

I. Military and Economic Warfare

U.S. Military Out To Force Ibero-America into NATO's Global Wars

by Gretchen Small

Jan. 27—At the outset of 2023, the U.S. military opened a new phase in its drive to conscript the nations of Ibero-America and the Caribbean into Global NATO's fool's errand of militarily crushing the nations of Russia and China. The change was signaled by U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute professor and resident expert on Ibero-American-Chinese relations, Robert Evan Ellis, in an explosive Jan. 13 [article](#) titled "The Strategic Role of Latin America in a Global Conflict Over Taiwan."

It was already public knowledge that the primary concern today of U.S. military policy in this region is to deny its southern neighbors the right to develop their natural, infrastructural, and scientific resources as part of China's Belt and Road Initiative and/or with the help of Russia, because those resources are to be for the exclusive use of the United States in its two-front war against Russia and China. Gen. Laura J. Richardson, head of the U.S. Southern Command, which is responsible for U.S. military operations in this region, spoke with exceptionally brazen enthusiasm of that resource-grab policy last July, at the Aspen Institute Forum.

What is new in Ellis's piece, is its premise: that because the U.S. is likely to be at war with China by as soon as 2027, and because that war will be a global one, it is therefore "imperative" for leaders of Ibero-America and the Caribbean to "anticipate" and clarify where they stand in that coming conflict. U.S. military planners must likewise "anticipate" and treat all existing or planned Chinese projects, companies, diplomats and even people-to-people contacts in the region as enemy outposts preparing for that intended war.

Six days after the publication of Ellis's piece, Gen.

Richardson made clear that Ellis's paper is not some wild-eyed policy cooked up by a lone fool. In a presentation given, appropriately enough, to NATO's lead war-policy think-tank in Washington, the Atlantic Council, Richardson laid out elements of the strategy to subjugate the militaries of Ibero-America and the Caribbean under Global NATO—with the U.S. military's



DoD

U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Laura J. Richardson, Commander of the U.S. Southern Command, told the Atlantic Council that participation by Ibero-American nations in the Belt and Road Initiative, and their acceptance of Chinese investment for their projects, amount to the leading national security threat to the U.S. homeland.

"great relationship" with Ukraine's military held up as a model for that transformation, no less.

The Context

This will not be an easy task. While no sensible leader in Ibero-America wants a head-on collision with the United States, the governments, military analysts, civil society and businesses of the region see as well as anybody that Asia is the new center of global economic

growth, and that fellow developing country, China, is spectacularly working to end poverty while at the same time becoming an industrial, scientific and technological power. There is keen interest in getting in on the expansion of the BRICS to BRICS-Plus; Argentina has already applied to join that grouping, and Bolivia has announced it also wishes to join. The efforts to put together an alternative financial system around BRICS-Plus which would foster physical-economic development and penalize speculation, is at the center of policy-making discussions in countries large and small in Ibero-America and the Caribbean.

So is the Belt and Road Initiative, which is looked to as a way to achieve the physical-economic integration of the region through the long-planned great infrastructure projects required to generate the productivity needed to end poverty and develop. China has offered concrete assistance in building transcontinental railways in South America, and connecting South America through Central America to Mexico and further north to the U.S. The deepwater port and regional logistics center which COSCO Shipping Co. is building in Chancay, Peru, if allowed to proceed, would transform the economies all along South America's Pacific coast, and potentially redefine Pacific cargo routes in general.

Yet the United States military has now declared all of that to be support for a U.S. enemy in times of war. Is this policy not a *de facto* war against the nations of the region, as much as against China and Russia? Is this not related to the role of the U.S. military (and its UK "special" partner) in unleashing hybrid warfare within and between the nations of the region—from Brazil, to Bolivia, Argentina, Mexico and Peru?

War Is What We Want

Ellis arranged to have his piece published in *Seguridad y Poder Terrestre*, the journal of the Peruvian Army's Center for Strategic Studies (CEEPP), which he has worked over recent years to transform into a virtual outpost for the U.S. Army War College.



U.S. Army War College

Dr. R. Evan Ellis, research professor of Latin American studies at the U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, asserts that because the U.S. is likely to be at war with China by as soon as 2027, it is "imperative" that Ibero-American leaders choose sides now for the coming conflict.

Ellis makes no pretense of presenting serious evaluations, but simply strings together assertions justifying his conclusions. Everything in the article is a hypothetical, except the intent of the author.

His starting assertion is that "a war with the U.S. of global proportions, sparked by a People's Liberation Army (PLA) invasion of Taiwan or another matter [any will do!—ed.], is no longer unthinkable." He projects that that war could occur by 2027, the end of President Xi Jinping's third term, because that's what Xi wants.

His next assertion reads:

In the context of a war with the PRC, China's operation and use of "dual use" infrastructure in Latin America, in combination with its regular military interactions in the region, raise the possibility of the region becoming a battleground in such a conflict, even if it [the region] simply wishes to benefit from China's money without involving itself in 'Great Power Competition.'

Those in the region who insist on viewing Chinese investments and projects as commercial ventures, he warns, are failing to take into consideration—

the strategic implications of the growing Chinese position in the context of a possible war of global scope. This work examines how PRC-based infrastructure, military and space engagement in Latin America *could* indirectly involve Latin America in a military conflict *potentially* brought about in the coming years by a *possible* PRC invasion of Taiwan or *similar events*. [Emphasis added—ed.]

On these flimsy grounds, Ellis concludes that the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command military planners need to "anticipate"—that is, map out and prepare to counter—Chinese positions from which the PLA "could impact the ability of the U.S. to deploy and sustain forces in the Indo-Pacific in the context of such a conflict." Ellis



CC/Casa Rosada, Argentina

The Espacio Lejano Station antenna, Neuquén Province, Argentina. It is operated by the China National Space Administration as part of its Deep Space Network for managing interplanetary missions, in collaboration with Argentina's National Space Activities Commission. The U.S., Russia, Europe, Japan, and India also have deep space networks.

writes that this must begin not only for the Western Hemisphere, but “in other parts of the world,” as well. Africa beware!

Time to Choose: ‘You Are Either with Us or Against Us’

The message is clear: U.S. war planners consider any commercial or infrastructure project which involves China to be “dual-use,” and therefore must be shut down. Ellis paints the many infrastructure projects China is building in the region, and the Chinese companies building or operating them, as potential wartime “conduits” for spying, special operations such as attacks against U.S. military personnel and possible attacks on the U.S. homeland. He targets the deep-water port of Chancay, Peru as a primary example of the kind of facilities which could become an “intermediate PRC staging base” for such attacks.

Ellis’s piece has a Dr. Strangelove mania to it. The way he writes, you would think that the PLA is already positioning its forces at Chinese projects and companies, readying to shut down U.S. supply chains. Equally dangerous, are all those Chinese diplomatic activities and people-to-people exchanges, which provide “windows” through which China can gather wartime intelligence and gain such influence that China could poten-

tially convince governments to remain neutral or even be supportive of China in the coming U.S.-China global conflict.

Ellis goes so far as to warn that if one or more additional countries of the region breaks relations with Taiwan and recognizes the People’s Republic of China, that might precipitate Chinese military action to “retake” Taiwan. (Five of the 13 nations which still have diplomatic relations with Taiwan are in this region.) Ellis is more worried about a new government taking charge in Haiti, than he cares about the *genocide* occurring in the country under the pretext that unelected, drug-tainted Ariel Henry is governing. Why? Because in off-the-record interviews with Haiti experts in October

2022, he found that “the majority of actors interested in replacing Haiti’s unelected Prime Minister Ariel Henry, all want to recognize the P.R.C.”

The bottom line of all this is that neutrality is no longer to be tolerated. Ellis orders:

For Latin American leaders, military planners and analysts, it is imperative to anticipate how the region, long considered a zone of relative peace, could become the subject of struggle as the indirect result of PRC aggression against Taiwan, *even if PRC claims that it does not have military designs on the hemisphere are true.* [Emphasis added.]

‘We Fear You Might Develop’

Gen. Laura Richardson, the head of the U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), [conveyed](#) this same message to a broader audience, in her Jan. 19 appearance in the Atlantic Council Commanders Series, broadcast on the internet.

Richardson named participation by the region’s countries in the Belt and Road Initiative, and their acceptance of Chinese investment projects, as the leading national security threat to the U.S. homeland. Asked what security threat keeps her up at night, she answered: Chinese investment in critical infrastructure and space

facilities in the region.

SOUTHCOM, Richardson, Ellis, *et.al.* are all singing the same tune on regional policy. In her appearance at the Aspen Institute Forum last July 20, Richardson [warned](#) that China is building up “critical infrastructure in the region—deep water ports, telecommunications, space, SIGINT, these infrastructure projects, often under the guise of economics and for research.” She expressed horror that not only are 21 countries in the region participating in the Belt and Road Initiative, but 25 countries have Chinese projects “inside of their country: a metro station, a railway, a highway, telecommunications, a dam, projects under the guise of economics.”

China’s assistance in helping U.S. neighbors to participate in space exploration is the focus of particularly visceral attack, with both Richardson and Ellis enunciating publicly what has been told to governments privately: these projects must be shut down. In his “Strategic Conflict” article, Ellis targeted everything from the China-CELAC space working group in 2021 to the five weather and Earth-monitoring satellites China and Brazil have built and launched since that CEBRS program was established in 1999. The Bolivian and Venezuelan satellites jointly developed and deployed with China, Argentina’s deep space radar in Neuquén, Peru’s participation in the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization, and even all Chinese cooperation in the region’s astronomical observatories are all labeled suspect enemy operations.

This is criminal lunacy! More than 170 million people live in abject poverty in this region today, and the numbers are rising fast. Infrastructure and space are the precisely the kind of development projects which Wall Street and the raw materials cartels have refused to let those countries build, but which are required to generate the productivity required to eradicate poverty once and for all from the region—as China has done.

‘Your Resources Are Our Riches’

Richardson admitted in Aspen that the region’s governments want such projects “to show some progress for their countries,” but she charged that they only end up with “spiraling debts” to China. Then, with a straight face and no mention of Wall Street or the IMF, she lied: “We don’t have strings attached to what we do.” We just “help these countries understand where they are, what they need to do.”

Even richer was her denunciation at the Aspen forum of Chinese investment in development projects in the region—projects which the U.S. refuses to offer to its neighbors—as “extractions.” Yet she had begun that same talk by exclaiming that this region matters to U.S. national security interests, because—

Our competitors know, our adversaries know that this region is so rich in resources.... It’s off-the-charts rich.... Sixty percent of the world’s lithium is in the region. You have heavy crude. You have light sweet crude. You have rare earth elements. You have the Amazon, which is called the lungs of the world. You have 31% of the world’s fresh water here in this region, and there are adversaries that are taking advantage of this region every single day right in our neighborhood.

The U.S. government has been warning every country in the world that they should not deal with Chinese companies, because behind every one is the PRC government, yet Richardson bragged that it was the U.S. Southern Command which arranged last year for a delegation from the U.S. “Business Executives for National Security” (BENS) to visit Guyana, as part of the Defense Department’s “integrated deterrence” policy. She explained: “Why is Guyana very important? Well, they just discovered light sweet crude right off the shores of their country....”

A Ukraine Model for Ibero-America?

In her Atlantic Council talk this month, Richardson spoke as if the U.S. military is currently the lead agency for U.S. government operations in Ibero-America and the Caribbean. While the U.S. still does not have ambassadors confirmed for 12 of the region’s 31 countries, the Southern Command is busy convoking interagency meetings, signing MOUs with U.S. academic institutions and NGOs, and organizing and deploying visits by top military-industrial corporations (the BENS group) to have “frank discussions” with leaders of these countries to “advise” them on what they should be concerned about.

Her repeated discussion of how the Southern Command is putting together a region-wide “Team Democracy” partnership against the “malign state actors,” China and Russia, has all the earmarks of the beginning

stages of a Western Hemisphere version of such recent regional NATO alliances as the EU-NATO, Japan-NATO, AUKUS alliances.

On the venal level, Richardson gushed about how the Ukraine conflict and sanctions on Russia have presented the opportunity for “the U.S. to slide in” with its arms sales. She assured her Atlantic Council audience that the U.S. is “aggressively” telling the nine countries in the region that use Russian military equipment, and can no longer get spare parts or Russian servicing of the equipment because of the sanctions, to either donate that equipment to Ukraine or switch it out for United States equipment. (That gambit has yet to produce results. Even Colombian President Gustavo Petro, who earlier had invited NATO to step in with helicopters to help police the Amazon, acknowledged that Richardson and other U.S. officials did make such proposals, and Colombia’s Russian-made helicopters may deteriorate into scrap metal for lack of maintenance and replacement parts, but Colombia will not send weapons to feed the Ukrainian-Russian conflict.)

Ominously, Richardson suggested that the U.S. should use the Ukraine model and wedge for this “Team Democracy” formation, and held up the U.S. role in re-making the Ukrainian military since 2014 as a possible model for what the Pentagon intends for its Southern “neighbors” in this hemisphere.

Richardson’s talk was built around the “levers” which SOUTHCOM has to influence the region. “In terms of looking for levers,” she said at one point, “the National Guard State partnership program is huge. We have the largest National Guard State partnership program. It has come up a couple times with Ukraine. Ukraine has the state partnership program with California. How did we initially start our great coordination with Ukraine? It was leveraged to the National Guard State partnership program that California had. But I have the largest out of any of the co-coms [U.S. regional military commands]. I have 24 State partnership programs [to] utilize those to the nth degree.”

Will Ibero-America really allow itself to become the new Ukraine in Global NATO’s two-front war against Russia and China?

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Already being implemented, this plan is taking over the direction of national economies from sovereign governments, using the power of central banks and the too-big-to-fail private financial institutions, cutting off credit to fossil fuel power generation and to industrial and agricultural enterprises claimed to emit too much carbon. Meanwhile it is creating a new huge bubble in the “sustainable fuel” sector, hoping to prop up the increasingly bankrupt financial system.

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