. The result is that the armed forces of the region observe the ceiling on intervention but do engage in internal, often role-expansive operations in response to various dilemmas. They do so at the behest of democratically elected governments, not on their own accord. And they do so out of duty and professional self interest, not power or principle. Armies are, by and large not driven by an overarching political agenda. In the past, military immersion in internal affairs constituted a threat to democracy and civilian control. The military would take advantage of its newfound roles to autonomously extend its spheres of influence, encroaching upon and ultimately undermining civilian authority. That does not appear to be the case today.

There is, in other words, a new civil-military pragmatism in the region. Governments that face acute and persistent dilemmas cannot be so principled as to erect a firewall of exclusion when it comes to military assistance. They rely on the military where they must and find alternatives to the military where they can. The military in turn can parlay these ventures into a justification for professional sustenance in the form of defense budget shares, salaries, and equipment. Neither armies nor politicians are

being guided by grand visions and sweeping ideologies. The National Security Doctrine remains dead and buried. What is alive is the notion that when push comes to shove, some reliance on military deployment, infrastructure, personnel and technology may be necessary to solve problems that could get out of hand. Politicians reluctantly call upon their armies from time to time to render services because they believe they have no other choice.

These are the themes to be addressed throughout the essay. I will first define the regional and domestic contexts that frame military action and give rise to this new civil-military pragmatism. The military, it will be shown, has been asked to respond to three kinds of dilemmas: security, developmental and governance. None of these are likely to disappear anytime soon, but neither are they likely to serve as convenient springboards from which the military will launch political attacks against civilians. Role expansion is not inherently threatening to civilian control so long as soldiers remain decision-takers not makers. However, where by invitation the military have climbed to positions of policymaking authority—especially outside the sphere of defense—then role expansion becomes more troubling. This kind of vertical authority is extremely uncommon nowadays, but it has occurred in Venezuela. The thematic narrative will be intermittently punctuated with capsule like commentaries on various South American countries, and somewhat more elaborate coverage on Venezuela and Argentina.

Regional Strength and Domestic Weakness: the Context for Civil-Military Relations

Contemporary civil-military relations are framed by developments at the regional and domestic levels. Let us deal with the regional first. The Latin American community stands as a bulwark against military coups and in support of democracy. Regional organizations and diplomats have rallied to the defense of beleaguered civilian presidents, pressured autocratic leaders who threatened to subvert their own democracies, written clauses into bilateral investment deals which render them valid only under democratic authority, and made membership in free trade zones dependent on continued constitutional rule.[1] Combined, their words and deeds have helped to limit the military's permissible field of action within the political systems of Latin America.

The Latin American community is more resolute than ever in its defense of democracy, and its institutional and legal machinery more finely tuned than ever to enable it to react in a decisive and more or less timely fashion when a democracy is under siege. Perhaps the institutional center-piece of these developments is the Organization of American States. Once thought of disparagingly as either a tool of U.S. hegemony or as an agency without real purpose, the OAS came into its own by the end of the 1980's and early 1990's. Restoration, defense and strengthening of democracy would be the agency's call. In what would become its defining moment, the OAS General Assembly adopted Resolution 1080 on June 5, 1991. That resolution bound the OAS Secretary General and Permanent Council to take immediate action in the event of a "sudden or irregular interruption of the democratic political institutional process or of the legitimate exercise of power by the democratically elected government" of any of the OAS member

states.[2] An ad-hoc meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs or a special session of the General Assembly would have to be convened within a ten day period for the purposes of taking appropriate measures in response to the crisis. Resolution 1080 has to date been applied four times: Haiti, 1991, Peru 1992, Guatemala 1993, and Paraguay 1996. The key innovation of 1080 was its requirement that a threat to a democratic regime trigger the agency's automatic and immediate response. Members would not have the luxury to dither about, endlessly debating the merits of reacting.

The agency's reactive capacity would be further strengthened the following year with the adoption of the Protocol of Washington. That protocol would amend the OAS charter to allow for the suspension of a member state, by a two-thirds vote of the General Assembly, should its democratic government be overthrown by force.[3] Finally in September of 2001, the member states ratified the Inter-American Democratic Charter that spelled out in greater detail what constituted democratic rule, and stipulated regional responses to and penalties for *alterations of* –not just interruptions of—the constitutional regime (Article 19).[4] The Charter's new language acknowledged the region's increased awareness that threats to democratic functioning can take various forms, while at the same time reinforcing its conviction that coups would not stand. The Charter was invoked for the first time in April of 2002 when members of the armed forces temporarily removed Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez from office.

There have been subregional manifestations as well. The MERCOSUR trade free trade organization of the Southern Cone has put would be coup plotters on notice, by making membership contingent on sustained democratic practice. At the tenth summit of MERCOSUR presidents, leaders called democracy an "essential condition for cooperation" within the economic realm, and agreed that any rupture of the democratic order could result in that country's expulsion from the integrated market and loss of all rights emerging from it.[5] Then there are unofficial gatherings of nations such as the Rio Group, which has acted with great dispatch to help avert a coup in Paraguay and setback a coup attempt in Venezuela.[6] And finally, at the bilateral level, numerous countries have written escape clauses into trade and investment contracts rendering them null and void should one partner's democratic system be cut short.

Why has the region responded so resoundingly whereas in the past, it seemed all but helpless in the face of authoritarian onslaughts? In part the answer lies in the simple fact that by the beginning of the 1990's nearly every government in Latin America had become democratic. Each fledgling democracy had an incentive to help others in distress, or if not send a disturbing signal to its own military that praetorianism would go unanswered. States quickly grasped onto the idea that a military threat anywhere was a military threat everywhere. This heightened the sense of solidarity between constitutional regimes determined more than ever to defend democracies in peril.

By the end of the twentieth century, it was clear that the OAS had acquired the political will, legal machinery and institutional wherewithal to rescue democracies under siege and to deter future conspiracies against them. Latin American militaries and their civilian allies had to think twice about coercively seizing power, knowing that were they

to do so, the regional community would respond quickly and decisively; that those reactions would trigger additional reactions in the form of diplomatic and economic isolation. Future trade, investment and financial relations with the rest of the region and especially with the United States and other developed democracies would be placed at risk should a non-democratic government seize and hold onto political office.

Combined, these regional have raised the costs to military intervention to unprecedented heights, and have generally dissuaded coup plotters from even trying. In those few cases where coups were actually carried out, the defacto governments that were installed lasted less than 48 hours, succumbing to enormous internal and external pressures. I refer to these as ephemeral coups.[7] But while stronger regional and subregional institutions have stood as barriers to military takeovers, weakening institutions and performance failures inside these democracies have constituted invitations for lesser forms of military involvement, which brings us to the domestic context.

Democracies are under increasing stress in Latin America. The victims of either poor governance, poor economies or both, many democratic systems are showing signs of fatigue, fragility, and a few have experienced momentary breakdowns. Crises of governance and/or crises of the economy have fueled doubts about the problem solving abilities of those in power, and in some cases, of the system itself. The sense is that governments in the region are less efficacious than they once were. Deadbeat congresses that fail to legislate, autocratic presidents that disregard the letter of the law and rule by decree, legislative-executive feuds that result in deadlock, remote judicial systems that are beyond the pale of average citizens, ossified political parties that have lost touch with their bases, and in general governing institutions that seem unresponsive to the needs of ordinary people -- all of these contribute to a decline in democratic efficacy, efficiency, and legitimacy.[8]

According to public opinion polls, citizens across the board have less confidence in political parties, leaders, legislatures and executives than they did at the beginning of the democratic transition.[9] There is a growing sense that elected governments are less capable at meeting the needs—especially the economic needs-- of voters than they were in the past. Economically, things were worse during the infamous lost decade of the 1980's. But during that period, the public seemed more willing to cut their elected governments slack for their missteps and mismanagement, being only too pleased to have won back their freedoms lost under military, authoritarian rule. Today however, the memories of dictatorship have faded, and democratic leaders must prove themselves to a skeptical and impoverished public. Generally speaking, they have not done well.

A quick look at some statistics from the Latinobarómetro gives us an idea of the nature of the problem. It is not surprising to find public dissatisfaction with the way democracy is working in most corners of the globe. Even 47% of the citizens polled in the European Union countries register their disapproval with democratic performance. But public dissatisfaction with democratic performance among those polled in Latin America was 68% in 2002, second highest only to Eastern Europe.[10]

What is more troubling is the percent of people who believe democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. Only 56% of Latin Americans believe this is so, down from 61% in 1996. That compares with 78% from Western Europe and 80% in the U.S[11]. When asked whether they would not mind having a non-democratic government in power if it could solve the economic problems, 50% agreed or strongly agreed in Latin America. That finding is consistent with another one. When asked, " if you had to choose between democracy and economic development which would you say is more important?" more than twice as many said development was.[12] Clearly Latin American citizens are reeling from the effects of economic downturns, and seem less resistant than they once were to making tradeoffs between regime type and economic gain were these to bring them relief.[13]

The public's perception then is that civilian leaders are not up to the task. These politically weakened governments somewhere along the line lost their problem-solving capabilities. They would not trust other centers of power (Peru), could not resolve constitutional crises on their own (Ecuador) would not generate economic opportunities for their citizens despite enormous wealth (Venezuela) could not reverse serious economic declines (Argentina) could not put an end to insurgent threats, narcotics production and civil strife (Colombia). The result has been the creation of political vacuums that must be filled.

Democracies do have enormous recuperative powers and can more often than not right their own ships when tossed by stormy seas. Latin American democracies are no exception, and have resolved numerous crises at the polls or by other legal means. Brazilian politicians resolved the Collor corruption scandal on their own via impeachment proceedings; the military was never heard from. Peru passed through some frightful moments in the fall of 2000 in the midst of the Montesinos corruption scandal and the subsequent resignation of President Fujimori. Still, the military remained in the barracks as an interim democratic government took over to call for new elections in 2001. And, as will be described Argentina went through five presidents in the span of three weeks at the end of 2001, without calls for military rescue. Yet, other problems seem more intractable, and it is these that invite unorthodox solutions, some of which involve the participation of the armed forces.

Thus, on one side of the equation are the regional and subregional actors who have strengthened the institutional and legal machinery for protecting democratic gains since the transition. On the other side are the domestic political actors who preside over weakened institutions and who have lost some political, security, and economic problem solving capabilities. Enter the armed forces**.** The Latin American military today finds itself squeezed between these two very different institutional environments, producing a paradox*: the regional costs to military coups are greater than ever, yet domestic weaknesses makes the costs of military non-intervention greater than ever.* As regional institutions push the military back to the barracks and away from the political arena, domestic problems and power vacuums reach out and pull them back in. But the push and pull of today's civil-military relations is different than in the past. Regional

resistance to coups has lowered the ceiling to military political action. The military cannot, but on rare occasions, be so bold as to topple elected governments and assume power themselves lest they invite swift condemnation and reprisals from the world beyond them. But neither can they remain so aloof as to resist all calls for help when polities and economies of the region are in trouble.

From state and society, there are greater pressures on the military to arbitrate political disputes and avert constitutional crises (Ecuador), assume cabinet portfolios and other positions of public authority (Venezuela), suppress protests (Venezuela), engage in crime sweeps (Brazil), join police in patrolling city streets (Guatemala), lead counterinsurgency efforts (Colombia), lend a hand in counter-narcotic missions (Colombia, Bolivia, Brazil) aid in poverty relief programs (Argentina, Venezuela), disaster relief (Central America, numerous other countries) and general developmental assistance (Ecuador). As a result, the military finds itself implicated in all sorts of missions, most of which are internal, others simultaneously internal and external in nature; most of which are role expansive, some more narrowly gauged.

Democracy's Dilemmas and the Military Response

This dizzying array of missions actually responds to three very general kinds of dilemmas: *security*, *developmental* and *governance*. Security dilemmas lure the military in either when an armed threat is obviously of great magnitude (guerrillas in Peru, Colombia) or when it is less so, but still sufficient to overpower police and internal security forces or otherwise render these agencies inoperable. Governments with anti-guerrilla, anti-narcotics, anti-crime, anti-terrorist agendas will call on the military to either take the lead or assume supportive (i.e. logistical) roles because they have no choice. Refusal to allow military participation in internal security affairs under any conditions could very well place the nation or communities within it at great risk by foreclosing a pragmatic option, even if it is a last resort.

For example, Brazil has recently completed work on its Amazon-based surveillance system (SIVAM) that has been configured to detect and apprehend FARC guerillas, narco-traffickers and other criminal elements who may be using the Amazon's expansive jungle habitat as bases of operations. The system is operated by the Brazilian armed forces. Brazil has redeployed thousands of troops toward its Northern frontiers, and in May 2002, conducted the largest military exercise ever held in the Amazon close to the Colombian border.[14] Without a huge, non-military internal security force to rely on, Brazil confronts the choice of either using the military or leaving its frontier areas exposed to these kinds of threats.

The second dilemma is developmental in nature, occurring when the nation lacks sufficient civilian agencies and resources to respond to either emergency needs or ongoing needs of disadvantaged populations. Military units are called upon to engage in everything from elaborate, long-term civic-action projects to temporary efforts to distribute food and medical provisions. During Argentina's greatest economic crisis,

millions were left jobless, and by mid year 2002, INDEC calculated that 19 million Argentines, or 53% of the population, had plunged below the poverty line[15]. The nation began to attract the attention of U.N. relief agencies—something unheard of in the land of wheat and cattle. In March of 2002, President Duhalde directed the military to help provide emergency relief in the form of food, water, medicine and sanitation services to the worst afflicted regions. We will return to this mission later on. [16]

Governing dilemmas are arguably the worst, and occur when weak civilian institutions—parties, legislatures, executives, and courts—are unable to resolve crises of lawmaking, succession, representation or accountability. Parties that have been discredited, congresses that are deadlocked with the president, courts that are too corrupt or obsequious to intercede—these and other manifestations of weakness create power vacuums that occasionally invite military interventions. One example would be the Ecuadorian military's decision to withdraw its support for President Abdalá Bucarám (August 1996-February 1997) following a constitutionally questionable move by the congress to remove the president on grounds of "mental incompetence." [17]Bucarám defied the congress, barricading himself in his office. A day after saying it would not choose sides, the military announced it no longer recognized Bucarám as president, precipitating his resignation shortly thereafter. The military then demanded that congress work out constitutional succession rules, while the vice president stood in as interim chief of state.

It is unlikely that these scenarios will change anytime soon. Foreign and domestic conditions combine and conspire against any easy solutions or quick exits from these dilemmas. In the security realm, the military find themselves being tugged into service not just because internal security forces are sometimes ill-equipped, but because the nature of the threats have changed. Those threats are increasingly internal *and* external, transnational and cross-border in nature, thus obscuring the boundaries between defense and internal security They are also increasingly interlinked, with drug cartels working in tandem with guerrillas, arms traffickers, terrorists and other criminal elements. Both conditions make it difficult, though not impossible, to neatly separate police and internal security jurisdictions from military jurisdictions. Sufficient ambiguity here can allow for the introduction of the military, especially when nations confront unconventional threats of substantial size and lethality. In recognition of these facts, the Fifth Defense Ministerial in Santiago Chile (November 2002) called for the creation of a "flexible security architecture" that integrates "new and old security institutions" and which is able to respond to a multidimensional threat. [18]

This is not to say that Latin American countries aren't interested in keeping the military at arms length from these entanglements. They are, and are quite mindful of the potential risks should they not. Moreover, efforts have been made to legislate specific curbs on military involvement in internal security matters (Argentina), while most militaries themselves are reluctant to take on these roles. It's just that the centripetal forces pulling the military back in can be pretty powerful. Among those forces is the United States itself, which for years now has sought to militarize the response to the new hemispheric threats.

Developmental dilemmas pose long-term-short-term tradeoffs for governments. In the long term, democracies are almost always better off if they can build civilian agencies to deliver food, clothing and medicine, transport mobile health services to rural areas, construct roads, fortify dams and bridges, and so on. In the short term, cash-strapped governments often lack the resources to invest in these agencies and are thus tempted to fall back on those organizations that are already equipped to respond. Militaries have the built-in infrastructure (bases, personnel, communications, transport, logistics, etc.) which can be easily reconfigured to launch wide scale operations of a non-lethal nature. This can usually be done within pre-existing budget lines --something fiscally-minded governments, under the gun to adhere to IMF spending limits, greatly appreciate. In this case, the external pressures to conform to fiscally austere, neoliberal guidelines for economic reform conspire with the urgency of domestic needs and the absences of viable civilian responses to keep the military option open.

Governing dilemmas are less common but potentially more serious, and thus deserve lengthier treatment. On the one hand because the regional defense of procedural democracy makes it unlikely that de facto governments could survive, the military coup is no longer the institutionalized solution to crisis it once was.[19] On the other hand, the region shows great reluctance to press for a strengthening of democratic processes and institutions which could obviate the need for military rescue calls. When the *quality* of a democracy is at issue, when there is a progressive decline in the system's efficiency, credibility, representation, and accountability--even as the overall architecture of the democratic system is preserved- member states would rather not intrude, for reasons of principle and self-interest. The principle is one of non-intervention in the affairs of other states. The self –interest is that none of these flawed democracies want to press too hard for democratic strengthening elsewhere lest the spotlight be thrown back on them next time around. [20] Because outside states resolutely defend the democratic bottom line, but shun efforts at democratic deepening, the Western Hemisphere now embraces a system that shores up "low quality democracies" of decreasing legitimacy and efficacy to their own populations. It is these kinds of systems that occasionally invite military participation without much outside scrutiny.

It is not surprising therefore that we witnessed the retreat of OAS observers from Peru once President Fujimori had passed the "minimal test" of holding constituent assembly elections in November of 1992**.** It was then that the ad-hoc committee of OAS foreign ministers resolved that those elections "represented an important phase in process of re-establishing democratic institutional order," and closed the book on their investigation. [21] In doing so, the OAS had kept in its sights the election itself, but had turned a blind eye toward the president's crafty maneuvers leading up to the election and more importantly to the maneuvers that would transpire in the years ahead.[22] The President would go onto progressively emasculate the Peruvian democracy, while relying more and more on his intelligence agencies, military, other security forces, and own autocratic style to "govern" the nation. The OAS stood aloof from these problems so long as regular elections were held and the Congress remained open—the minimal benchmarks for success.

The regional response to the Ecuadorian coup of 2000 can also be fathomed in light of the hypotheses suggested here. A civil-military junta comprised of Colonel Gutiérrez (now President of Ecuador) Indian leader Antonio Vargas, president of Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador, and ex-Supreme Court President Carlos Solórzano ousted President Jamil Mahuad and seized control on January 21 of that year. The OAS member states, its secretary general, and U.S. State Department officials responded to the takeover with energetic condemnations and warnings of severe economic consequences should the defacto government stand. Under the weight of external pressures, military chief of staff, General Carlos Mendoza--who at first cast his lot with the junta--swiftly turned the tables. But early the next morning, he was announcing that the junta had stood down. Vice President Gustavo Noboa was immediately installed as the next President. [23]

While external reactions to the coup were commendable, reactions to the swift succession were not. Not only had President Jamil Mahuad not resigned, but had been illegally evicted from office. A coup had made possible the vice president's assumption to power. But once the Ecuadorian Congress ratified Noboa, the OAS rushed to support him and the restored democracy despite the fact that Ecuador had sanctified an unconstitutional process of succession and had not resolved the problems that had given rise to the coup in the first place.[24] Then the OAS turned away from the Ecuadorian crisis as quickly as it had rushed in, without contemplating the mixed signals it had sent.

In sum, there are various regional and domestic realities which contextualize military roles. Regional influences may be beneficial (OAS defense of democracy) or detrimental (new transnational security threats, IMF fiscal pressures). Domestic weaknesses—both political and economic—are pervasive, but strengths are visible as well. Let us not underestimate the desire of every democratic government in the region to have firmer control over its military, even if many fall short of their aspirations. These elements create an environment in which armies will remain internally active but whose operations will be bounded; where politicians will reluctantly call upon their armies from time to time to render services because they believe they have no choice. The questions then become, on what terms have the armed forces been engaged? And how harmful, if at all, are these operations to democratic government and civilian control?

The Limits and Terms to Military Involvement

The kinds of military engagements that most preoccupy scholars are the internal, role expansive variety.[25] Here, the military's scope of professional involvement widens to spheres beyond defense and may involve soldiers in everything from crown and crime control at one end to the distribution of food and medicine to impoverished areas at the other. Many scholars have concluded that duties not traditionally associated with a soldier's professional calling can have a detrimental effect on civil-military relations if they become part of the military's raison d'etre, an integral part of their corporate identity and doctrine. It then makes it more difficult to extricate the military from these prized

functions. The military will protect its turf, and politicians, unwilling to challenge the armed forces, will instead cede power to them. The military may then exploit their newfound roles to further widen their spheres of influence.

The first observation is that the introduction of the military into role-expansive functions seems predicated on pragmatic, not ideological or doctrinal grounds. Armies have undertaken missions for purposes of helping civilian leaders fill vacuums and resolve specific problems that could not otherwise have been adequately dealt with. For example, military personnel have been used to help deter crime in Central American cities because police forces have been undermanned and overwhelmed. Crime has increased alarmingly, and politicians and the public see little choice but to support the introduction of troops to patrol city streets. There is no evidence that such involvement has spawned an effort to justify new military doctrines or to resurrect obsolete ones.

To my knowledge, most contemporary role-expansive assignments have not led to a revision of strategic, doctrinal guidelines for purposes of making counter-crime, counter narcotics, counter-terror, poverty relief or other role-expansive missions of this sort *permanent* features of military orientation. In Argentina there are legal prohibitions on doing so. Either by legal commission or omission, most other militaries of the region recognize that these assignments, however important, are temporary in nature and not their raison d'etre.

If there are partial exceptions to this rule, they probably would be found in Venezuela or Ecuador. President Hugo Chávez, for example, has made the military a mantelpiece of his Revolución Bolivariana. His 1999 constitution explicitly delegates internal security and developmental roles to the military. Article 328 charges the military with guaranteeing the independence, sovereignty, and integrity of the nation by providing for defense *and by helping to maintain internal order and achieve national development* (emphasis mine). [26] Security is defined with broad strokes, referring to virtually every facet of Venezuelan life, and making no separation between the external and the internal. Obviously by embedding expansive military roles into the nation's Magna Carta, the president has not only elevated their legal stature, but has made their annulment exceedingly difficult.

Nonetheless, even in this case, it is interesting to note that officers have not been explicitly retrained to engage in crowd control, food distribution, the commandeering of production facilities and assorted other operations which they have been suddenly thrust into. It is one thing to codify a role-expansive mission; it is quite another to build that mission into the daily educational, doctrinal, and training experiences of the armed services. While constitutional role expansion is disquieting, it is less so if military academies fail to embrace it.

The second observation is that these pragmatic missions in Latin America have been undertaken at the behest of constitutionally elected officials, and not at the initiative of the military organization. With the obvious exceptions of the coup attempts in Ecuador (2000) and Venezuela (2002) there is little confirmation for the thesis that role

expansion has meant greater military autonomy. If armies on internal warfare and development missions had explicit political agendas of their own which they acted upon in the 1960's and 1970's that is, by and large not the case today. Armies are decision-takers, not makers, carrying out their duties at the request of the president and within the guidelines so stipulated by the commander-in-chief. Generally speaking, they have not defined *for themselves* widened spheres of influence, engaged in mission creep, demanded quid pro quos, nor otherwise taken advantage of assignments for their own political gain at the expense of civilians who oversee them.[27]

A distinction has to be made between the military fulfilling functions imbued with political content and the military acting politically, as if it were an independent organization. Regarding the former, the military may find itself implicated in political projects but remains non- deliberative and subordinate to civilian authorities. These activities must be monitored and supervised closely but do not themselves constitute threats to civilian control. The latter connotes a premeditated, organized effort to accumulate power, often at the expense of civilian overseers. [28] These activities are indeed troubling.

The Venezuelan Case

A reference to Venezuela is instructive in this regard, since this country represents an extreme case that may help prove the rule. Over the last year, the armed forces (or parts thereof like the national guard) have participated in Plan Bolivar to alleviate hunger, suppressed demonstrators, seized oil tankers and petrochemical installations and other production facilities, and commandeered where houses and police stations.[29] Undoubtedly, these actions have placed the military at the front lines of what has become a hugely polarized, national political struggle. The military is now more heavily ensconced in internal security and development activities than at any point in its history. And yet, all of this has come at the behest of a democratically elected president. These are operations infused with political content, but not demonstrations of military political autonomy. With the exception of the short-lived coup attempt of April 2002, activities of this sort have not generated a autonomous response from the military institution. This in turn may suggest that military role-expansion is not inherently threatening to civilian control.

In fact, the military has dutifully complied with assignments that many officers are, to say the least, not enamored with. While enlisted men from poor backgrounds have participated in Plan Bolivar with great relish, the same cannot be said for all many within the officer corps who come from more advantaged backgrounds and who don't associate "social work" with their profession's calling. [30] Others are offended by having to perform police-like functions.

But so far at least, the military seems willing to carry out objectionable assignments, and has even done so while being taunted by civil society. At first, General Raúl Baduel reported receiving "hundreds" of phone calls from opposition

figures, urging him-at times propositioning him-- to compel Hugo Chávez' resignation. [31] What was private soon became public. Carlos Ortega, leader of the national strike, outwardly humiliated the military when he said, "What are you waiting for to accompany us? We understand the obedience you owe to the president of the republic, but obedience is one thing, being submissive is another." And the opposition conducted marches to bases, imploring the military to join the national strike. General Julio José Garcia Montoya responded to these entreaties by saying the army would stick to its institutional role and "stay out of the political diatribe." [32]

The military is, to be sure, in the eye of the political storm, and Chávez placed it there. This has opened up divisions within the ranks. Institutionalists with no political axe to grind are being tugged from one end by anti-Chavista officers and from the other end by loyalists. [33] Thus far, Chávez has maintained the upper hand, and these splits have not led to dissention or to a breakdown in the chain of command. Of course, the situation is fluid, and could at any moment take a turn for the worse, as it did in April of 2002. Chávez is keenly aware of that, and has since last spring, cashiered rebel soldiers, assigned trusted officers to the command of strategically vital units, and spent considerable time visiting military installations where he presses the flesh. [34]

Clearly the Venezuelan case is an exceptional one, marked by extreme instability, violence, and an autocratic, demagogic leader who has pushed his nation to the brink. But it does help answer the question: are domestic, role-expansive assignments *inherently* risky, even if ordered by a constitutionally elected leaders? The answer is apparently not. If most soldiers can compliantly execute orders under these onerous conditions, without taking matters into their own hands, then they certainly could do so anywhere.

While Harold Trinkunas, writing on Venezuela, says there is a danger to expanding the military 's role, he admits that the principle threat is "that it is occurring while institutional mechanisms of civilian control are being dismantled."[35] The implication is that Venezuela could at least tolerate military role expansion were civilian institutions to be strengthened. Unfortunately Chávez has, through constitutional re-engineering and by fiat, emasculated other civilian centers of power (like the Congress) that could set in place a more institutionalized *democratic* form of control. Instead, the President asserts his own personal authority over the ranks, relying on persuasion, promotions, and bonds of fidelity and friendship. At least for now, that may well be enough to keep a role-expansive army in check. Thus, it is one thing to curtail the military's autonomy, as Chávez has done; it's quite another to institutionalize a form of democratic civilian control, which Chávez has not done.

Horizontal vs. Vertical Role Expansion

If role expansion does not necessarily generate autonomous military action, then under what conditions is it potentially hazardous to civilian control? To democracy? To answer that question, some disaggregation of the concept is necessary. Not all role-expansive activities are the same, and can be divided into horizontal and vertical

dimensions. The horizontally-expansive assignments are ones already mentioned, that involve the military in non-defense-oriented tasks within society. So long as these assignments are undertaken at the behest of the constitutional authorities, and so long as those leaders retain enough power to both contain the military and to call it off when the work is done, then such roles do not pose a threat to either civilian supremacy or to democratic rule.

Vertically-expansive assignments are a different matter. These allow the military to ascend to important, official, decision-making functions within government. They may also refer to unofficial forms of influence that allow officers to influence, veto or sometimes determine national policies and priorities. Either way, vertical authority places the military closer to the commanding heights of power in a democratic system and is potentially disturbing to democratic, civilian rule.

To peel the onion back further, not all forms of vertical authority are equally troubling. A basic distinction must be made between military ascension within the defense orbit and outside of it. When active duty officers serve on national security councils, or are appointed as defense ministers, this may be lamentable, and certainly far less-desirable than a fully civilianized security council or defense ministry. [36] But it does not pose a fundamental challenge to the democracy so long as military influence is contained within the defense sphere, the elected president is commander in chief, civilians retain a majority on the security council, and continue to make the nation's policies. However, when the military acquires non-defense cabinet portfolios, a say so over national policies (be they social, economic or political) or worse still an influence over the choice of policymakers themselves, then this kind of vertical ascension does pose a regime challenge. In essence this is a kind of simultaneous accumulation of vertical and horizontal authority as the military rises to elite positions but then broadens its scope of influence to assume decision-making powers. Here, civilians are ceding some of the very authority they need to keep military influence in check. Too great a military presence at the top calls into question the civilian nature of the government. Too great a military presence at the top without strong legislative and judicial checks on the executive branch may call into question the democratic nature of the government itself.

Unfortunately Venezuela has fallen prey to some degree of vertical role expansion as well. Chávez remains in control as the democratically elected president with the legitimacy (however diminished) that that confers upon him and his choice of cabinet appointees. But since his inauguration in February of 1999, he has filled a number of cabinet posts with military personnel. According to Harold Trinkunas, up to one third of the cabinet has been occupied by military men and some 176 active duty military officers had, by 2001, already occupied senior ministerial and administrative positions in government. Officers--both active and retired--have held ministerial portfolios in Foreign Affairs, Interior and Justice, Infrastructure, Defense, Office of the President, and Inspector General. [37] The upshot of all of this? The government maintains its control over the armed forces despite its role-expansive activity, yet that same government is of questionable democratic character, with a weakened congress and too great a presence of uniformed personnel at the top.

Argentina's Crisis: Where is the Military?

We've argued that military internal role expansion is a persistent feature of the contemporary Latin American landscape, in a context framed by regional defense of democracy at one end and domestic weaknesses and power vacuums at the other. Second, this role expansion is a pragmatic, time-limited and government-initiated response to crisis, not a doctrinally-grounded pretext for a new more permanent military mission, nor an expression of politically autonomous action on the part of the armed forces. The bad news then is that democratic governments feel compelled to call upon their militaries to engage in non-military duties, in the absence of viable alternatives. The good news is that doing so does not necessarily precipitate a loss of governmental control at the hands of a free-wheeling military institution.

How then does this scenario play out in the Argentine case? If there is one nation in Latin America where we would least expect to see evidence of military role expansion, it would be Argentina. Over the course of 15 years, that nation has constructed multi-tiered, legal limitations to military intervention in domestic affairs. Its Laws of National Defense, Internal Security, Restructuring and Intelligence clearly demarcate and restrict the military's involvement in internal matters. The armed forces mission is by law to defend the nation against threats of external origin only; it may not organize, indoctrinate or otherwise prepare itself for internal security missions; it may only intercede to offer logistical support to internal security forces, or in a more substantial way in exceptional circumstances when police and other security forces are overwhelmed by armed aggressors, and then only at the request of the President under constitutional State of Siege provisions. [38]

By the same token, Argentina has been the victim to one of the greatest economic crises in recent Latin American memory, one that has generated unprecedented rates of unemployment, poverty, divestment, contraction, and capital flight. The crisis has been marked by a complete breakdown in economic policymaking capacity and a violent social explosion that has left dozens dead and brought down two presidents in the span of ten days. If any situation would have pulled the military in, it would have been this one. Where was the military during Argentina's worst economic crisis?

The economic story is well known. For almost a decade, the nation had persisted with a convertibility scheme which had kept its currency pegged to the dollar. While helping to dramatically lower inflation and restore economic stability, the plan also prevented the nation from easily adapting in order to remain competitive within the free trade environment of MERCOSUR. Argentina's trade position deteriorated, while falling confidence in the currency and persistent speculations about an impending devaluation prompting citizens to shift into dollars. A 132 billion dollar public sector debt could not be paid and was falling due-with no bailouts from the International Monetary Fund on the horizon. Unemployment and poverty were on the rise. All these were components of an economic crisis that led President Fernando De la Rúa to declare a cap on bank

withdrawals in a desperate effort to save his financial system. [39] That move, would precipitate his own demise.

The economic crisis touched off massive street demonstrations throughout Buenos Aires and other cities. Levels of violence and counter-violence, so close to centers of executive and legislative power, were if not unprecedented, certainly shocking. Tens of thousands of angry protesters descended on the Plaza del Mayo and then advanced toward the Casa Rosada. Taunting the police, demonstrators charged the Presidential palace to demand that De la Rúa step down. Police held the protesters at bay, but the President had to flee by helicopter from the Casa Rosada rooftop, not before tendering his resignation. [40]

During the evening marauding groups of "piqueteros" attacked the homes of several political leaders including the former Vice President Carlos Chaco Alvarez and the chief of the cabinet, Chrystian Colombo. [41] A week later, violence would resume as protesters stormed the Congressional offices. Once inside they smashed property, set fires, and hurled furniture into the streets. Again they clashed with police, resulting in a number of casualties.[42] Not surprisingly, the government declared a state of siege in order to confront these uprisings.[43] Police units responded with water hoses, tear gas, rubber bullets and in some instances lethal force. At the end of the month, 28 lie dead and hundreds more wounded, in this some of the worst urban violence Argentina had seen in decades. Nonetheless, the military were nowhere to be found. The government was legally entitled to call upon the armed forces under the state of siege provisions, but did not do so. But police and internal security forces alone handled the security dilemma.

Nor was the military involved in the settling the nation's governing dilemma. De la Rúa's resignation on December 20, 2001, touched off an unprecedented chain of quick successions. By the end of the year, the presidency would change hands four times, before finally resting with the designation of Eduardo Duhalde as chief of state. If there ever was a vacuum of power at the apex of the political system, it was during the last 12 days of December 2001. But that vacuum was filled by Argentine lawmakers who, meeting in joint session and operating within legal guidelines, determined how the nation's top post would be filled. According to the constitution, the Vice President would normally serve as caretaker.[44] But since Chaco Alvarez had resigned that post the year before, the job went to the president of the Senate, Ramón Puerta. Puerta served for 48 hours until the Congress selected Rodríguez Saá as interim president Saá then resigned ten days later amidst renewed violence and having failed to generate enough support within his Peronist Party. Again a caretaker president was installed until the Congress met in joint session to select Eduardo Duhalde as the next interim president.

Not all was according to script. Legislators wrangled over whether or not an immediate election should be held to determine the next interim president, how long that individual would serve and under what terms. In the end however, the crisis was resolved; Duhalde would be selected by an overwhelming majority of congressmen, and at his urging, new elections would be postponed until the spring of 2003. [45] The

Argentine democratic system had risen to the occasion, obviating the need for illegal and unsavory solutions. Throughout it all, the military remained garrisoned. Commenting on these unprecedented events, Former army commander Martín Balza said, "This was the first time a [Argentine] government is ousted without military intervention, without a tank in the streets." [46]

However, it was Argentina's economic dilemma that brought the military out of the barracks and into the center of an emergency effort to help suffering communities. In March of 2002, President Duhalde directed the armed forces to participate in a massive program to provide emergency food, medical, and sanitary relief to those zones hardest hit by the crisis. The Government budgeted some 350 million pesos annually for its emergency food assistance program—equal to six percent of total social spending.[47] These funds are distributed to provincial governments, with shares divvied out depending on need. The provinces would, in turn, rely on the Catholic Church and its philanthropic agency, *Caritas*, along with other social agencies and the military, to purchase and distribute the relief items. The Argentine army in particular has been eager to seize upon this opportunity to place its resources at the disposal of the people perhaps to recover some of its social standing lost during the last two decades.[48] It can configure its structure, its territorial deployment, and its operational resources to dual use, collaborating in the delivery of basic necessities to poor communities.[49]

The Argentine program is not without its problems. Cooperation between the Church and the military broke down on occasion and relations became strained. And in August of 2002, charges were made that the military was grossly inflating the costs of meal deliveries, no doubt in an effort to justify greater budgetary allotments and/or disguise unauthorized payments to military participants. [50] The potential for corruption is always great in operations of this sort. Indeed, it had already taken root among the political class, which is one of the reasons the armed forces were called upon in the first place. But the military has, by and large, operated within guidelines, not displaced the Church and other relief agencies, nor exploited its relief role as a means of expanding its own power. This is in contrast to the Venezuelan program, Plan Bolivar 2000. Chávez has taken emergency relief funds intended for state governors and mayors and instead given these to military units. The result is that the armed forces—*at the president's behest*-- have completely displaced governments and civilian agencies to become the "main agents for regional development and the alleviation of poverty." [51]

Argentine law appears to justify a limited military engagement in tough economic times. Article 33 of the Law of National Defense says the military can be called upon for civil defense purposes, when disasters of a natural *or other* origin arise. The military would be asked to help "re-establish" the "normal rhythms of life in the effected zones" in conformance with the law. The assumption here would be that the military's mission would come to an end once some semblance of normality were to return to these communities. [52] Article 6 of the Law of Military Restructuring authorizes military involvement in "support of national communities."[53] The language is broad enough to justify military participation in poverty alleviating programs. Such involvement would

constitute a subsidiary mission which under no circumstances could substitute for or infringe upon the military's primary mission: national defense.

The Law of Restructuring would seem to give the military an opening for ongoing assistance, since it makes no mention of crisis, emergency or timelines. Besides, what if certain communities in Argentina are in states of perpetual need? What would bring military assistance to a close? Here there is some ambiguity and room for interpretation, as reflected in the army's website . The army does recognize that during times of peace it lends a hand during "social emergencies." But it also says that it offers its services on a *regular basis* and "*either* in response to societal demands or the requirements of national provincial or municipal authorities." It conceives that its purpose is to "contribute to national development and the population's well being, fundamentally collaborating in the satisfaction of the community's basic necessities." These operations permit the army to "maintain a close and fluid contact with the people, expressing its sense of solidarity and vocational service for the well being of Argentines." [54]

Although there is certainly a broad, developmental thrust to these remarks, they do not reflect the more limited nature of the army's actual ongoing activities. These have been confined to the delivery of sanitation and medical provisions to hospitals, schools and remote areas that are difficult to access, assistance in vaccination campaigns and disaster relief operations.[55] Moreover, the army's view is not out of line with the President's own proclamations. In December of last year, Duhalde spoke to the armed forces, stating that the " highest calling for a soldier is to align with the people in time of need, with the constitution and the law in mind." The message was clear: role expansive military ventures are worthy, but must be conducted within the objectives and guidelines stipulated by the constitutional authorities. [56]

The military brass and defense minister have not hid their desire that military assistance in this economic crisis take on national dimensions. In part, this purely an economic rationale: to justify an expanded defense budget after years of contraction. But so far, the Duhalde government has resisted pleas to "nationalizing the military's support." Wanting to maintain its control over these missions, it has preferred to restrict armed services operations to specific, targeted communities depending on need, local conditions, *and* hospitality. [57] With memories of political repression in decades past still intact, some communities have refused to lay out the welcoming mat for the troops. Where this is so, the government has kept the military out. The last thing the government wants to do is to impose military solutions on fearful communities at a time when its police have already been taken to task for excesses committed in stemming the social uprisings. The Argentine armed forces show no signs of bucking the political authorities on this point, nor have they applied any undue pressures on the government to expand the scope of their involvement in the anti-poverty campaign.

In sum, military action in Argentina fits within the overall framework suggested by this paper. Regional defense of democracy has lowered the ceiling on military intervention there as it has elsewhere. National laws further circumscribe military participation in domestic affairs. Unlike Ecuador and Venezuela, The Argentine military

has stood on the sidelines as politicians grappled with their own governing dilemmas and police and internal security forces responded to social violence and unrest. But not unlike other nations of the region in time of great economic stress, Argentina's recent crisis has drawn the military in as a participant in government-led hunger alleviation programs, with as yet no apparent ill side effects for civilian control and democratic governance.

Conclusion

With regional defenses against democratic breakdown greater than ever, but domestic pleas for military engagement also greater than ever, Latin America has settled into a new, equilibrium point. It is one that features the persistence of "low quality" democracies, characterized by unresponsive, weak institutions and poor problem-solving capabilities. These systems are likely to survive, unperturbed by military coups yet unable to shake the military loose. The military can neither "save" the nation by seizing and holding onto political office, nor be saved from the burden of assuming its quota of responsibility to help out in time of need. The armed forces will likely remain engaged in role-expansive activities during a period when resource deficiencies and IMF pressures continue to make it difficult for governments to fund the building of civilian infrastructure to take the military's place.

The military responds because governments have called upon it to do so. Military cooperation in this regard is dutiful but not altruistic; self-interest plays a role too. At a minimum, activities of the sort heretofore described justify the protection of defense budget shares at a time when these are under siege. More optimistically, they may justify some enlargement of military expenditures when time and conditions permit. Military earnings may grow, but it is unlikely that military political influence will expand proportionately, if at all. The armed forces remain, by and large, decision-takers, not makers. Because role expansion is government authorized , because new missions are both initiated and terminated by the constitutional authorities, then these operations pose no inherent threat to civilian control. And that is a silver lining in a region increasingly blanketed by darkening clouds.

Fuente:
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[1] The Organization of American States has spearheaded the diplomatic efforts to sure up democracies under siege, or to combat autocratic moves by certain presidents. Actions have been taken on behalf of democracy in Haiti, Peru, Guatemala, Paraguay, Ecuador and Venezuela. MERCOSUR, the free trade zone of the Southern Cone, has built into its charter provisions for canceling membership if and when a country succumbs to a military coup. And countries like Argentina, Chile and others have written escape

clauses into investment deals with Spain and other European nations, rendering these null and void should their respective militaries seize power.

[2] Organization of American States, "The Santiago Commitment to Democracy and the Renewal of the Inter-American System, June 4, 1991," AG/Res 1080, OAS proceedings, Vol. 1, August 20, 1991.

[3] Organization of American States, "Protocol of Washington, December 14, 1992," OEA/Ser.P AG/Doc. 11.

[4] OAS, "Inter.-American Democratic Charter," adopted by the General Assembly in Lima, Peru, September 11, 2001 **http://www.oas.org.**

[5] MERCOSUR, "X Cumbre de Presidentes del MERCOSUR, 25 of June 1996, San Luis Argentina, "Declaración Presidencial Sobre Compromiso Democrático en el MERCOSUR." http://www.mercosur.com/.

[6] The Rio group, which grew out of the Contadora Group, was established in 1986, and has twelve members. See Arturo Valenzuela," The Collective Defense of Democracy: Lessons from the Paraguayan Crisis of 1996," A Report to the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, December 1999.

[7] The ephemeral coup seems to be some product of swift and decisive regional action combined with a strong reaction from civil society within these states. Officers and their civilian allies are undoubtedly aware of the costs to democratic disruption since these have been made known repeatedly.

[8] Democracy's decline is not a statement about the erosion of one particular form of representation. It is common knowledge that some political systems of interest representation are more party-centered while others are more clientelistic; that some leaders are more populist in style, preferring to make direct rather than institutional connections with voters. The problem seems to be more pervasive, one that has affected nearly all polities in Latin America.

[9]Latinobarómetro, Opinión Pública Latinoamericana, Annual Survey, 1996-2002. Latinobarómetro is a public opinion survey representing the opinions, attitudes, behavior and values of the countries where it is applied. The study started in 1995 in eight countries of the region, and since 1996 it covers 17 countries representing a population of 400 million people. The countries are: Argentina, Bolivia ,Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. In some years Spain is also included. See WWW.LATINOBAROMETRO.ORG.

[10] Data from Eurobarometer, Afrobarometer, Asianbarometer, New Democracies Barometer and Latinbarometer, 1999-2001.

[11] Latinobarómetro, 2002.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Of course the public is fickle, and can and do quickly change its views on the pros and cons of democracy once economic recovery is underway.

[14] The New York Times, "Brazil Employs Tools of Spying to Guard Itself," 27 July 2002, lexis-nexis online, http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe; The New York Times, "Military Flexes Muscles in Amazon," 29 May, 2002, lexis-nexis online.

[15] Clarín, "Gobierno, Iglesia y Ejército: Una pelea por el Reparto de Comida," 25 August, 2002.http://old.clarín.com/diario/2002/03/03/.

[16] Clarín, "Duhalde le asignó una nueva misión a las fuerzas armadas," 3 March 2002, http://old.clarín.com/diario/2002/03/03/.
[17] Associated Press, February 7, 1997, lexis-nexis online; New York Times, February 9, 1997, lexis-nexis online.
[18] Conferencia de Ministros de Defensa de las Americas, Santiago de Chile, 18-22 November, 2002, "Declaration of Santiago, Chile,"
[19] J. Samuel Fitch, The Military Coup d'Etat as a Political Process: Ecuador 1948-1966. Baltimore: johns Hopkins University Press, 1977.1977).
[20] The one country that could safely push for stronger adherences to democratic ideals would be the United States. But should the U.S. go at it alone and moreover, act in a heavy-handed way, it would rekindle memories of Washington's unilateral thrusts into Latin America and cause a backlash that ironically would do more harm than good.
[21] The OAS Ad-hoc reunion of foreign ministers reconvenes after that, on December 14, 1992. In a resolution sponsored by nine countries, it says: "The November 22, 1992 elections represented an important phase in the process of re-establishing a democratic institutional order. With the installation of the constituent assembly, the adhoc meetings will come to an end."
[22] The OAS ignored the irregularities leading up to the election and thereafter.
See Cynthia McClintock, "Peru's Fujimori," Current History, March 1993.
[23] USA Today, "Vice President takes charge of Ecuador", 22 January, 2000; Mario Lascano Palacios, 21 de Enero: la noche de los coroneles : rebelión de los mandos medios. (Quito, Ecuador : Editorial Kess, 2001), pp. 61-78.
[24] OAS, resolution 764 expresses support for the Noboa govt. CP/Res 764, 26 January, 2000.
[25] There are role expansive missions of an external nature too. These may include humanitarian relief abroad or electoral supervision in foreign countries. Generally though, these seem less objectionable to civil-military scholars. On the problems of role expansion, see Eric Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1977; Alfred Stepan, "The New Professionalism of Internal Warfare and Military Role Expansion," in Abraham F. Lowenthal and J. Samuel Fitch, eds. Armies and Politics in Latin America (Holmes and Meier, 1986), 134-150; Claude e. Welch, Jr. Civilian Control of the Military: Theory and Cases from Developing Countries (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1976).
[26] Constitución de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, 1999, Base de Datos Políticos de las Americas, http://www.georgetown.edu/pdba/.
[27] David Pion-Berlin and Craig Arceneaux, "Decision-Makers or Decision-Takers? Military Missions and Civilian Control in Democratic South America," Armed Forces & Society, 26 (Spring 2000):413-436.
[28] David Pion-Berlin, "Military Autonomy and Emerging Democracies in South America," Comparative Politics 25 (October 1992):83-102.
[29] El Universal, "Relanzan PB-2000 el 27 de Febrero," 14 February, 2000, http://www.eluniversal.com; Agence France Presse, "Venezuela's army says troops are ready to intervene in strike," 17 December 2002, lexis-nexis online; The Associated Press, Chavez sends Navy ship to take over rebelling oil tanker," 5 December 2002,

lexis-nexis online; Agence France Presse, "Chavez threatens to militarize Venezuela's strike-hit economy," 11 January 2002, lexis-nexis online. http://web.lexis-nexis.com/

[30] Some theorists have argued that the strongest test of civilian control is one where the governing authorities compel soldiers to conduct missions they object to. See David Pion-Berlin, "Strong Tests of Civilian and Military Power in South America," paper presented to the Latin American Studies Association, Chicago, September 24-26, 1998; Michael Desch argues the best indicator of civilian control " is who prevails when civilian and military preferences diverge." See his book, Civilian Control of the Military: The Changing Security Environment (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1999, p. 4.
A strong test may be in the works in Venezuela right now or it may be a perilous gamble by the president; we shall see. Clearly, it is much too soon to tell whether Chavez has that kind of grip on the military.

[31] The New York Times A Top General Still Stands Behind Chavez," December 21, 2002, lexis-nexis online. http://web.lexis-nexis.com/.

[32] Agence France Presse, 1/3/03, lexis-nexis online; Financial Times Information, Venezuelan General says army will "stay out of the political diatribe," 9 January 2003, lexis nexis online. http://web.lexis-nexis.com/

[33] I am grateful to Colonel Joseph R. Nuñez, U.S. Army War College, for pointing out these internal divisions to me. Phone conversation with author.

[34] Washington Post, "Chávez Foes Reaching Out to Military" 21 December 2002, lexis-nexis online.

[35] Harold Trinkunas, "The Crisis in Venezuelan Civil-Military Relations: From Punto Fijo to the Fifth Republic," Latin American Research Review 37, 1 (2002): 70.

[36] Alfred Stepan's list of military prerogatives includes both vertical and horizontal forms but assigns no weighting scheme to them. Hence roles cannot be distinguished by their potential threat to civilian control. See Stepan, Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988). Military powers vary in their centrality to civilian control efforts, and should be rank ordered. See Sam Fitch, "Military Attitudes Toward Democracy in Latin America: How do we Know if Anything Has Changed?" in David Pion-Berlin, ed. Civil-Military Relations in Latin America: New Analytical Perspectives (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001): 62.

[37] Trinkunas, "The Crisis in Venezuelan Civil-Military Relations," 66.

[38] See República Argentina, "Ley de Defensa Nacional" (Ley 23.554) 26 April, 1988, articles 2,4; http://www.ser2000.org.ar/protect/archivo; Cámara de Diputados, Sesiones Ordinarias, Orden del día no. 741, Ley de Seguridad Interior, articles 27,31,32.

[39] New York Times "Argentina limits withdrawals as Banks near collapse," 3 December 2001, lexis-nexis online.

[40] Associated Press, 20 December, 2001; Clarín, "Renunció De la Rúa y el PJ vuelve al Gobierno, 20 December 2002, http://www.clarín.com/ultimo_momentoas/notas/2001-12-20/; Clarín, "Texto completo y facsímil de la renuncia de De la Rúa," 20 December 2002, http://www.clarín.com/ultimo_momentoas/notas/2001-12-20/

[41] Clarín "Balearon la puerta de las casa de Chaco Álvarez y atacaron las de otros políticos" 20 December 2001.

[42] Clarín, "La protesta en el centro porteño terminó con cinco muertos destrozos y saqueos a comercios; December 20, 2001; Clarín, "Doce heridos y 30 detenidos despues de la protesta, 29 December, 2001; EFE news service, December 29, 2001.
[43] The Associated Press, "Argentina president declares state of siege as economic crisis erupts in looting and violence," 19 December 2001, lexis-nexis online.
[44] See article 88 of the 1994 Argentine Constitution, found in Roberto Dromi y Eduardo Menem, La Constitución Reformada (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Ediciones Ciudad Argentina, 1994), p. 509
[45] New York Times, "Turmoil in Argentina," 20 December, 2001, lexis-nexis online; Agence France Presse, "Congress to Designate Interim President to See Out De la Rúa's term," December 21, 2001, lexis-nexis online; New York Times, "Populist Argentine Senator Steps into Fill the Void" 2 January, 2002, lexis-nexis online; The Associated Press, "Argentine Politicians argue over new choice to lead country" 2 January, 2002, lexis-nexis online.
[46] Agence France Presse, 12 January, 2002, lexis-nexis online.
[47] Clarín, "Duhalde le asignó una nueva misión a las fuerzas armadas," 3 March, 2002, http://old.clarin.com/diario/2002/03/03/.
[48] La Nación, "El Ejército, en el centro de la ayuda a Tucumán," 8 December, 2002, http://www.lanacion.com/herramientas/printfrinedly/.
[49] Collaborating to satisfy basic necessities of the community during times of peace, when military operations not being undertaken, to provide help in the realms of social, health, infrastructure. During military operations, to employ military personnel and means in delivery of public services, agriculture, transport, public health, communications, to maintain or restore normal life.
[50] Clarín, "El Gobierno busca bajarle el tono a la pelea por la ayuda alimentaria," 27 August, 2002. http://old.clarín.com/diario/2002/08/27.
[51] Trinkunas, "The Crisis in Venezuelan Civil-Military Relations," 69.
[52] Ley de Defensa Nacional (Ley 23.554), 26 April 1988, art. 33, http://www.ser2000.org.ar/protect/archivo/.
[53] Proyecto de Ley de reestructuración, article 6, 18 February, 1998, http://www.ser2000.org.ar/protect/archivo/.
[54] República Argentina, Sitio Oficial del Ejército Argentino, "Apoyo a la Comunidad" http://www.ejercito.mil.ar/index_ppal.htm
[55] Ministerio de Defensa, Revisión de la Defensa 2001, "Nuestras Fuerzas Armadas en Acción: Desde el Ejercito Argentino" http://www.mindef.gov.ar/revision/principal.htm.
[56] República Argentina, Sitio Oficial del Ejército Argentino, Noticias, "el Presidente convoca a las fuerzas armadas para la lucha contra el hambre," http://www.ejercito.mil.ar/index_ppal.htm
[57] Email communication from José Manuel Ugarte, 24 February, 2002; Clarín, 25 August, 2002; La Nación, "El Ejército, en el centro de la ayuda a Tucumán, 8 December 2002.