Chapter Twenty-Two

THE NATIONAL SECURITY STATE

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Governments created by military coups and run brutally by individual military officers have not been strangers in Latin American history. But the aftermath of military coups in Ecuador in 1963 and Brazil in 1964 ushered in a new era of authoritarian governments in which the military as an institution ruled directly or indirectly, using military-generated doctrines concerning security and development as guides. And though the Ecuadorian (1963–6 and 1972–9) and Peruvian (1968–80) military governments were not particularly egregious violators of human rights (Fitch 1992: 63; Palmer 1992: 304–5), Brazil's horribly systematic use of torture to limit opposition (1964–85) was repeated by military governments in Argentina (1976–82), Chile (1973–89), and Uruguay (1973–85).

The phenomenon has been labeled variously, each highlighting a distinct aspect. The most widely used and known is Guillermo O'Donnell's "Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Regime" (1979), which highlights the institutional and technocratic side of the political regime's approach to governing. But Alain Rouquié's "Terrorist State" (1987) also attracts adherents because of its emphasis on the human misery inflicted upon its own society by these governments. And Jorge A. Tapia Valdés's "Stratego-cratic State" (1986) as well as Frederick Nunn's "Professional Militarism" (1992) concept insist upon the military nature of these regimes. Because of the key role that the doctrine of national security played in these regimes, however, the nomenclature of "National Security State" (NSS) is particularly apt. Scholars agreed on the basic outlines of these new forms of governing, but soon came to disagree on the most useful characterization of them, their origins, and their dynamics (Collier 1979). In this chapter we will review the characteristics of these governments that placed an ideology of national security above all other considerations across the gamut of human interactions and briefly explain their origin and demise. This chapter will not present the histories of individual NSSs; readers can peruse the attached bibliography for histories of the particular countries' experiences with the phenomenon. The key argument here is that political crises, economic crises, and social stratification were not sufficient to produce the National Security States of Latin America; it was only in combination with a professionalized military institution wielding a specific doctrine of national security that the subjugation of the citizenry to the state could be attempted.

Defining the National Security State

Two key characteristics define the National Security State: the military institution itself is intimately involved in leading the political system, and its goals are to transform the country's political and economic institutions. This distinguishes military rule in the NSS from previous regimes in which military officers seized power for personal benefit (e.g., General Anastasio Somoza García and his family dynasty in Nicaragua, 1936–79; General Fulgencio Batista in Cuba, 1952–9; and General Luís Garcia Meza in Bolivia, 1980–1); for the protection of the economic interests of a particular group in the country (e.g., the Salvadoran military [Stanley 1996]); or to throw out one set of politicians and let other politicians compete in new elections (the "moderating pattern" of military intervention).

The development of a perspective within the military that it should run the country for a period of time while it transforms the political and economic institutions that it expects will produce national development is the result of both the military's professional development and the adoption of a particular doctrine of national security, which began to evolve in the late 1950s. In the National Security State (Tapia Valdés 1980) the professional military only rules for reasons of national security. To rule when national security is not at stake would divert the military from its job, thereby endangering national security; hence, a professional military would reject the call or the temptation to govern in these circumstances.

In the National Security State the military governs as an institution, not as the followers of a particular military leader. This distinction allows for a personalist General to assume the office of President, as in the cases of Augusto Pinochet Ugarte (Chile, 1973–89), Juan Velasco Alvarado (Peru, 1968–75), and Guillermo Rodríguez Lara (Ecuador, 1972–5). The link between the personalist military leader and the military institution in these cases is philosophical, ideological, and systematic, rather than being based on personal enrichment or to defend the particular interests of any particular group, including those of the military. (Supporting this perspective, military spending as a percentage of the total government budget tends to decrease in almost all of the NSSs [Fitch 1992: 28].) The military and the military president respond to what they see, through the lens of the national security doctrine, as their *obligation* to the nation.

The other distinguishing element of the National Security State is its system-transforming orientation. Instead of attempting to defend the existing political and economic institutions of the country, the military see them as aggravating the problems confronting the nation because they are inefficient, corrupt, and designed to benefit one group of society at the expense of another. The result of these old institutions, the professional military have come to learn, is subversion and underdevelopment. Consequently, the defense of national security requires system transformation (Stepan 1973; Rouquié 1987). This goal stands in great contrast philosophically from those of other military governments that seek personal or corporate enrichment, or to defend the class interests of a particular group in society, or who see themselves as temporary caretakers during transitions from one civilian government to another.

It is important to note that three elements commonly ascribed to the National Security State – gross violation of human rights, neoconservative economics, and

intelligence paranoia – are not distinguishing characteristics. The violation of human rights, either in terms of its depravity or its volume, is not peculiar to the NSS, nor even a necessary characteristic (the Peruvian and Ecuadorian NSSs were not particularly horrific violators of human rights). Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, and Brazil were certainly gross violators of human rights, but in the 1970s so were Paraguay, Bolivia, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. The repression in these latter cases was exercised in the name of the elite and against the people, whereas the national security doctrine insists that its use of repressive tactics is for the benefit of the people and the nation.

Nor does a particular economic policy distinguish the National Security State. As discussed below, the NSS usually becomes viable when citizenry, elite, and the military agree that current economic development policy is simply reproducing economic and political crises. The Argentine, Uruguayan, and Chilean NSS pursued radical economic liberalization policies to free up the market in the expectation that the country would prosper simply by assuming its appropriate place in the worldwide division of labor (Foxley 1983; Ramos 1986). But Brazil adopted a mixed strategy in which the government remained a key player in markets deemed important for national development (Evans 1979), while Peru under General Juan Velasco Alvarado (1968–75) and Ecuador (1972–5) were very interested in guiding economic forces to meet the needs of those at the lower ends of the socioeconomic strata (McClintock & Lowenthal 1983; Isaacs 1993).

Though intelligence and spying are very important to the NSS (see below), again they are not uniquely characteristic. The Cuban communist government is equally paranoid about independent thinking, unauthorized political gatherings, and opposition to the government. But the repression and spying engaged in by the Castro government is carried out in the name of defending class revolution, not in the name of the nation of Cuba.

While military rule and system transformation distinguish the NSS they do not imply a united military institution nor policy coherence of the government. These are behavioral outcomes and thus questions for empirical examination rather than proof-by-assertion. Making decisions about the allocation of resources among legitimate claimants (however legitimacy has been defined by the NSS) necessarily creates competing advocates. Hence once the military as an institution has to make those decisions, disagreements will develop and call into question the unity of the military in defense of its self-identified "national security." Another factor undermining military unity is how those disagreements are resolved. Since national security is at risk, and the military has imposed discipline and punishment upon those in civil society who do not accept the military's definition of the threat and appropriate response, can it act with less vigor against those within the government and military that also disagree? Finally, these threats to the national security can give rise to powerful intelligence forces that threaten to undermine the hierarchy that is so fundamental to the military institution. Autonomous intelligence groups strike fear and resentment among military officers because military hierarchy is set aside, and the very ambiguity of "threat to national security" that allows the government to "legally" move against a civilian of questionable loyalty can also be used within the military institution to silence dissenters.

All of the NSS governments experienced important disagreements within the high commands of the armed forces concerning the installation, development, and retreat

of the NSS. Analysts identify these divisions as representing legalists (they want a quick return to democracy), moderates (they are willing to turn politics back to the civilians after moderate purging of the politicians and some tinkering with political institutions), and hardliners (they see a need for a "deep cleansing" of social and economic structures, not just politics, and have no timetable for a return to democracy). The tension is always there, but usually obscured by press censorship. Still, sometimes the disagreements are too deep or too consequential to hide. The Ecuadorian junta expelled the Air Force commander in 1965 and in Chile Pinochet moved against his Air Force commander in 1978. Argentine factions engaged in armed combat against each other in 1962 and 1963, Ecuador's NSS confronted a military revolt in 1975, and the Uruguayan Navy went into the streets in 1972 to prevent an overt coup. During the first year of the Brazilian military government 1,200 officers were purged (Moreira Alves 1985); the 11-year ebb and flow of the Brazilian *distensão* and *abertura* to "guided democracy" reflected the relative standing of the hardliners and softliners (the latter were a group around the first military president, General Humberto Castelo Branco, and became known as *castelistas* [Skidmore 1988]).

Another empirical variation among National Security States is their degree of inclusiveness of social groups into their policy-making circles. Some analysts have made a distinction between inclusionary and exclusionary NSSs. These are authoritarian governments, so the difference lies in who is represented, not in to whom the government is accountable. Inclusionary governments (Peru and, to a lesser degree, Ecuador) wanted the "popular sectors" (workers, peasants, and students) mobilized to receive the benefits of the system transformation carried out by the NSS. Exclusionary governments (Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile), on the other hand, did not.

My reading of history and the scholarly literature leads me to stress three common elements that give rise to the military deciding to rule as an institution in order to transform the nation's political and economic institutions: the ideology of national security; the belief that national security professionals should lead; and a perception of intelligence as a key defense mechanism. These elements produce structures and behavior that vary roughly in accordance with the historical and conjunctural distinctiveness of each country, as well as the personal proclivities of key military leaders.

The Ideology of National Security

The ideology of the military as the founder of the nation and the ultimate guarantor of legality, order, Christianity, and "national essence" is as old as independence and has roots in Spanish colonialism (Loveman 1993; 1999). In those earlier times the military had not yet professionalized, and thus their intervention in politics responded to either personal or class interests. It was not until militaries encountered a specialized paradigm that emphasized their unique role as professionals in diagnosing the threats to the nation and giving them pride of place in addressing them that the National Security State became possible.

The study of geopolitics provided the underpinnings of that paradigm, beginning in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It was imported from Europe (geopolitical thinking could not prosper in the USA because of its self-conception as

simply abiding by its "Manifest Destiny") and had its greatest impact in South America (Arriagada Herrera 1986a; Kelly & Child 1988). Geopolitics is about the implications of geography on foreign and security policy as well as the relationship between national power and geography. It provided an interpretation of the territorial conflicts and rivalries that developed in the wake of Latin American independence and a vision of what a nation must do to prosper. The key characteristics of geopolitics as it was adopted in South America are: the nation perceived in organic terms (it lives and dies); a zero-sum view of international relations because growth and power come at the expense of others' territory and influence; the concept of strategic territory; and a phobia about lines of territorial projection into the seas and the security of lines of communication. Although geopolitics lost its expansionist rationale in South America, one can still see the impact of these ideas in continued concerns about national control over Antarctica and the Amazon.

Geopolitical analyses emphasize the internal elements of national power. The "interior frontiers" emphasized by many military and civilian advocates of geopolitics encompassed an extremely broad range of factors: morality, intellectuality, esthetics, religion, tradition, sociopolitical fashions, and lifestyle, as well as technology, production processes, and economic systems (Guglialmelli 1977). A nation's population becomes an instrument for the power policy of the state, not just as soldiers but as economically active people (Arriagada Herrera 1986a: 137). In line with this focus on interior frontiers, one of the greatest threats to the state is internal decay, including civil war.

Nunn (1992) demonstrates that military journals throughout Latin America had been discussing the links among social and economic development and political stability since the 1930s. An interest in civilian–military integration to address these issues was thus topical long before the development of the doctrine of national security. Varas & Agüero's (1984) study of Chilean military writing demonstrates that, while concerned with these issues in the earlier period, military writers thought about them as economic, political, or administrative issues, not as military ones.

Before the doctrine of national security, geopolitics was seen as providing its sophisticated users with the "ability to create political systems and practice the art of statesmanship in the same manner that the General dominates the art of war" (Medina Parker 1944: 408). Professor of Military Geography Colonel Augusto Pinochet Ugarte explained in his textbook, written five years before the Chilean coup, that geopolitics "is a political science," by which he meant that it is the scientific study of the dynamic development of the state, and thus "serves as a guide to the statesman for the political leadership of the State" (Pinochet Ugarte 1984: 49–50).

One of the problems that geopolitics – and later national security doctrines – pose for those who would be guided by it, is its ambiguous methodology and the contradictory proposals that could follow from them. For example, distinct Argentine geopoliticians have seen Brazil as a "subimperialist" threat and as a potential partner against threats from powers outside of the South Atlantic (Arriagada Herrera 1986a: 139; Pittman 1988: 30–54). A more pertinent question for our topic concerns the relationship between the people and the state. On the one hand, one can perceive the population as merely an instrument for state policy and thus argue that leaders must have a free hand in ruling over society; this was the position taken by hardliners.

But one of the major Brazilian geopoliticians, General Golbery do Couto e Silva, argued in the 1950s that national security required democracy because the people could not play their proper role in national development if they were "slaves" (Tapia Valdés 1989: 199).

The study of geopolitics was most developed and innovative in Brazil. Peruvian and Chilean military academies produced a consistent line oriented toward applications rather than theory. The Argentine military was divided about the utility of a geopolitical paradigm with the result that it never dominated the military institution, as was the case in Brazil and Chile. Geopolitical analysts of the Argentine situation were prolific, but their work was contradictory and confused, and largely elaborated outside of official military channels. It became intimately linked with the political sentiments of civil society groups that wished to garner military backing for their political projects. Writers placed great emphasis on distancing geopolitics from Nazism and, after the overthrow of Juan Perón in 1955, from Peronismo (Arriagada Herrera 1986a: 140).

When Peru's *Centro de Altos Estudios Militares* (CAEM, Center for Higher Military Studies) and Brazil's *Escola Superior de Guerra* (ESG, Superior War College) began developing national security doctrines for their countries in the 1950s (Stepan 1973: 47–65), the link between national development and security resonated easily with officers already familiar with geopolitical thinking. The Superior War Colleges took up the challenge of integrating geopolitical analysis with French and US counterinsurgency doctrine in the late 1950s and early 1960s (Stepan 1973: 64–8, 172–87; Arriagada Herrera 1986a: 146; Tapia Valdés 1989: 375–8). Given world events, particularly Chinese and Vietnamese modification of Marxism to incorporate peasant-based People's War and the emergence of the Guevarist *foco* strategy with Castro's victory in Cuba, it was not strange that Latin American militaries would be concerned with the possibility of domestic subversion. A focus on counterinsurgency fit in well with geopolitics' concept of "interior frontiers" and the domestic sources of power. Although counterinsurgency led each of these professional militaries to conclude that fundamental changes in their countries' social, political, and economic systems were necessary to avoid revolution, it did not determine how those changes were to occur. Hence both left- and right-wing National Security States emerged.

The close ties of Latin American militaries with the USA and France also affected the evolution of national security doctrines at this time. The US foreign policy establishment had been emphasizing the importance of planning in order to make the most efficient use of a nation's resources for development and security since its elaboration of the Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the late 1940s. France articulated a concern with internal subversion in the 1950s as its colonial empire began slipping out of its hands in Southeast Asia and Algeria, while US experiences in Southeast Asia and Cuba also refocused its concerns in the developing world from traditional military conflicts like Korea to revolutionary war. National planning and counterinsurgency both received a big push from the militaries that the South American professional militaries emulated. For example, General Golbery in 1952 had noted, "It should not be thought that the sacrifice of liberty will always lead to an increase in security. On the contrary, beyond certain limits, the loss of liberty will create a vital loss of security." By the 1960s he was articulating the view that internal subversion constituted the greatest threat to security in the

region and the world (Tapia Valdés 1989: 199–200). Golbery became a chief architect of the Brazilian NSS, though as a moderate.

Because throughout the region US anti-communist counterinsurgency doctrine was taught to military officers and used to pursue "subversives," that doctrine by itself cannot be what distinguishes the NSS. The uniqueness lies in the link between counterinsurgency and geopolitics. That connection facilitates the incorporation of a counterinsurgency perspective for creating a new political system, one that would be used to further the interests of the nation and not simply the class interests of the national elite or US Cold War interests.

The national security strategy, in both its left- and right-wing versions, entailed intervening in the organizations which citizens "mis-used" in the workplace and in politics to articulate and defend what NSS thinkers considered "selfish" interests. But the National Security State was not totalitarian, so there were no sustained efforts to create their own mobilization strategy at work and in politics in the manner of fascist, corporatist, or communist regimes. Even the Peruvian NSS, which mobilized significant sectors of the lower classes to implement policy at the local level, did not organize them into a political party that could support the government (Mauceri 1996: 15–39). Instead, NSSs chose to reorganize unions and political parties, at times forbidding them, at other times creating very limited and defined spaces for their existence. The goal of the NSS was to remake the manner in which societal interests were articulated and the distribution of influence in policy making. Success for the NSS would depend upon getting society to accept the national security doctrine, thereby legitimately leaving society with only a marginal ability to alter the military's strategy for defending national security.

Now that we have defined the NSS, it is important to note a significant difference from many analysts. These analysts of the NSS in Latin America claim that the militaries adopted counterinsurgency perspectives because their countries had no external threats for which military power would be relevant (Rouquié 1987: 98–9). In this view, the USA kept extra-hemispheric powers at bay, no Latin American military could defeat a US invasion, and Latin American countries have enjoyed a long peace amongst themselves since World War II, except for the One Hundred Hours War between El Salvador and Honduras in 1968.[1]

But with the exception of Uruguay, all of the countries that experienced National Security States had military disputes with their neighbors. Border disputes have erupted in violent confrontations involving Ecuador and Peru; Bolivia, Peru, and Chile; Chile and Argentina. Argentina did fight a war with Great Britain over the Malvinas/Falkland Islands in 1982. Also, Argentine and Brazilian nuclear weapons programs in the 1970s were indicators of their recognition that military power is part of the currency of international power (Mares 2001).

Some analysts claim that the development of an internal mission is not consistent with a military force that can be used in traditional state–state confrontations (Fitch 1992: 22). If that were true, and given the record of militarized interstate conflict mentioned in the previous paragraph, these professional militaries would be de facto derelict in their first responsibility to defend the nation. Some militaries were aware of this tension between internal and external threats. For example, the military in Peru, after failing to defend the Leticia territory against Colombia in 1932, decided to resist generals who wanted to use them to support a dictatorship (Villanueva 1971:

100–7); in Ecuador in 1975 one of the arguments for the transition out of the National Security State was the need to focus on the disputed territory with Peru (Mares 1996–7). But the tension doesn't come just from having an internal mission. In the USA the Army was used to quell industrial disputes and social and racial tensions in the period 1877–1945 and even developed a civil disturbance doctrine that contemplated the harsh use of force when necessary (Laurie & Cole 1997). Rather, the question is to what degree the military can do both; the US military was able to successfully balance those roles, and Chile's performance in 1977–82 standing up to Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina at the same time demonstrates that it is possible even for a non-great power.

In summary, the national security doctrine identified the goals a nation should have and the factors that would determine its success. The doctrine itself required implementation and thus the other two characteristics of the National Security State became key.

National Security Professionals Must Lead

Professionalization entails creating a sense of identity linked to one's profession and an appreciation of the skills required to perform one's task; one becomes the "expert" whose responsibility is to provide society with the benefits of that expertise. Along with the development of those skills emerges a set of values concerning the importance of the military's tasks, and hence of their unique contribution. The military becomes the expert in utilizing violence to defend the nation; that use of violence requires understanding how potential enemies plan to use violence in order to devise military strategies and tactics to deter or defeat them, thereby defending the nation.

It is this skill building in the analysis of threat and the employment of violence that separates some Latin American militaries from their contemporaries in places like Haiti, Guatemala, and the armies of their own nations in the nineteenth century. Civilians were interested in using the military to infuse values of patriotism and the social skills of the modern man (hygiene, education, time discipline, etc.). But the modern professional military is not about building citizens; it is about building experts in the defense of the nation.

The advanced training provided by military educational institutions stimulates two aspects of military leadership. First, such specialized education increases the officer corps' sense of professionalism. And it provides an institutional philosophy and methodology for the analysis of national defense. In the NSS, that philosophy was the doctrine of national security and the methodology was based on geopolitics.

Professionalization of the military becomes perverse and undermines both political democracy and traditional forms of authoritarian government when officers perceive that their skills and values permit them to identify threats to the nation that, while imminent, either remain unseen by self-interested politicians or cannot be effectively addressed because self-interested classes or social groups refuse to sacrifice to save the nation. The advanced training, combined with the national security doctrine, provides a basis for military officers to see themselves as possessing specific "scientific" knowledge that civilians do not have; they are consequently the only ones who can

truly appreciate the requisite expertise required to defend the nation. It is for this reason that once they take control of the government their "goals [are] more ambitious than those of the coups undertaken by less professional armed forces" (O'Donnell 1976: 212).

Professionalization did not proceed at the same pace among the countries that established National Security States, nor only among militaries that later overthrew elected governments. The early professionalizers in Peru and Brazil wanted key civilians to understand the central concepts and collaborate with the military in implementing the doctrine of national security and development. Hence, in Brazil civilians constituted about half the students in the courses at the Superior War College, which also offered civilians extension courses (Stepan 1988: 47). Peru invited prestigious civilian instructors from Europe and officers attended UN centers that studied development issues (Stepan 1973: 63; Rouquié 1987: 320). Professionalization of the Argentine military made important advances in the mid-1960s (O'Donnell 1976: 206–10).

Ecuador, Uruguay, Bolivia, and Paraguay did not have specialized military academies that provided training in national security doctrines (Nunn 1992: 230–1; Isaacs 1993: 102). The Uruguayan, Paraguayan, and Bolivian militaries, however, were very tied in to their Argentine and Brazilian counterparts and made efforts to follow them into NSS. In the "moderately professionalized" Uruguayan Army the hard-line faction was known as the "Brazilianists" and those who advocated more social reforms were labeled "Peruvianists." An interesting result of the lower level of confidence the Uruguayan military had in their rationale for establishing a National Security State is that they preferred to rule with a civilian figurehead in the presidency (Handelman 1981: 22–3; Fitch 1992: 9). In Paraguay and Bolivia pre-professional armies had long dominated politics and in the 1970s the Stroessner and Banzer regimes, respectively, developed closer links with the NSSs in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, but could not themselves transition into a NSS. Chile and Argentina had weaker educational traditions than Peru and Brazil, but experiential learning helped close the gap. Chilean military success in two wars with Bolivia and Peru, plus Prussian military training and the strength of the Chilean political system and the militarized National Police Force (*Carabineros*), produced a military that, except for a difficult period from 1924 to 1932, eschewed involvement in politics. But as the political system weakened in the face of economic crisis and growing class conflict in the 1960s, the military got drawn into politics (North 1986). At this point the Chilean military, like the Argentine, benefited from experiential learning in their adoption of national security doctrine. The political advances of the radical left, hypermobilization, and, in Argentina, urban guerrilla terrorism all provided on-the-ground education for the military.

The national security ideology recognizes that security and development require the institutionalization of a political and economic system, not just arbitrary "cleansing" and commanding. Military leadership and the new regime, therefore, require legitimacy; they cannot be established simply by force, even when it was the force of arms that created the opportunity. This is not just an institutional efficiency argument. The geopolitical strain in their national security doctrine required an expression of legitimacy, at some point, from outside the military, by making either the population at large or the national elite fundamental players in national development. Thus

although the military-led "revolutions" in the NSS looked to their own actions in saving the nation to legitimate their takeover of national power, their continued rule required some expressed support by either the elite or the population.

Once the military sought that legitimacy, it was very difficult to turn back the pages if the group solicited refused to bestow it. The Brazilians were cautious in their search for legitimacy. In Institutional Act No. 1 they declared that it was the Revolution itself that provided legitimacy, rather than the people or the constitution, and they never subjected the Institutional Acts that were the fundamental underpinnings of the NSS to a direct vote. Instead, the elections they held were to determine who would participate in government within those rules. Since people voted, the rules seemed to have legitimacy; consequently, when the vote didn't provide the "correct" results in 1965 or the right-wing party voted against the government in Congress in 1968, initially even the *castelistas* and *legalistas* within the military supported tinkering with the new rules. Since the Revolution was still in its early stages, students were mobilizing against the NSS and guerrilla activity was appearing, the NSS had some residual legitimacy from the crisis that had provoked the Revolution, and the hardliners were able to steer the NSS into an increasingly repressive period. But by 1974 only the hardliners within the military were willing to argue that, despite the successes of the government against the overt subversives, rapid economic growth, and the creation of multiple new institutions (including voting rules and participation requirements), national security required continued unilateral military rule.

The Uruguayan NSS confronted its defining moment in 1980 when the electorate rejected the proposed new constitution. Since the Institutional Acts themselves were part of the proposed constitution, its rejection eliminated any façade of their legitimacy as well; as a result, the hardliners within the Uruguayan military couldn't block the decision to seek a transition back to democracy (González 1983; Gillespie 1991: 50–78). The Chilean military took their authoritarian constitution to a plebiscite in 1980, seven years after their bloody coup, and their electoral victory was successful enough that it took almost two decades after the return of democracy to begin passing major amendments to it. But General Pinochet also suffered a huge loss when the 1988 plebiscite provided an overwhelming "NO" to the continuation of his rule and the junta members insisted that he accept that judgment. In each of these three cases the majority of the key officers within the military refused to accept the continuation of the military government as a legitimate expression of the National Security State after the nation had been asked and had rejected it. Instead, the officers sought transition toward civilian government while retaining key institutions believed necessary to national security.

A legal framework not only helps to create a sense of legitimate order and rule, it also provides a basis for responding to demands of the opposition without turning to ad hoc, and hence arbitrary, measures. This is true even outside authoritarian situations: law provides guidelines that limit internal conflict and oppositions' claims for greater changes. Chile's 1980 constitution provided a timetable for a plebiscite, making Pinochet's refusal to resign and hold elections in response to post-1982 mobilizations by the opposition seem reasonable to his supporters and to some in the middle; the opposition wound up playing by these rules (Agüero 1998: 383–404).

The specific manner in which NSS governments dealt with the question of institutionalizing military leadership varied across them, but all sought to retain a key role

in politics through wide-ranging national security laws and councils. Brazil also attempted to create a two-party system privileging a right-wing party that they erroneously expected would naturally accept indirect leadership from the military (Skidmore 1988). In Argentina a number of generals, including Presidents Generals Roberto Viola (1981) and Leopoldo Galtieri (1981–2) believed that their "cleansing" of society and economic restructuring made it possible to slowly reintroduce elections in which generals would be the leading candidates – Galtieri expected to win himself.

Although the national security-oriented professional military expected to lead, military officers disagreed significantly over *how* they could best lead. *Legalists* continued to favor the old "moderating coup," which could keep civilians within very tight bounds. These tended to be the first officers purged by the national security doctrine-influenced officers. *Moderates* wanted to redesign institutions, then allow competition across a fairly wide spectrum, excluding only a few individuals who had the potential to wield enough political influence to undermine the new institutions. The Ecuadorian transition begun after 1976 was guided by these officers, as they vetoed the presidential candidacy of Assad Bucaram. *Hardliners* insisted upon deep cleansing of society, not just of the political and economic systems, and were willing to rule by arbitrary force for an indefinite period of time. Disagreements among factions within the military were so great that armed confrontations occurred between them, as in Argentina in 1962 and 1963 (O'Donnell 1976: 206), and the leaders among dissenting officers were murdered, as in the case of Chile's ex-Minister of Defense General Carlos Prats, shot down in the streets of Buenos Aires along with his wife, and General Alberto Bachelet Martínez, who died in his cell after months of being tortured.[2]

Though the national security ideology resonated with the military officer corps and some high-level technocrats, it was not as attractive to the state bureaucracy, which would be responsible for much of the policy implementation. Many military officers, including those who wrote for the Superior War Colleges, believed that national development, and hence national security, simply entailed a leadership identifying solutions, giving orders to implement policy, and evaluating the outcomes for any necessary adjustments (Nunn 1992). In the absence of party and totalitarian ideologies that could indoctrinate them, however, the lower levels of the bureaucracy did not necessarily accept the military government's paradigm. Because of this, the coherence of the regime, particularly as regards implementation of policy, was never as complete as expected by the high command (Cardoso 1979: 48–9).

Intelligence as a Key Defense Mechanism

Just like various versions of its Marxist competitor, the national security doctrine highlighted the ability of the internal threat to hide among the population and spread the revolutionary message among students, within unions, and to landless peasants. In this context, intelligence became an important tool in the fight against subversion. French and US counterinsurgency doctrines emphasized the fundamental importance of timely intelligence to defeat the internal threat. Secret US CIA and Army training manuals were revealed which advocated and trained in the use of abduction and

assassination as well as medical, chemical, and electrical techniques during interrogation (Cohn et al. 1997; McSherry 2002: 41–2).

Recognition of the need for intelligence, evenly timely intelligence, does not necessarily produce widespread and vicious violations of human rights. While it is true that the pre-professional military and the police have historically murdered and beaten people from the lower classes who they saw as threatening the dominant political, economic, and social systems, this does not explain such behavior by the NSS, for a number of reasons. One of the defining characteristics of the NSS is its domination by a professional military institution. Hence, first, the deviant behavior of non-professional military and police is not expected to persist in the new institution. Second, not all of the NSSs engaged in widespread and brutal violations of human rights (the two Ecuadorian and the Peruvian did not). Third, the NSSs that did engage in vicious human rights violations devised new and horrific means of torture. Fourth, the NSSs subjected people from the middle and upper classes to torture, murder, and "disappeared" them along with the perennial targets from the lower classes. It is important, therefore, to distinguish among the development of an intelligence capability, its transformation into a power center, and the deterioration of its function in the National Security State into a moral abyss even within that state.

Before detailing some of those horrors, it is important to recognize that they were not simply conceived of and carried out by sadists, sociopaths, and other societal misfits. Instead, we must understand these actions as the deliberate strategy of professional military officers who saw themselves engaged in a war for nation and God.[3] Brazilian President Ernesto Geisel (1974–9), by no means one of the hardliners within the military, justified the use of torture with reasoning that attempts to place it within the Just War tradition: "there are circumstances in which a person is forced to engage in [torture] for obtaining confessions and, thus, to avoid a greater harm [to society]" (cited in Huggins 2000: 74). All of the military officers interviewed by Huggins (2000: 74) also argued that it was their professional duty, and not an issue of morality, to sometimes torture and murder.

The supreme irony, however, is that in the defense of Christendom and the nation they engaged in behavior that egregiously violated modern Christian doctrine and the constitutions of their nations (Loveman 1999b: 227–52). Because of NSS efforts to ensure amnesty once the discussion of a transition to democracy occurred, the Chilean case is illuminating. The Chilean military government's decree of an amnesty for itself in 1978, long before they contemplated returning power to a "protected democracy," suggests that they realized that the states of emergencies and civil war that they were engaged in to defend national security did *not* make these actions legal or moral.

There was a tendency for intelligence services to act independently in the early days of the establishment of the NSS. Torture and repression are instrumental tools for the NSS and thus their use corresponds to the evolution of the relationship between the goals sought by those with the potential to wield those tools and the targets against whom, from their perspective, it would make sense to employ such measures. The Chilean and Argentine militaries took control in a period when they and their civilian supporters feared that the left was poised for a civil war; quick action to destroy mobilized groups and root out their supporters seemed to be called for (from their perspective). In Uruguay the military had already defeated the *Tupamaros*

when they effectively seized power from President Bordaberry. To implement the National Security State they sought to keep the level of fear in the population up while they created the institutions of the NSS and negotiated a transition to a protected democracy. Brazil saw its highest levels of repression in the period after the decision was made to transition to a protected democracy, as the hardliners sought to terrorize those in society who were negotiating, and convince the military that subversives continued to conceal themselves in society (Skidmore 1988: 125–35; Stepan 1988: 27–8).

The search for a process to begin the transition out of overt military rule can be associated with more repression, particularly violations of human rights, as the hardliners seek to convince their moderate to soft-line colleagues that the danger of subversion remains and to provoke civilian negotiators into more intransigent positions against the military. Since the hardliners tend to be overrepresented among the intelligence forces, they have the best information about the decreased threat from subversion at the time that every transition out of a NSS begins. Their obstructionist behavior, consequently, is an indication that they are clearly aware that society has not been remade into the form that the national security doctrine had postulated was necessary for the nation to develop and be secure. They realize, consequently, that transition means that the national security mission is not completed and will be undermined in the years to come. Despite much of the bemoaning of *democraduras* (democracies with strong authoritarian features) in the post-transition scholarly literature, only in the Chilean and Brazilian cases (for very different reasons) did the NSS survive even five years out.

The Brazilian intelligence institution (*Serviço Nacional de Informações*, SNI) was the most autonomous of the NSSs. General Golbery developed the plans for the SNI before the coup, and it installed branches in every government ministry with "veto power over top-level and secondary-level appointments." It created its own school to train personnel, gaining such a monopoly on the intelligence function that the intelligence courses of the Superior War College were eliminated. Indicative of its influence, two of its chiefs, Médici and Figueiredo, became Presidents during the NSS. The SNI was not directly involved in physical repression and torture; they left that to the intelligence services of the branches of the armed forces, the state police, and the paramilitaries (Moreira Alves 1985: 48–50; Dassin 1986; Skidmore 1988: 56–7; Stepan 1988: 14–20, 25–9).

During the first few months of the Chilean military government the various branches of the armed forces and the Carabineros carried out intelligence functions in an uncoordinated fashion (Arriagada Herrera 1986b: 130–2). The *Dirección Nacional de Inteligencia* (DINA) was created in January 1974 to centralize intelligence gathering and analysis; it operated beyond all legal bounds. By 1977 the growing power of DINA and its leader, General Manuel Contreras, as well as international pressure to improve its human rights performance, led General Pinochet to replace DINA with the *Central Nacional de Inteligencia* (CNI). This move was part of an effort to transition into institution building, including a new legal regime, which would provide legitimacy for continued military rule (the project for a new constitution was begun shortly after). Nevertheless, the military and CNI continued to violate human rights into the 1980s whenever they perceived it "useful" (Garretón 1986: 160–3) or even in revenge, as when there was an assassination attempt on Pinochet.

Uruguay institutionalized human rights violations within the regular military rather than creating a specialized intelligence service. The function was seen as operational, and thus under the control of combat units; military officers, consequently, rotated through intelligence duties (Stepan 1988: 13–29). This normalization of intelligence functions probably explains the Uruguayan NSSs extensive use of incarceration: one in six Uruguayans was imprisoned during its reign (Barahona de Brito 1997).

Argentina has the bloodiest and most sordid legacy of the National Security States, perhaps partially due to the fact that, like Uruguay, it never created a centralized intelligence service. During the *Proceso*, power was divided among the three branches of the military. The President was an agent of the Military Junta, made up of the Commanders in Chief of each service. But the high commands of each branch met separately to discuss the issues of the day. The service Commanders thus had a politicized and mobilized group of officers overseeing them. In this context it was difficult for an autonomous intelligence agency to arise and concentrate power (Stepan 1988: 24–5; Russell 1990). Instead, each of the military branches repressed as they saw fit, producing not only uncoordinated intelligence but also probably contributing to the far greater levels of execution and disappearance inflicted upon civil society.

The list of violations of human rights engaged in by the Chilean NSS is also indicative of what happened in Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay: "arbitrary arrest, imprisonment, torture, forced disappearances, summary executions, collective executions, the negation of the right to appeal War Council sentences, homicide, exile, internal exile, abduction, intimidation, attempted homicide, death threats, raids, dismissal from jobs and surveillance. Such treatment violated the following rights: the right to life, the right to personal integrity, the right to personal liberty, the right to personal security and the right to live in one's country" (Human Rights in Chile 2006). To this list survivors have added rape, psychological torture through witnessing the torture, murder, and rape of family and loved ones, and, in the case of Argentina, the theft of the children of those they murdered, whom they placed for adoption in "good" military homes (Argentina 1986).

In violating human rights these four NSS behaved similarly, though they varied in their reliance on one means over another. Chile is the leader in the percentage of its population killed by the military in the seizing of power and its immediate aftermath (1973–4). Uruguay had the NSS that detained, interrogated, and intimidated the greatest percentage of its population. The security forces of the Argentine version of the NSS "disappeared" the greatest percentage of its population in the period just before and after creating the NSS. The magnitude of the Argentine and Chilean horrors can be appreciated in the following statistic for dead/disappeared per 100,000 people: Brazil 0.1, Uruguay 1.0, Chile 31.2, and Argentina 32.[4]

The right-wing NSSs (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, and their satellites Bolivia and Paraguay) shared with the left-leaning NSSs (Peru, Ecuador) the perception that internal revolutionaries were philosophically and materially supported by communists outside of the country (Rouquié 1987: 331–2). But only the right-wing NSSs decided to work together to gather and share intelligence concerning the transnational nature of the threat as well as collaborate in addressing it across national borders. In 1974 Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia, Chile, and Paraguay met to

discuss intelligence and operations cooperation against people considered subversives, including those within the military who disagreed with the installation of a National Security State. The following year Brazil joined the group and it formally became "Operation Condor" (McSherry 2002: 45). Four features characterized Operation Condor: it was a secret but official operation; it focused on international operations; it was multinational; and it chose its targets very selectively, rather than engaging in the more general terror designed to inspire fear in society (Martorell 1999; McSherry 2005: 1–10).

With this background in the definition, ideology, and key characteristics of the NSS we turn now to a brief discussion of their origins and demise.

Origins of the National Security State

The origins of the National Security States that reigned from 1963 to 1989 were similar and their militaries shared important perceptions and goals. A perverse process of military professionalism and the doctrine of national security are not sufficient to create the National Security State. Civil society needed to provide a context for its development and the initial demand for the coup that, much to the chagrin of the majority of the civilian coup supporters, opened the door to the NSS. But the specific institutional structure developed for the NSS as well as the intensity with which its development was pursued reflected the specifics of their institutions, their domestic societies, the nation's distinct vulnerabilities and advantages in the international political economy, and the personalities of those generals who successfully maneuvered internal military politics and rose to the top.

By the 1960s perverse military professionalism and national security ideology had attracted numerous adherents within the military, but a catalyst was needed for the ideology to translate to action. That catalyst came from civilian behavior in rejecting the political system and creating threats against the military itself (Stepan 1988: 123–71). By making officers overtly dependent upon political criteria for advancement, politicians and civilian groups subverted professionalism, and when civilian radicals called for the lower ranks to rise up against the officers or armed workers, peasants, and students, they challenged the military's monopoly over the legitimate use of force.

The path to this catalyst was constructed by economic crises and societal praetorianism – that is, the politicization and mobilization of a significant number of the institutions of society, including the Church. Economic crises were endemic in Latin America during the 1960s and early 1970s. This was a period of frustrated efforts to advance the country's development beyond the rapid industrialization many countries experienced in the 1940s and 1950s. Some scholars refer to these earlier decades as the "easy phase" of Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI), one in which countries largely imported intermediate and capital goods for assembly at home behind high-tariff walls on finished goods. This generated an industrial labor force and new capitalists as the multinational companies that had previously exported their product to Latin America now found that they needed to produce the product internally.

The political bargains bringing labor and domestic capital into association with state-owned enterprises produced highly subsidized industries and state-provided infrastructure. Imported intermediate and capital goods were the economic life-blood of the process, but the exchange rate could not decline in reflection of the economic inefficiencies running rampant through the economy because devaluation would make the necessary imports more expensive. Agricultural exports declined as the overvalued exchange rate made them less competitive on world markets, producing a disinvestment in the agricultural economy. For some countries, dramatic negative fluctuations in the world price for their dollar-denominated primary product exports (e.g., coffee for Brazil, copper for Chile) contributed to inflation and stop-go cycles of economic growth. Governments also pressured agricultural producers to provide for a growing internal market, especially for meat and dairy products demanded by unionized labor in the cities, which then induced many producers of basic foodstuffs to shift into production of animal feed. Shortage of basic foodstuffs led many governments to increase subsidies to poor urban consumers and to import wheat, corn, and beans, creating a new draw on already limited foreign exchange. Balance of payments crises ensued, devaluations became more painful as they were put off until the last minute, inflation climbed, and members of the ISI coalition blamed each other rather than question the model itself.

The political economy of the social coalitions that supported ISI was more to blame for the stagnation of the industrialization process than was a "general crisis of capitalism" or any "exhaustion" of the late dependent development process (Hirschmann 1979). Economic crises (even severe ones like that of 2001 in Argentina which produced riots in the streets that forced President Fernando De la Rua to resign) can be addressed without destroying the political system if civilians believe that the system can generate new leaders who will address the problems. But in the NSS cases, many civilians, including traditional political parties, were demanding a military coup because they had lost confidence in the political system's ability to successfully confront the challenges of development (Stepan 1988: 147–52; Rial 1990).

Latin American societies were already praetorian, but the loss of confidence took an already mobilized society to dysfunction. A significant number of groups became veto groups – that is, they could and would stop the machinery of government and the economy if their demands were not immediately met. In this context of hypermobilization and radical politics, the military was as legitimate a target as was a housing ministry. Consequently, a growing number of officers perceived their professionalism threatened through contagion in the ranks or political interference in the institution by demagogic politicians. Defense of the institution that had the self-assumed responsibility to save the nation, therefore, required eliminating that societal praetorianism. The threatening actors could be urban guerrillas or middle-class housewives banging pots in the streets; the point was that the political system's channels for dissent and the expectation that one could wait for an election had lost legitimacy. Into this vacuum stepped those military officers with, in some cases, an incipient understanding of the national security doctrine (the *castelistas* in Brazil), and in others, a total commitment to the national security doctrine (Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay).

The End of the National Security State

None of the National Security States survived, though liberal democracies were not their successors. Two disappeared after a long and arduous transition (Brazil and Uruguay); one collapsed (Argentina); one faded away after a short negotiated transition (Ecuador); and another became dormant, to be resuscitated for a period as a civilian-dominated version of the NSS (Peru under President Alberto Fujimori, 1992–2000). The Chilean NSS was the most durable: the military handed over the government after 17 years to a civilian government that accepted the military's 1980 constitution as well as its basic economic strategy and proclaimed "Mission Accomplished." Fifteen years after the transition to a "protected democracy," however, it is being dismantled under a left–center coalition.

We can point to specific problems faced by the NSSs which produced a revitalization of political parties and social organizations: military defeat in the Malvinas/Falklands War for the Argentine NSS, economic crises for the Peruvian version, and internal disunity for Ecuador's NSS. But ultimately, it was the inability of the National Security State to legitimize and institutionalize itself that guaranteed its demise. For the National Security States could never eliminate the economic and social inequalities that characterize Latin America and thus they could never convince sufficient numbers of people that the expression of conflicting views over where the nation should go and how it should get there was illegitimate. The national security doctrine could only maintain primacy as long as a significant portion of the politically active citizenry feared instability *and* believed that the military could provide security.

Fear is not the same as legitimacy. The professional military that internalized the national security doctrine could never see that they were doomed from the start: to the degree that they eliminated the specter and reality of violent anti-system forces, they were not needed. And if they insisted (as the hardliners were wont to do) that those forces lurked in private spaces, waiting for a chance to return, then pursued them with fury, the National Security State became a threat to more and more citizens who had looked to the military to defend them. Ultimately the growth in the number of people who saw the military themselves as the threat brought an end to the National Security State.

NOTES

1   Sometimes called the "Soccer War." The implication that the war had anything to do with the soccer riots is demeaning to the 4,000 Hondurans who died when Salvadoran forces invaded and diverts our attention from the migration and territorial issues that underlay the conflict (Durham 1979).
2   Air Force General Alberto Bachelet Martínez was the father of Michelle Bachelet Jeria, who was elected President of Chile in early 2006.
3   One might hypothesize that it is this belief in defending Christendom that explains why the four right-wing National Security States engaged in terrifying human rights violations far beyond what the more left-leaning NSSs in Peru and Ecuador committed. Given Stalin's gulags, Mao's Cultural Revolution, and the North Vietnamese abuse of US prisoners of war, one would not want to postulate that it is simply a matter of the morality of the right versus that of the left.

4   Stepan (1988: 14, 70). Chilean data on disappeared and dead is from "Desaparecidos": www.desaparecidos.org/chile/eng.html; and population data from: www.library.uu.nl/wesp/populstat/Americas/chilec.html (accessed March 10, 2006).

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