

# U.S. policy on hemispheric security

*Washington wants to give the OAS "blue helmet" powers to enforce its new world order. Excerpts from an Oct. 17 memorandum by EIR.*

## I. Overview of policy

The mid-October 1992 trip of Gen. George A. Joulwan, the head of the U.S. Southern Command, based in Panama, to the Southern Cone of Ibero-America, is part of Washington's political preparations for the upcoming extraordinary session of the Organization of American States (OAS), which will probably commence on Nov. 23, 1992 in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

The U.S. policy objectives for this meeting were made clear at the June 3-9, 1991 Organization of American States General Assembly in Santiago, Chile, and again at the OAS meeting in the Bahamas in May 1992:

1) reform the OAS charter to give that body "intrusive powers" in member states, should "democracy" be threatened in any country; and

2) restructure the Inter-American Defense Board (JID), to convert it from an advisory body on military matters into the OAS's deployable military force, on the model of the United Nations' "blue helmets."

In Ibero-America, the period of January through June 1991 saw a concerted policy drive by the United States, with strong backing from Argentina and Venezuela, to launch the total transformation of the OAS and the JID along the lines described in the brief chronology below. But the September 1991 military coup in Haiti made it clear to Washington that not everyone on the continent would go along with the new policy without protesting. And subsequent developments in Venezuela (February 1992) and Peru (April 1992) served to underscore that point.

In the last few months, Washington has faced:

- renewed coup concerns in Venezuela;
- the emergence of nationalist civic-military movements in various countries in the region; and
- a terrible threat to Bush's entire new world order with the example provided by Brazil's peaceful removal of its corrupt President from office.

The essential role of General Joulwan has been to silence these protests of the Ibero-American militaries. His deployments have been the most intense immediately after the various threats to "democracy" in the recent period. In other words, he has been used on several occasions to pressure and threaten the Ibero-American armies back into line. This is the significance of his most recent trip as well.

## II. Chronology

**Nov. 21, 1990.** Gen. George A. Joulwan is named commander of the U.S. Southern Command, Panama.

**Dec. 4, 1990.** Argentina's ambassador in Brazil, José Manuel de la Sota, proposes a Southern Cone alliance in defense of democracy, in which sanctions and even armed interventions would be used by members of the alliance against any other member country which failed to maintain a "democratic" system. De la Sota made the proposal at a luncheon at which Brazilian President Fernando Collor de Mello and 21 other Ibero-American and Caribbean ambassadors to Brazil were present, during U.S. President Bush's visit to Brazil.

**Jan. 11, 1991.** London's *Financial Times* hails Argentine efforts to "modernize" their armed forces, and says Finance Minister Domingo Cavallo is "trying to interest his neighbors in a regional security pact that would keep the generals out of politics and busy with non-threatening duties, such as protecting the environment and stamping out drug trafficking."

**March 1991.** Argentine Foreign Minister Guido di Tella holds secret meetings with his Chilean and Brazilian counterparts to elaborate a strategy for forging a military wing of the Southern Cone common market known as Mercosur, to enforce "democracy" within the region, while simultaneously reducing both troops and conventional weaponry within each nation. The Argentine daily *Página 12* reports March 13, 1991 that the goal is to accelerate the "dismantling of the hypotheses of conflict" between neighboring countries.

Head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of Argentina Adm. Emilio Osses echoes Di Tella's proposals, saying it is necessary to "assume that the Armed Forces model that has been accepted throughout most of this century has come to an end," and that "modernization" of the forces is required within the framework of reform of the state and the "new existing international context."

Argentina's *Ambito Financiero* newspaper reports that behind these moves is the U.S. strategy to prevent internal insurgencies which could threaten democracies in the region, and that the U.S. is pushing for a Conference of Southern Cone Defense Ministers to forge a Southern Cone Security Treaty to establish specific mechanisms of consultation and enforcement.

**April 25, 1991.** Former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara, in a paper for the annual meeting of the World Bank, strongly promotes the concept of such "collective action" on the model of United Nations intervention in Iraq, and urges that the OAS be similarly transformed: "Agreement by the [U.N.] Security Council that regional conflicts endangering territorial integrity will be dealt with through application of economic sanctions and, if necessary, military action imposed by collective decisions and utilizing multinational forces. . . . Such a world would need a leader. I see no alternative to the leadership role being fulfilled by the U.S. . . . Regional organizations like the OAS and OAU [Organization of African Unity] must come to function as regional arms of the Security Council."

**April 1991.** U.S. Ambassador to the OAS Luigi Einaudi, at a Woodrow Wilson Institute seminar on the "Future of the OAS and Hemispheric Security," states that the current structure of the OAS and the Inter-American Defense Board are inadequate to this task. He expresses his "great frustration in the ability to bring together the OAS and the Inter-American Defense Board, the civilian political authority and the military institutional authority. It is clearly time that we translated the democratic solidarity that we have achieved in the hemisphere into a new definition and role for the military." Einaudi goes on to directly attack the concept of national sovereignty, noting that when some new world order advocates, such as "my friend Carlos Andrés Pérez," address the OAS, "they will speak with such clarity that they send many people away reeling, looking for the protective veils of non-intervention, of the sovereign equality of states and of representatives."

**June 3-9, 1991.** The OAS holds its 21st annual General Assembly in Santiago, Chile. Foreign ministers of all member countries sign the "Santiago Commitment," which contains an "inexorable commitment" to defend democracy in the region. Concretely, they agree that the OAS Permanent Council would immediately convene in the event of the overthrow of the government of a member state, and that a meeting of foreign ministers or the General Assembly itself would be called within 10 days, to consider further action.

This accord is a compromise achieved after intense debate. The U.S. and Venezuelan representatives, in particular, push for much stronger action, a revival of the so-called Betancourt Doctrine, which would suspend from OAS membership any country which undergoes a coup. It would also make the suspended nation subject to other punitive actions, including economic and financial embargo, and even joint military intervention by the OAS. The Venezuelan government makes the proposal to adopt such a Betancourt Doctrine in the name of the Andean Pact nations as a whole, which had met the previous month, and argues specifically for the concept of turning the OAS into a guardian of "supranational rights," a regional branch of the United Nations. And U.S. Ambassador to the OAS Luigi Einaudi states: "The U.S. is

determined that the new international order should have an immediate derivative south of the Rio Grande: 'a new regional order.' It would be like killing two birds with the same stone that was intended for Saddam Hussein."

Opposition by some nations, including Mexico, forces the adoption of a less radical compromise, the Santiago Commitment. Venezuelan Ambassador to the OAS Guido Groscors calls it "timid but important," and Luigi Einaudi describes it as "going beyond expectations," but that now we must "make the security mechanisms secure."

**June 10-14, 1991.** Top military leaders from Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay—the newly signed Mercosur countries—meet for the Fifth Strategic Studies Symposium in Montevideo, Uruguay and agree to reassert democracy in the region. According to UPI, the group carries out a "profound self-criticism" of the role of the armies, and pledges that "any military intervention against internal social conflicts deriving from economic problems that emerge in the future, should be legitimized by the civilian authority."

**Sept. 30, 1991.** Military coup against President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in Haiti. The Santiago Commitment is immediately activated, and the OAS, after lengthy debate in emergency session, agrees to impose an economic embargo on Haiti until such time as "democracy" is restored.

**Oct. 26, 1991.** Gen. George A. Joulwan goes to Brazil to meet with the country's three military ministers, among others.

**Jan. 6, 1992.** *Newsweek* reports that the U.S. Southern Command's top priority is to participate in the Ibero-American War on Drugs. Through this, U.S. special forces are involved in the following:

- Army Green Berets train Bolivian, Peruvian, and Colombian police and military in jungle warfare.
- Navy SEALs are in Ecuador, Colombia, and Bolivia giving specialized instruction.
- The supersecret U.S. Army Delta Force has given the Peruvian Army training in counterterrorism, according to Peruvian and U.S. military sources.
- The U.S. wants to have the Green Berets move in to train the Honduran Army, to achieve "the conversion of Honduran units that patrol the Salvadoran border for guerrillas into drug-interdiction teams."

**Jan. 15, 1992.** The *New York Times* interviews General Joulwan, who says the number-one priority for the United States is to keep U.S. troops from getting involved in actual combat. He says the U.S. public must start considering extending counterinsurgency aid to countries like Colombia and Peru, where the line between traffickers and guerrillas is too blurred to distinguish between the two.

**Jan. 28, 1992.** General Joulwan visits Caracas and gives a class to colonels and majors at the Superior War College, subject undisclosed. Journalists who have been formally invited to his class are kicked out of the conference room on orders of U.S. Embassy security personnel.

**Feb. 4, 1992.** General Joulwan visits Colombia, where he tells *El Espectador* newspaper that “it is a pleasure for the U.S. Army to help Colombia maintain democracy.” Defensively, he insists that in cooperation in the war on drugs, the U.S. Army seeks “not to violate Colombian sovereignty, but to defend it.”

**Feb. 5, 1992.** Coup attempt in Venezuela against President Carlos Andrés Pérez.

**Feb. 26, 1992.** U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan testifies before the U.S. House Armed Services Committee on the Army budget for 1993. He stresses that the national defense forces must shift from “an orientation toward the global Soviet threat to a focus on regional crises and the sources of instability. . . . We now face a strategic environment that requires rapid projection of power—often with little or no notice—in reponse to regional crises while remaining engaged in vital regions through forward presence.”

Sullivan describes the main threats to U.S. interests as:

- inimical ideology;
- amassing arms and technology proliferation;
- regional instability;
- economic collapse, competition or restrictions;
- renegade states (Cuba, North Korea, Iraq, Iran,

Libya);

- ethnic, religious, and cultural differences; and
- environmental degradation.

Regarding Ibero-America, Sullivan says the three greatest threats to stability in the region are: 1) the pervasive effects of drug trafficking; 2) the inescapable demise of authoritarian rule in Cuba; and 3) chronic economic difficulties. “Any of these factors could be a catalyst threatening vital U.S. interests.” Sullivan concludes, “The Army of today is focused on no-notice, forcible entry, crisis response to conventional regional conflict by means of tailored force packages—armored, light, and special operations forces—from the continental U.S.”

**March 24, 1992.** The *New York Times* editorially calls for the creation of an “inter-American military force” to provide a cover for U.S. military interventions into Ibero-America. “There is little time to lose. . . . In Venezuela, military nationalists challenge democracy. . . .

“A hemispheric intervention force is more likely to be accepted if Washington maintains a low profile,” the *Times* adds. “The time has come to create a new inter-American military force that could intervene to protect democratic governments from hijacking by armed terrorists.”

**March 24, 1992.** General Joulwan visits Argentina for three days to hold discussions with high-level government and military officials, reportedly on joint actions against the drug trade. At the end of his visit, General Joulwan is asked to comment on the *New York Times* editorial: “I know nothing of this, but it would be a political decision among the governments of the region and the OAS.”

In conversations with Argentine officials, General Joulwan tells them the drug problem had become “one of the hypotheses of conflict that U.S. political-military strategy is premised on,” and that he intended to encourage “the process of demilitarization of the countries of Latin America.”

After Joulwan’s visit, President Carlos Menem tells a meeting of foreign ministers of the Rio Group, gathered in Buenos Aires March 26-27, that the OAS should create a security council to intervene in the countries of the hemisphere to “protect democracy.” According to the Mexican daily *La Jornada* of March 27, Menem “reiterated his proposal that the OAS should have a multinational force to intervene in cases of coups d’état.”

**March 28, 1992.** Venezuela’s daily *El Nacional* reports that Venezuelan President Pérez backed Menem’s proposal for an inter-American military force, but that the Rio Group rejected the idea. Argentine Foreign Minister Di Tella states unhappily that “this matter was not brought up.” Pérez says, more frankly: “Unfortunately, in Latin America when we defend the principle of non-intervention, we fall into the trap of indirectly supporting dictatorships, because when a dictator is installed here, the principle of non-intervention goes in favor of the dictator and not in favor of the people who lost sovereignty. That is why I have insisted that the concept of non-intervention that should prevail essentially must accept the presence of supranational rights to be defended by the region, not as a right of each state but as a right of the Latin American region itself. One of those rights is respect for popular sovereignty as expressed at the polls by the inhabitants of a country, and that right should be multilaterally defended.”

Mexico’s *La Jornada* of March 26 says that then-Venezuelan Defense Minister Gen. Fernando Ochoa Antich is prepared to closely study the idea of creating an interventionist Ibero-American military force capable of “protecting” democracies.

**April 5, 1992.** Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori suspends the Congress and the Supreme Court, in what is widely described as an *autogolpe*, or “self-coup.”

**May 7, 1992.** The U.S. House Western Hemisphere Affairs subcommittee holds hearings on the Peru situation, in which chairman Rep. Robert Torricelli (D-N.J.) says that the Peru events are “not simply another seizure of power in a Third World capital causing a momentary ripple in relations, but a growing insurrection with political consequences for the region and further fueling the exportation of dangerous coca for cocaine production in neighboring facilities.”

Testifying before the subcommittee, General Joulwan states: “One of my command’s strategic objectives is to strengthen democratic institutions in Central and South America. When democracy is threatened, we need to send a clear signal to the military that we cannot do business as usual. We have sent such a signal, and I have personally made this clear to the military leadership of Peru. . . . We

will continue to assess our involvement with the Peruvian military based on progress made on a return to democracy.”

**May 18, 1992.** The OAS meets in the Bahamas, and the discussion centers on the issue of “democracy” in Haiti and Peru. The meeting agrees to tighten the embargo on Haiti, and Peru is pressured to return to “democracy” immediately.

Argentine Foreign Minister Di Tella proposes to the assembly that the OAS charter be reformed by two additional articles: the first, requiring the suspension of non-democratic governments from the OAS; the second identifying the necessity to fight poverty.

Di Tella’s additional proposal for Peru to be immediately suspended from the OAS is not accepted, at which point he urges an extraordinary meeting of the OAS for late 1992, in Buenos Aires, to discuss his proposed changes in the OAS charter. This is agreed to.

Di Tella’s proposal for OAS reform is co-sponsored by the U.S., and calls for giving the OAS “intrusive powers,” similar to the U.N.’s power of imposing embargoes and sending peacekeeping forces.

*La Jornada* of Mexico reports that the Brazilian and U.S. representatives co-sponsor proposals to broaden the concept of “hemispheric security” to include not only weapons control and human rights, but also the strengthening of democratic institutions, drug-trafficking, the liberalization of trade and economies, and protection of the environment. Einaudi emphasizes that this will set “an exemplary precedent” and that the hemispheric security proposal is “an impressive proposal for the post-Cold War era which, doubtless, represents a significant contribution not only to the security of the Americas, but of the whole world.”

*La Jornada* reports that Einaudi and others sharing the U.S. view nearly succeed in setting themselves up as a de facto OAS “informal security council” without assembly approval.

Another proposal is presented by a commission of 10 nations headed by the United States and including the Southern Cone countries, Nicaragua, Ecuador, and Honduras, which urges the 1993 General Assembly of the OAS to take up the issue of transforming the JID into a supranational force comparable to the U.N. blue helmets. Argentina’s Di Tella proposes, according to *La Jornada*, that the JID “have a relationship similar to that which each armed force has with the civilian authorities of the states.”

Einaudi summarizes the U.S. views: The postwar pillars of stability for Ibero-America are democracy, private enterprise, and the OAS. He warns that “those who subvert democracy will remain isolated, will remain without normal diplomatic contacts, without financial assistance and without participation in the central activities of the Enterprise for the Americas initiative.”

**Sept. 18, 1992.** General Joulwan visits Venezuela and meets with President Pérez. According to the daily *El Nacional* of Venezuela, one topic under discussion is the sta-



*A military parade in Bogotá, Colombia. The U.S. wants to take apart the continent’s armed forces and turn them into a supranational “blue helmets” force.*

tioning of U.S. troops in Venezuela, supposedly to help in fighting drug trafficking and kidnappings, including joint coastal patrols with the Venezuelan Navy. One of the two zones mentioned is the southern region of Lake Maracaibo, an area of vast oil deposits.

**September 1992.** General Joulwan visits El Salvador.

**Sept. 17, 1992.** Argentine Navy Chief Adm. Jorge Ferrer submits a report to President Menem to discuss the “feasibility” of establishing a “mechanism of interaction” between the Argentine Armed Forces and NATO, saying that “Argentina will be the first of the so-called peripheral countries to join the biggest military organization in the world.”

**Sept. 28, 1992.** Argentine Foreign Minister Di Tella gives a presentation in Brussels to the Permanent Council of NATO Ambassadors on how Argentine foreign policy has realigned itself with the objectives of the western world, and formally requesting that Argentina’s military be permitted to conduct joint exercises with those of NATO. He says that Argentina is “introducing reforms into the military structure, to be better able to regularly participate in [U.N.] peacekeeping operations.” In response, the council invites Argentine Defense Minister Ermán González and the chairmen of the defense commissions of Argentina’s House and Senate to address them.

**Oct. 1, 1992.** General Joulwan visits Venezuela, meets with President Pérez to discuss U.S. assistance in fighting drugs. Joulwan comments upon leaving the meeting that the U.S. is worried over the drug traffickers’ threat to democracy and sovereignty, and that he has discussed a joint cooperation counternarcotics plan with President Pérez.