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## MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIGEST 5-75 (U)

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LATIN AMERICA CHRONOLOGY

1975

- 29 July (U)Newspaper accounts which indicated the 1964 requirement that all Rio Treaty members break political, economic, and other relations with Cuba was removed by the Organization of American States at the Costa Rica meeting--making the issue of diplomatic relations with Cuba a bilateral matter. Of significance was reaffirmation of the treaty by its members and recognition of the importance of continuing US participation for an effective security arrangement.
- 30 July ~~(S/NFD)~~The USSR offered Peru six missile-equipped patrol boats, either OSA-class or Komar-class. This exemplifies Soviet attempts to increase Soviet personnel and influence in Peru.
- 31 July (U)Twenty-five countries in Latin America, including Cuba, met in Panama to form the Latin American Economic System (SELA) whose purpose is to defend Latin American economic interests and promote economic development. The US was not invited to join the organization.
- 1 August (U)Eleven members of a commission on inquiry in Boyaca, Colombia, were killed, apparently by a guerrilla group from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).
- ~~(S/NFD/CD/WNSISMI)~~To avoid charges of meddling, the Soviets have a method of providing a legal source of funds to the Costa Rican Communist Party (PVP). Costa Rican taxi drivers are permitted to import new cars tax free every three years; using the PVP as a middle man, the Soviets are selling the taxis at reduced prices with the profits going to the PVP.
- 5 August ~~(C/NFD)~~The first kidnapping of a US national in 11 years could signal a rise in terrorist activity in Colombia. Seized was Donald Cooper, an American executive who was employed by Sears, Roebuck and Company.

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- ~~(S/NFD)~~ The final increment of 15 Soviet MI-8/HIP helicopters arrived in Peru. The first 15--14 HIP's and a possible MI-6/Hook--were delivered in late June.
- 8 August (U) Press reports indicated that a British businessman, Charles Lockwood, was kidnapped in Argentina for the second time in three years. He previously had been held by the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) in 1973 for two months and was released after payment of a two-million-dollar ransom.
- 12 August ~~(S/NFD)~~ The Soviets will transfer the Latin American section of their international school, the Marx-Engels Institute, from the USSR to Cuba next year. This will aid the Communist Party of Cuba toward their goal of becoming the predominant communist party in Latin America.
- ~~(C/NFD)~~ The arrest and deportation of key Peruvian opposition figures, plus closing of the leftist magazine Marka for anti-Chile statements, demonstrated the government's determination to maintain stable internal security and allow no dissident activity during the conference of non-aligned nations in Lima.
- 13 August ~~(C/NFD)~~ Mexico will become the second nation in the Western Hemisphere, following Cuba, to establish formal ties with the USSR through the Soviet-dominated Communist Economic Alliance. Formal relations between the two countries will be established by signing the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance agreement.
- ~~(C/NFD)~~ President Geisel of Brazil indicated in a recent speech that the strong controls represented by extra constitutional decrees would be retained and that a return to democratic rule should not be anticipated in the foreseeable future.
- 14 August ~~(S)~~ Two Soviet T-4-class mechanized landing craft (LCM) arrived in Havana, raising Cuba's total inventory of T-4 LCM's to seven.

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- 16 August ~~(C/NFD)~~ Appointment of army Colonel Damasco as Interior Minister of Argentina stirred opposition in the military. It is feared that the colonel's position in government might be interpreted as military interference in civilian rule.
- 20 August ~~(S/NFD)~~ Jamaica and Guyana are slowly being converted to socialist states with the aid of Cuba. Both countries are becoming highly nationalistic, one-party, Marxist states. Cuba, on the other hand, has returned to an active political role with focus on the Caribbean and Puerto Rico.
- 22 August ~~(S/NFD)~~ The Dominican Republic's national police activated a three-man counter-terrorist assassination team to eliminate leftist activities. Assassination assignments are developed through information gathered by the police secret service.
- 24 August ~~(C/NFD)~~ Vulnerability of Argentine military installations to attack by terrorist groups was demonstrated by the exploding of the frigate Santísima Trinidad by Montonero guerrillas in Buenos Aires. That incident, coupled with guerrilla activity in three other cities, added to a growing wave of violence.
- ~~(C)~~ Two naval guards and one policeman were killed during a flag-lowering ceremony in Mexico City. This urban terrorist violence brought the total number of policemen killed in Mexico this year to 21. The deaths were attributed to the 23d of September Communist League. To help police combat guerrilla attacks, the Mexican Government authorized purchase of unspecified quantities and types of high-powered weapons.
- 27 August ~~(S/NFD)~~ Top Argentine military leaders demanded Colonel Damasco's retirement from the army or resignation as Interior Minister. The Army Chief of Staff, General Laplane, was replaced by General Videla because he approved Damasco's appointment to the Peron cabinet without approval of other service chiefs. The Provisional Senate President, Italo Luder, constitutional successor to President Peron, took over as head of state.

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- 1 September ~~(S/NFO)~~ Soviet MIG-21/Fishbed aircraft deliveries to Cuba continued. In late August, Havana received a total of 18 Fishbeds. This increased the number of MIG-21's in the Cuban inventory to 105, of which 30 are the J Model.
- (U) A coup, led by Chief of Staff General Gonzalez, failed to overthrow Ecuador's President Rodriguez. A major cause of the attempted coup was reported to have been dissatisfaction with a drop in oil revenues caused by adherence to price hikes by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).
- 5 September ~~(C)~~ US Army exercises were conducted in the Panama Canal Zone, in August, utilizing 2,000 82d Airborne Division paratroopers. The maneuvers were interpreted by the Panamanian Government and press as unscheduled and a deliberate warning in response to Panama's new membership in the non-aligned group of nations.
- ~~(S/NFO)~~ The Prime Minister of Peru, General Morales, replaced General Velasco as President. Morales remains committed to General Velasco's goal of restructuring Peruvian society along socialist lines.
- ~~(S/NFO)~~ More than 300 tons of old Dominican arms and ammunition were purchased by Chile. The shipment included 181 aircraft weapons--111 MK-5 20mm and 20 MK-2 Hispano-Swiza 20mm guns, 50 M-3 Browning .50-caliber machine guns, plus 4.8 million rounds of old ammunition.
- (U) According to press reports, an Argentine Army unit raided San Miguel and arrested three Montonero guerrillas who had blown up a Hercules C-130 transport plane a few days earlier. Other raids near Buenos Aires resulted in release of Charles Lockwood, the British businessman who was kidnapped by guerrillas in July.
- 6 September ~~(S)~~ West Germany delivered 950 Cobra antitank missiles to the Peruvian Army. This purchase more

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than doubled the army's Cobra inventory. Some missiles will be mounted on Soviet MI-8/HIP helicopters in an air-to-surface role, while others will be utilized to reinforce antitank units.

- 11 September (U)Responding to the upsurge of violence and kidnappings in Argentina, according to press releases, President Peron formally outlawed the Montonero guerrilla organization as the first step in a major offensive against all Argentine terrorists. Recently, the Montonero and the ERP guerrillas have been focusing their terrorist attacks on all branches of the armed forces.
- 12 September ~~(C/NFO)~~The Dominican Republic's El Polverin Explosives Factory was sold to South Korea. The plant's equipment will be dismantled and shipped to Seoul. Faced with the increasing threat of the North, South Korea is making every effort to become self-sufficient in arms and munitions to offset materiel stock depletion should US troops leave the country.
- 15 September ~~(C/NFO)~~Argentina's executive powers were temporarily delegated to the constitutional successor, Senator Luder, during Mrs. Peron's 40-day leave of absence. President Luder reshuffled the cabinet to form a possible power base. The most significant change--replacement of Mrs. Peron's right-hand man, Interior Minister Colonel Damasco, with former Foreign Minister Robledo--probably was brought about by military pressure. Removal of Damasco reflected a growing armed forces influence in national affairs.

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