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## MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIGEST 6-75 (U)

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LATIN AMERICA CHRONOLOGY  
1975

- 23 September ~~(C)~~ During anti-American demonstrations in Panama City, 600 rock-throwing youths broke 100 windows in the American embassy. No Americans were injured; however, several Panamanian National Guardsmen were assaulted.
- 24 September ~~(C)~~ The governing Institutional Revolutionary Party of Mexico announced that the Treasury Secretary, Jose Lopez Portillo, would be the party's candidate to succeed President Echeverria for a six-year term beginning in 1976. Portillo shares Echeverria's economic and social philosophy and will continue the policies and programs Echeverria initiated.
- 26 September ~~(S)~~ Military dissatisfaction continued in Ecuador after the 31 August coup attempt against President Rodriguez. The feeling is strongest in the army where poor personnel management, lack of proper equipment, and failure to purchase necessary armaments have aggravated the unrest.
- 29 September ~~(S)~~ President Hugo Banzer of Bolivia increased diplomatic pressure on Chile in hopes of gaining access to the sea by obtaining sovereignty over an 8.8-mile-wide corridor of Chilean territory. As compensation for the territory, Banzer offered to provide Chile with oil, gas, and agricultural products.
- 30 September ~~(S)~~ A second airborne training facility, containing two small towers and the base section for a steel-lattice jump tower, has been constructed near Havana. An air-cargo-preparation training area and a parachute-packing shed were also noted. The small number of personnel involved in para-troop training and the jump technique employed suggest focus on special operations. The identification of this facility and plans to enlarge it

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indicate Cuba may be expanding its capability for conventional tactical employment of airborne forces.

1 October

~~(S/NF)~~A Soviet cargo ship delivered four Zhuk-class patrol boats to Cuba, increasing the number of Zhuk boats in the Cuban inventory to six. The Zhuk-class boat is 75 feet long with a 50-ton displacement, and it is capable of speeds to 34 knots. Armament includes two twin 14.5mm machine guns.

~~(C)~~Prime Minister Castro of Cuba endorsed the cause of independence for Puerto Rico, lending his personal prestige to an issue that has become a major stumbling block in the path of normalizing relations with the US. Puerto Rican independence, while a real Cuban goal, is also being used by Cuba to bolster its revolutionary credentials in the third world.

3 October

~~(S/NF/CD/UNSI/SMI)~~Jamaican Prime Minister Manley decided to downplay relations with Cuba, following criticism of his political beliefs which equated his democratic socialist program with communism.

5 October

(U)Argentine terrorists set off 11 bombs in four cities, opened fire on soldiers in the capital, and kidnapped a communist student. Violence flared for 24 hours after the government extended the 6 November 1974 state of siege indefinitely, in order to combat terrorism.

~~(S/NF)~~Argentina's Montoneros--a dissident, leftist, Peronist, terrorist organization--were responsible for a three-stage assault against the military in which 26 terrorists and security officials were killed. The Montoneros simultaneously hijacked a domestic airliner and initiated an attack on a nearby army base. Eighteen terrorists escaped in the plane after the effort failed.

8 October

~~(S/NF)~~A Cuban air penetration exercise conducted by air force fighter aircraft emphasized the Western

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air-defense zone, which includes Havana. The air force demonstrated a high level of proficiency, even though Cuba's SAM system did not participate.

~~(S/NF)~~ Peru's military capability improved considerably with the arrival of 190 Soviet T-55 medium tanks, three portable ZSU-23-4 antiaircraft weapons systems, and an unspecified number of 130mm M-46 field guns. The equipment was sent to III Military Region which borders Chile.

23 October

~~(S/NNINTEL)~~ Venezuelan military officers exhibited concern that occasional outbreaks of violence in Colombia could escalate to such an extent that a coup could occur. Accordingly, Venezuela's armed forces began offensive and defensive contingency planning relating to Colombia and reinforced units along the border.

24 October

~~(C/NF)~~ A United Nations solution was drafted on the independence of Belize which will probably be unacceptable to the Guatemalan Government. Guatemala has increased troop strength in the province bordering Belize from 300 to 500 men.

~~(S/NF/NNINTEL)~~ Reports indicated that Havana plans to invite members of Lima's Joint Command and other senior Peruvian military officials to observe Cuban military maneuvers. The move was designed to persuade Peruvians to reconsider purchasing Soviet naval equipment.

~~(C/NF)~~ President Perez of Venezuela signed a contract for six Italian-built, Alpino-class frigates costing \$432 million, thereby culminating Latin America's largest single naval arms purchase. Italian training and maintenance personnel are to be assigned to Venezuela. The new ships will strengthen Venezuela's aspiring image as the dominant influence in the Caribbean.

~~(S/NF/NNINTEL)~~ Peru purchased an air defense system--including radar, missiles, and antiaircraft

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artillery--from the USSR.

26 October

~~(C)~~ Five Argentine policemen were killed in a machine gun attack by terrorists on a police convoy in Buenos Aires. This brought to 148 the total number of people killed in political violence during October. The attack came two days after an attempt to assassinate the deputy chief of police. The latest victims brought this year's death toll close to 1,000.

~~(SNF)~~ A US Coast Guard aircraft was intercepted about 40 nautical miles northeast of the Cuban coast during a search and rescue mission and was harassed for several miles by two MIG-21's.

1 November

~~(SNF/WHINTEL)~~ President Morales Bermudez of Peru moved to eliminate suspected radical trouble-makers and to undercut potential challenges to his regime by conducting an air force and naval purge, involving many arrests within the military and civilian population.

(U) Antigua's Prime Minister Walter announced that Antigua and its constituent island, Barbuda, will become independent from the United Kingdom after the next general election in May 1976.

5 November

~~(S)~~ The British built up their 600-man garrison in Belize with an additional 500 to 600 troops, six Harrier VTOL fighter-bombers, and the frigate Zulu. This action was generated by recent transfers of Guatemalan troops and 10 armored vehicles to within 15 miles of the Belizean border.

7 November

~~(SNF)~~ A small Argentine opposition party with close military ties presented a motion to impeach President Peron. The impeachment motion charged Mrs. Peron with "inadequate discharge" of her duties and corruption.

11 November

(U) Two American nuns, implicated in an alleged conspiracy to hide Chile's most-wanted, left-wing

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guerrillas from authorities, were allowed to leave Chile for Miami.

(U) Fifteen landless peasants were killed in Honduras, creating new tensions between the country's conservative landowners and the highly politicized peasant movement, the National Front of Peasant Unity.

14 November

~~(CNE)~~ The Military Airlift Command (MAC) reported possible sabotage attempts on C-141 aircraft transiting Howard Air Force Base in the Canal Zone. The similarity of circumstances in three incidents over an 18-month period raised the possibility of sabotage.

~~(C)~~ Counter-terrorist operations reached an all time high in Argentina. The bombing of a guerrilla base camp in Tucuman Province marked the air force's first participation in support of army operations there.

15 November

~~(CNE)~~ There was a decrease in the level of anti-US emotionalism in the Panamanian press. Through careful press management, Brigadier General Torrijos has prepared the public for a period of extended negotiations, indicating that a draft treaty before 1976 is unlikely.

~~(SNF/NO CONTRACT/UNINTEL)~~ President Perez of Venezuela ordered a high-level investigation of four military groups suspected of coup plotting. It is believed that anti-military leftists have infiltrated the armed forces, government, and universities.

19 November

~~(CNE)~~ President Echeverria announced Mexico's claim to a portion of northern Belize.

20 November

~~(SNF)~~ President Echeverria's assertion of Mexico's claim to Belize prompted Guatemalan President Laugerud to issue a public statement reaffirming his country's claim to Belize.

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~~(C)~~Compulsory participation in Guyana's National Service (GNS) commenced with the draft of 63 University of Guyana students. The one-year mandatory duty for university students is meant to advance Prime Minister Burnham's aspirations toward a socialist framework of government for the country.

~~(C)~~The Argentine Government decided to advance the presidential elections from 1977 to late next year. This decision could lessen pressure on President Peron to resign. The decision by Mrs. Peron to agree, however, could be a ploy to ease strains temporarily while contemplating a surprise move to throw her opponents off balance.

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