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MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIGEST 1-76 (U)

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LATIN AMERICA CHRONOLOGY
1975-1976

- 21 November ~~(C)~~President Lopez of Colombia ordered a military and police crackdown on public disorders and terrorism throughout the country. The hard line approach stemmed from increasing military pressure on Lopez to take more forceful action. His belated recognition of the recent crime wave, kidnappings, and strikes has undermined popular confidence in and support for his government.
- 25 November ~~(CNF)~~The United Kingdom's negotiating position at the UN on Guatemala's claim to Belize will not include territorial concessions. Acting Guatemalan Foreign Minister Obiols acknowledged the diplomatic defeat, but indicated an appeal to the International Court of Justice would be Guatemala's next move.
- 27 November ~~(SNF/NO CONTRACT/NNINTEL)~~The Guyana Defense Force purchased one million dollars in small arms from Europe with an option to buy anti-aircraft systems in the future. Additionally, the Guyana National Service was delegated a more significant role in the country's national defense since civilians, mostly students, may now be drafted.
- 28 November ~~(SNF/NNINTEL)~~Two Soviet ZSU-23-4 anti-aircraft gun systems and 22 130mm M-46 field guns were sighted at Lima army barracks in addition to one 130mm field gun, 13 152mm D-20 howitzers, and eight 37mm anti-aircraft guns at Arequipa, Peru. This was the first indication of 152mm D-20 howitzers in the country.
- ~~(C)~~The last of six British Constitution-class patrol boats, three gunboats and three missile boats, were commissioned into the Venezuelan Navy, countering economically and effectively the problem of an aging fleet.
- 6 December ~~(SNF)~~Ecuador's President Rodriguez announced plans to return Ecuador to civilian rule in the future. His decision was spurred by steady deterioration of his position, recent harsh attacks by political leaders, imposition of press censorship, and his threat to use force to ensure institutionalization of the government.

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~~(CNF)~~ Implementation of the US Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) drew strong criticism from Venezuelan business and political sectors. The exclusion of Caracas from preferential trade agreements under GSP was called unfair and discriminatory. However, any Venezuelan embargo on or reductions of petroleum exports to the United States would damage the already declining economy.

7 December

~~(CNF)~~ Argentina's armed forces stepped up counter-terrorist activities in the wake of violence that left 29 persons dead. The 3 December murders of the former head of the National Police, Major General Caceres, and his wife by Montonero guerrillas, coupled with retaliatory firing-squad executions of foreign students by right-wing terrorists, have brought the country to the brink of anarchy. The army has taken control of the provincial capital of Tucuman, where violence was most pronounced. The province has been the scene of a full scale anti-subversive campaign for more than a year against the rural guerrillas of the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) and the outlawed Montoneros.

12 December

~~(C)~~ Rural unrest in northern Mexico increased significantly in October and November. Peasants occupying land claimed to have been promised to them long ago were forcibly removed by landowners with the aid of the police and the army. Twenty-four peasants were killed during the evacuation.

18 December

~~(CNF)~~ Rebellion by Argentine Air Force officers at Moron Air Base resulted in replacement of the pro-Peronist Air Force Commander in Chief, General Fautario, by Brigadier General Agosti, an anti-Peronist. Rebellious air force officers sought to gain support from army, navy, and all other air elements to call for replacement of President Peron by the Army Commander, General Videla.

(U) Following the attempted air force officers' coup, a large group of Montonero guerrillas attacked army and police facilities near Buenos Aires in a series of coordinated raids. Response by combined government forces and air support thwarted the attack, leaving 50 guerrillas dead.

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- 7 January ~~(CNE)~~ Argentine Government officials announced that Argentina intends to take over the Falkland Islands which are presently under British rule. The 2,000 inhabitants, who are almost exclusively of British descent, objected strongly to parliament over Argentina's taking control of the islands.
- 8 January ~~(CNE)~~ Politically motivated violence by members of Jamaica's People's National Party, including two attacks on the United States Consulate, spread in Kingston. Danger of future disorders continues.
- 9 January (U) A three-man delegation from the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) toured the Caribbean and secured support from Venezuela, Jamaica, and Guyana. Barbados and Trinidad refused to allow refueling rights to Cuban aircraft flying to Angola; however, Guyana granted them in the face of US protests.
- 11 January ~~(CNE)~~ Ecuador's President Rodriguez Lara resigned, turning power over to a military triumvirate called the Supreme Council of Armed Forces Chiefs. No change in Ecuador's domestic and foreign policies is anticipated.
- ~~(C)~~ Three bombings at a resort in Uruguay indicated a return to terrorism. The bombings were directly related to the late December roundup of 150 members of the outlawed Communist Party.
- 19 January ~~(C)~~ Prime Minister Castro's recent public defense of Cuba's military role in Angola indicates he is uncomfortable with what has proved to be an unpopular and costly policy in Cuba. Additionally, Castro views an improvement in relations with the United States as impossible under present circumstances.

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