BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL

Report To The Congress

OF THE UNITED STATES

U.S. And Soviet Bloc Training Of Latin American And Caribbean Students: Considerations In Developing Future U.S. Programs

The growth in Soviet bloc educational scholarships offered to Latin American students has prompted the United States to consider expanding its educational assistance to the region Views of public and private sector officials in the United States and four Caribbean Basin countries varied widely on the impact that students trained in the Soviet bloc may have on developing country and U S interests

GAO's study did not yield conclusive evidence to suggest the degree to which the United States should respond to Soviet bloc recruiting in Latin America and the Caribbean region However, Soviet bloc activities in that region should be continuously monitored Any new and expanded U S educational assistance in the region should be considered in concert with other types of U S economic and development assistance Moreover, the United States needs to further explore options for making the best use of limited federal training resources to complement and bolster the significant private sector efforts which have traditionally played a key role in international education exchanges

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COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON D.C. 20548

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To the President of the Senate and the
Speaker of the House of Representatives

This report presents information on Latin American and Caribbean students studying in the United States and the workings of Soviet bloc efforts to recruit, educate, and train more students from that region in the Soviet Union, Eastern European countries, and Cuba. It also discusses the U.S.-sponsored training programs and cites possible alternatives for the Congress to consider in future deliberations on assistance for that region.

We are sending copies of this report to the Director, Office of Management and Budget; Secretaries of State and Defense; Director, United States Information Agency; Director, Central Intelligence Agency; and Administrator, Agency for International Development.

Charles A. Bowsher

Comptroller General
of the United States

COMPTROLLER GENERAL'S
REPORT TO THE CONGRESS

U.S. AND SOVIET BLOC TRAINING OF LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STUDENTS: CONSIDERATIONS IN DEVELOPING FUTURE U.S. PROGRAMS

D I G E S T

The federal government has provided education and training for foreign students in the United States for decades. Thousands of Latin American and Caribbean students have attended U.S. universities and other institutions for academic and technical training through programs administered by the Departments of State and Defense, United States Information Agency, Agency for International Development, and others. GAO's review focused on federally sponsored programs which are the U.S. government's means of guiding the selection and training of foreign students to further socioeconomic development and strengthen political, military, and social ties with other countries.

Federal programs complement the much larger number of foreign student exchanges which are carried out independently of U.S. government programs and which represent about 95 percent of U.S. international exchange activity. (See ch. 1.)

The Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and Cuba (Soviet bloc) have also recruited foreign students for training in their respective countries. Although recruiting has existed for many years, it has increased in Latin America and the Caribbean over the last 5 years. This has led to many concerns in this hemisphere over the large number of all-expense-paid Soviet bloc scholarships offered to students from the region. Questions over the level and significance of these activities led GAO to undertake this study to address the following matters.

--Past and present trends in the level of U.S. government and Soviet bloc scholarships and training in the region. (See ch. 2.)

--Kinds of training offered, types of individuals targeted, and methods of recruiting employed by the United States and Soviet bloc governments. (See ch. 3.)

In examining these matters, GAO collected information and solicited views from knowledgeable officials within the government and the private sector in the United States and in four Caribbean Basin countries--Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, and Panama--which are reportedly experiencing high levels of Soviet bloc recruiting. (See ch. 4.)

GAO's primary objective was to discuss and compare U.S. government and Soviet bloc recruiting and training of students from Latin America and Caribbean countries. Therefore, no examination was made of the array of scholarships sponsored by the private sectors of either the United States or developing countries or by the governments of other major free world nations.

PROFILE OF RECRUITING IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Over the past two decades, Soviet bloc countries have increased recruiting and have outpaced the U. S. government in scholarship offers to developing country students. An examination of U.S. and Soviet bloc activities in the region shows that:

--In 1982 the Soviet Union and East European governments financially sponsored 9,080 students, compared with 2,197 students sponsored by U.S. government programs. Another 50,000 Latin American students were enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities without federal sponsorship. (See p. 4.)

--From 1972 through 1982 these Communist countries collectively increased their scholarship offers by 205 percent. Recruiting by the Soviet Union and East European countries over the past 5 years contributed significantly to the increase. Cuba is also training large numbers of Caribbean Basin students. (See pp. 1 and 21.)

--During that 10-year period, U.S.-sponsored training opportunities declined 52 percent because of reduced AID-sponsored training in South and Central America. (See p. 1.)

Although the Soviet bloc leads the United States in numbers of government-sponsored students, favorable perceptions of the U.S. educational system, familiarity with the English language, and traditional ties to the

United States lead far more students to privately finance their study in the United States. (See p. 12.)

Increased Soviet bloc recruiting in Caribbean Basin countries has recently led the United States to focus on that area in providing additional scholarship opportunities. (See pp. 14 and 15.)

The Kissinger Commission report of January 1984 called for increased numbers of U.S. scholarships for students from Latin America and the Caribbean region. The Congress is now considering several legislative proposals concerning U.S. government-sponsored training programs in that area. Information and observations provided in this report should facilitate deliberations on that pending legislation. (See p. 2.)

UNITED STATES AND SOVIET BLOC DIFFER IN APPROACH

U.S. and Soviet bloc approaches to providing training affect the types of individuals selected for their respective programs. (See ch. 3.)

The United States emphasizes graduate-level academic training and therefore seeks academically well-qualified individuals, preferably those proficient in English. Participants in U.S. programs are primarily from middle to upper social classes, are often influential in their home countries, and are selected on the basis of their teaching or leadership potential. (See pp. 22 to 24.)

Soviet bloc countries emphasize technically oriented undergraduate programs and tend to select candidates with lower academic qualifications. Often these individuals would prefer to study in the United States but are financially unable or not qualified for U.S. programs. Soviet bloc programs feature language training and preparatory courses to compensate for the shortcomings of these students. (See pp. 20 to 22.)

IMPLICATIONS OF SOVIET BLOC RECRUITING

U.S. and Latin American officials voiced a wide range of possible implications stemming from Soviet bloc recruiting in the region.

Those who see no need for additional U.S. programs to counter Soviet bloc activities commented generally that:

--The number of self-supported Latin Americans studying in the United States and Western Europe more than compensates for the difference between U.S. and Soviet bloc-sponsored students.

--The clear superiority of U.S. education over that offered in the Soviet bloc makes numerical comparisons meaningless.

--Most Latin American students accept Soviet bloc education because it is their only choice; if qualified or financially able, the vast majority would prefer to study in the United States.

--The numbers do not mean much because the Soviet bloc must always expend much more effort in Latin America than its Western counterparts to overcome the natural affinity Latin America has for the West.

--The overwhelming proportion of students trained in the Soviet bloc have negative experiences which cause them to return disillusioned with Communist society, if not outwardly anti-Communist.

Others see Soviet bloc activities as a serious threat to U.S. interests in promoting democratic processes in the region and urge extensive U.S. program increases and changes. While many interviewed were undecided over the seriousness of this matter, they nevertheless expressed suspicion about possible motives behind Soviet bloc activities and a need for better monitoring of the situation. (See ch. 4.)

The major concerns they expressed to GAO were that:

--Stepped-up Soviet bloc recruiting efforts have led to a growing disparity between numbers of U.S. and Soviet bloc-sponsored students. (See pp. 30 and 31.)

--Individuals trained in the Soviet bloc in many instances enter government service where they could influence future policies. (See pp. 31 and 32.)

--Students returning from ideological training could bolster the efforts of Communist elements already present in some sectors of society. (See pp. 32 and 33.)

--U.S. training opportunities may not offer realistic alternatives to students most likely to accept Soviet bloc scholarship offers. (See pp. 33 and 34.)

--The improving quality of Soviet bloc training may make it acceptable to more students as an alternative to Western educational offerings. (See pp. 34 and 35.)

--Existing data on U.S. and Soviet bloc training may be inadequate to assess the need for additional U.S. assistance. (See pp. 35 to 37.)

GAO's study did not yield conclusive evidence to suggest to what degree, if any, the United States should respond to Soviet bloc recruiting in Latin America and the Caribbean region. Nevertheless, Soviet bloc scholarships coupled with other Soviet bloc activities in the region could pose future security implications for some countries in the region and, as a result, for the United States itself. (See p. 38.)

U.S. officials responsible for monitoring Soviet bloc activities and assessing future requirements of U.S. educational assistance programs in the region need to analyze programs best suited to the identified needs of individual countries and evaluate the status of indigenous educational systems, the extent and nature of Soviet bloc recruiting, and U.S. program approaches which have been effective in the past. (See pp. 39 to 41.)

Consideration of increased educational assistance should be undertaken not in isolation from but in concert with other types of U.S. economic and security assistance. In formulating appropriate actions, the Congress and the executive branch should weigh U.S. security concerns against the cost of significantly increasing educational assistance to the region. (See p. 39.)

AGENCY COMMENTS

Official agency comments were received from the Departments of State and Defense, the

United States Information Agency, and the Agency for International Development. (See apps. I through IV.) Overall, the agencies found the report's conclusions to be generally thorough, balanced, and useful. Some of their comments offer additional information and viewpoints which have been incorporated in the body of this report as appropriate.

The agencies unanimously agreed that the United States should expand educational assistance to the region because present trends in Soviet bloc scholarship activities there pose security implications for the respective countries and for the United States. The Department of Defense added that sufficient evidence indicates that current problems will only worsen in the future if present trends continue.

The United States Information Agency is planning for a new program which will provide expanded educational assistance to the region and take into account these factors for each country. AID said that its training programs are based on program and country needs for development and that its programs are probably less middle- and upper-class oriented than the report implies. GAO's presentation on AID's participant training program simply shows that selected students are generally well educated and employed and have a high standard of living by developing country standards.

Defense agrees with the factual material in the report but says that GAO's frequent mention of the large number of non-federally sponsored students implies that the United States is spending enough money on educational assistance.

This report sets forth many perspectives and viewpoints voiced concerning that topic. GAO used both narrative and statistical illustrations to present the many different sponsorships for foreign students but did not intend to imply that sufficient levels of education funds were being committed to the region.

In this report, GAO attempts to present differing perspectives on the issue of U.S. and Soviet bloc training efforts in the region and to illustrate the difficulty of making one-on-one comparisons of each side's efforts.

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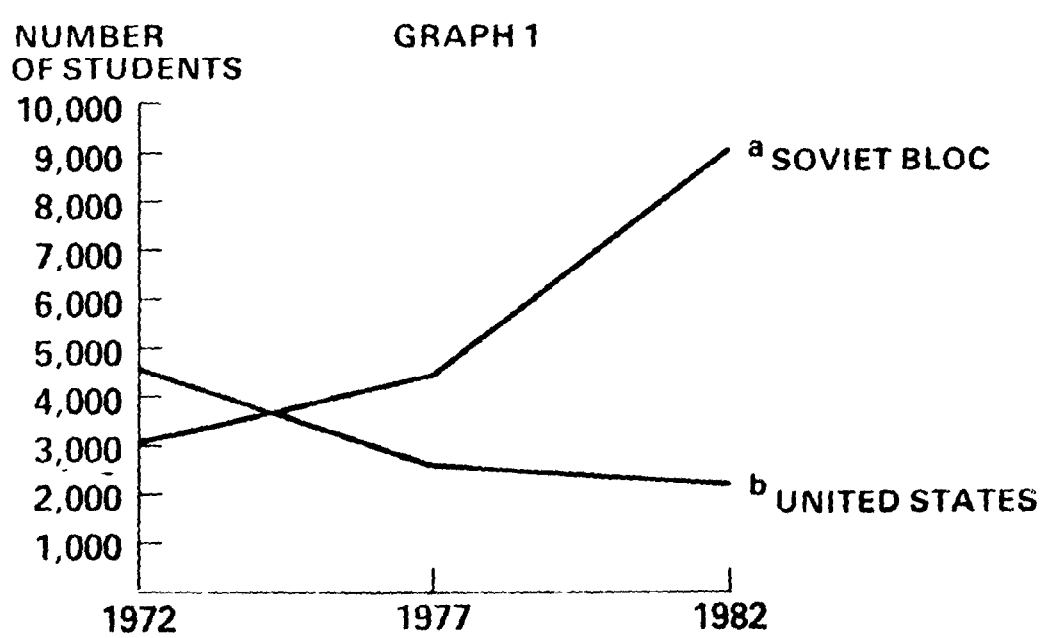
ABBREVIATIONS

AID	Agency for International Development
AIFLD	American Institute for Free Labor Development
DOD	Department of Defense
FMS	Foreign Military Sales
GAO	General Accounting Office
IMET	International Military Education and Training
USIA	United States Information Agency
OAS	Organization of American States

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, the largest U.S. government-sponsored education, exchange, and training programs have been administered by three agencies--the Agency for International Development (AID), the United States Information Agency (USIA), and the Department of Defense (DOD). During fiscal year 1982, these agencies sponsored about 12,500 developing country students worldwide for training in the United States--an overall increase of about 2,700 students over 1977. Public and private sector officials in the United States and the Latin American and Caribbean region have voiced concern over decreases in U.S. government-sponsored training programs in that region, however, especially in light of increased recruiting activities there by the Soviet Union, East European countries, and Cuba (hereafter referred to as the Soviet bloc). As shown in graph 1, U.S. government-sponsored programs in the region declined 52 percent between fiscal years 1972 and 1982 while those of the Soviet bloc (not including Cuba) increased 205 percent.



[a] Excludes Cuba

[b] This graph does not include the large number of non-government sponsored students studying in the United States (See graph 3 on page 12.)

No consensus exists on the seriousness of these trends; however, many U.S. and developing country officials are suspicious of the motivations behind Soviet bloc scholarship offerings and concerned about its future implications.

A December 1980 report prepared for the National Security Council by an interagency task force concluded that increased Soviet bloc scholarship activity in the Caribbean Basin (see map on page 15) could pose a threat to the furtherance of democratic processes in the Western Hemisphere. The report made several recommendations for countering the situation with increased U.S. government support for education and training in the region, some of which are just now being considered or tested as newly designed initiatives and projects.

Even before concerns were raised over increased Soviet bloc recruiting in the region, the Congress demonstrated its support for educational exchanges as an important mechanism of foreign assistance. Section 203 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act of 1979 (Public Law 95-426), for example, called for increased expenditures for USIA exchange of persons activities over a 4-year period. More recently, in November 1983, Congress voted additional appropriations to expand USIA's traditional exchange programs, including the International Visitors (IV) program. Similarly, allocations for DOD's International Military Education and Training (IMET) program have recently been increased. This demonstrated commitment to educational exchanges, coupled with increased Soviet bloc recruiting in Latin America and the Caribbean, indicates that future deliberations over increased economic and security assistance to the region will include consideration of the need for increased educational assistance.

The Congress is considering several legislative proposals to increase U.S. government-sponsored training programs for that region. House bill H.R. 5119 authorizes $50 million in fiscal 1985 for a variety of training activities. The Senate also has under consideration several legislative proposals, some of which endorse the recommendations of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America (Kissinger Commission) January 1984 report calling for 10,000 academic, vocational, and technical scholarships.

COMPARISONS OF U.S. AND SOVIET BLOC PROGRAMS

This report highlights past and present program efforts of the U.S. government and the Soviet bloc to extend educational and training opportunities to Latin American and Caribbean students. Table 1 compares the numbers of developing country students hosted for training, by each world region and for individual countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region, by the United States and the Soviet bloc in 1977 and 1982. The statistical illustrations used in the report draw upon the information presented in the table and include only programs shown there, unless otherwise noted.

The report also provides a detailed comparison of how the United States and Soviet bloc countries are going about this task. It discusses varying perspectives on the potential implications of an increased Communist presence in the region through formal bilateral exchange agreements and through local Communist parties, front organizations, and leftist trade unions. Finally, the report summarizes views on the adequacy of U.S. programs and suggests matters to be considered in deliberating the need for expanded educational assistance to the region.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The U.S. government has sponsored international scholarships and related training opportunities for foreign students since the early 1940s. In 1982, government-sponsored students comprised an estimated 5 percent of the total foreign student population in the United States. These students were participating in programs sponsored by over 30 federal agencies. The programs ranged from very short-term technical training, such as the U.S. Custom Service 2-week narcotic control programs, to long-term academic and technical programs, such as the 4-year undergraduate curriculum at U.S. military service academies.

Although each U.S. training program has its own distinctive focus and objectives, the United States and Soviet bloc governments share two overall objectives in providing training to developing countries: (1) to promote mutual understanding and (2) to increase economic, political, and military ties. Just as the United States promotes an appreciation for democracy by exposing foreign students to U.S. culture, the Soviet bloc countries wish to instill a respect for Marxist ideology by familiarizing students with their languages, institutions, and cultures. The common goal shared by the United States and the Soviet bloc is that the individuals they train may someday assume positions of leadership from which they might influence political, economic, and military developments.

Beyond these similarities, some experts view Soviet bloc objectives in providing training to developing countries as extending beyond the goals of mutual understanding and strengthened ties. They view Soviet bloc educational activities as part of a coordinated effort to promote the spread of communism throughout the world by breaking down the barriers of suspicion and gaining recognition of Marxism as a legitimate form of government. The premise is that eventually developing countries may passively fall to communism. Such a view is clearly held by Fidel Castro, who has enunciated the intention of creating a Cuban-trained cadre capable of governing Marxist countries and working for political change in non-Marxist countries.

TABLE 1

DEVELOPING COUNTRY STUDENTS BEING TRAINED IN THE UNITED STATES IN 1982 AND IN THE SOVIET BLOC IN 1972, 1977, AND 1982

	SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE ACADEMIC STUDENTS ONLY				UNITED STATES (1982)						TOTAL U.S STUDENTS (GOVT SPONSORED + SELF-SUPPORTED)
	1982	1977	1972	% CHANGE 1977 TO 1982	AID	USIA ACADEMIC	USIA IV	IMET	1982 TOTAL	% CHANGE 1977 TO 1982	
WORLDWIDE	83,545	40,015	23,865	+109	7,096[a]	1,200	1,009	3,208	12,513	+28	243,470
AFRICA	36,650	20,630	11,515	+78	2,249	334	402	384	3,369	+44	40,330
ASIA	13,640	3,735	2,780	+265	1,344	269	114	1,059	2,786	+12	76,580
EUROPE	20	–	–	NA	–	101	37	239	377	+25	1,580
MIDDLE EAST	24,155	11,220	6,565	+115	2,482	152	141	1,009	3,784	+94	71,840
LATIN AMERICA	9,080	4,430	3,005	+105	1,021	344	315	517	2,197	–19	53,140
CARIBBEAN[b]					261	11	56	55	383	+30	8,430
ANTIGUA	–	–	–		6	–	–	–	6		109
BAHAMAS	–	–	–		1	–	2	–	3		1,260
BARBADOS	–	–	–		12	1	16	8	37		280
DOMINICA	b	–	–		4	1	–	1	6		33
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	b	b	–		66	3	11	15	95		640
GRENADA	b	–	–		2	–	–	–	2		83
HAITI	b	b	–		65	3	10	13	91		940
JAMAICA	b	b	–		76	2	13	15	106		2,430
ST. LUCIA	–	–	–		7	–	–	3	10		25
ST. VINCENT	–	–	–		4	–	–	–	4		16
FRENCH WEST INDIES	b	b	–		1	–	–	–	1		20
OTHERS	–	–	–		17	1	4	–	22		c

[a] AID TOLD US ON MARCH 28, 1984, THAT IT TRAINED 7 885 DEVELOPING COUNTRY STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES DURING 1982 NO ADDITIONAL DETAILS WERE PROVIDED

[b] SPECIFIC COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY BREAKDOWN NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE

[c] BASED ON EXTRAPOLATED STATISTICS FROM OPEN DOORS 1981/82 INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WHERE REPORTED NUMBERS WERE TOO SMALL TO EXTRAPOLATE WE USED ACTUAL STATISTICS FOR THIS REASON TOTALS DO NOT IN ALL CASES EQUAL THE DETAIL STUDENTS FROM DEVELOPED AND COMMUNIST COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN EXCLUDED FOR PURPOSES OF THIS CHART

SOURCE VARIOUS EXECUTIVE BRANCH AGENCIES

TABLE 1

DEVELOPING COUNTRY STUDENTS BEING TRAINED IN THE UNITED STATES IN 1982 AND IN THE SOVIET BLOC IN 1972, 1977, AND 1982 (CONTINUED)

	SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE ACADEMIC STUDENTS ONLY			UNITED STATES (1982)						TOTAL U S STUDENTS (GOVT. SPONSORED + SELF-SUPPORTED)
					USIA			1982	% CHANGE	
	1982	1977	1972	AID	ACADEMIC	IV	IMET	TOTAL	1977 TO 1982	
CENTRAL AMERICA[b]				373	64	91	135	663	−1	15,470
BELIZE	b	—	—	5	—	6	—	11		170
COSTA RICA	695	485	230	37	13	10	—	60		700
EL SALVADOR	70	120	90	27	1	6	28	62		1,550
GUATEMALA	100	25	10	33	3	7	—	43		660
HONDURAS	b	b	—	53	2	8	80	143		1,100
MEXICO	195	110	175	54	39	40	20	153		7,890
NICARAGUA	1,260	130	145	67	4	8	—	79		1,240
PANAMA	b	b	—	97	2	6	7	112		2,160
SOUTH AMERICA[b]				387	269	168	327	1,151	−34	29,240
ARGENTINA	—	—	—	14	12	10	—	36		1,340
BOLIVIA	105	205	205	36	4	6	—	46		1,150
BRAZIL	45	95	215	89	59	53	—	201		2,820
CHILE	b	b	—	15	11	9	—	35		1,220
COLOMBIA	2,390	910	395	37	72	19	192	320		4,310
ECUADOR	825	755	320	36	30	8	37	111		1,310
GUYANA	110	70	15	27	—	2	—	29		780
PARAGUAY	—	—	—	8	2	11	—	21		104
PERU	825	525	260	97	28	14	97	236		1,850
SURINAME	—	—	—	1	4	6	—	11		90
URUGUAY	—	—	—	9	2	9	1	21		240
VENEZUELA	20	85	110	17	3	21	—	41		13,960
OTHER	—	—	—	1	42	—	—	43		c
UNSPECIFIED[b] COUNTRIES	2,440	915	835							

[a] AID TOLD US ON MARCH 28 1984 THAT IT TRAINED 7 885 DEVELOPING COUNTRY STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES DURING 1982 NO ADDITIONAL DETAILS WERE PROVIDED

[b] SPECIFIC COUNTRY BY COUNTRY BREAKDOWN NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE

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SOURCE VARIOUS EXECUTIVE BRANCH AGENCIES

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

The high level of concerns about a possible adverse effect on the Western Hemisphere from Soviet bloc scholarships being awarded to students from Latin America and the Caribbean region led us to concentrate our review on U.S. government and Soviet bloc recruitment of students in that region. The objective of this review was to collect and analyze information on training offered by the U.S. and Soviet bloc governments in Latin American and Caribbean countries and thereby gain a balanced perspective on their training activities. With available information and the understanding that current economic conditions in that region have a great impact on the demand for external assistance for higher education, we sought to address the following questions.

--What identifiable problems or future implications can be attributed to the influence of Soviet bloc education and training on the region's returning students?

--Do identified problems or future implications pose a serious threat in this hemisphere and, if so, should the United States react in some way to counter Soviet bloc efforts?

--Can increased support for ongoing U.S. government-sponsored programs provide an effective response to increased Soviet bloc training activities or are new approaches needed?

We visited executive branch agencies in Washington, D.C., and the offices of several major U.S. contractors/grantees responsible for administering and supporting U.S.-sponsored scholarship, training, and educational exchange programs--Partners of the Americas in Washington; the Institute of International Education in New York; and the Latin American Scholarship Program of American Universities in Cambridge, Massachusetts. We also met with officials at U.S. missions and host-government ministries and institutions in the Caribbean Basin countries of Colombia, Costa Rica, Panama, and the Dominican Republic to obtain first-hand information and views on the level and significance of Soviet bloc recruiting. We selected these countries in consultation with knowledgeable headquarters officials at AID, USIA, and the State Department to assure

-representative geographic coverage of the region for our identified issues,

--representation of countries experiencing the highest levels of Soviet bloc recruiting, and

--inclusion of countries participating in a cross section of U.S. government-sponsored training programs in Latin America and the Caribbean.

We focused our examination of U.S.-sponsored programs primarily on the AID Participant Training program, USIA's Fulbright and Humphrey programs as well as its International Visitor programs, and DOD's International Military Education and Training program because they are major programs used to bring the region's students to the United States for training. Throughout this report we use the term U.S.-sponsored training programs to encompass these major programs. We recognize that the International Visitor program is not a training program in the literal sense, but we have included it in this analysis because it shares the objective of the other programs--fostering increased ties with other countries.

We did not examine in detail the vast array of programs sponsored by other U.S. agencies or the private sector or other free world nations. Finally, we did not examine U.S. and Soviet bloc training programs conducted in the students' home countries or in countries other than the United States and Soviet bloc. Because of time constraints, we were unable to research the availability of data on these non-government-sponsored programs. Overall, our efforts were primarily descriptive, for the purpose of comparing U.S. and Soviet bloc efforts, rather than evaluative.

We obtained data on Soviet bloc activities from (1) unclassified documents, such as official memorandums and reports at the Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Central Intelligence Agency, and Defense Intelligence Agency, (2) discussions with officials of these agencies in Washington, D.C., and with other public and private sector officials in both the United States and countries in our case studies, including high-level Caribbean Basin government officials, and (3) formal U.S. government analyses and conclusions drawn from official reports.

Information concerning U.S.-sponsored training programs was drawn primarily from (1) files and records at AID's Office of International Training and Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean in Washington, D.C., (2) U.S. embassies and AID missions in the countries in our case studies, and (3) discussions with appropriate officials at those locations and at the offices of major U.S. contractors. We collected statistics on U.S.-sponsored students from AID, USIA, and DOD and used statistics reported to USIA's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Exchange by over 25 other sponsoring agencies.

The issues and views in this report often represent a composite of statements obtained from those with whom we met. Many of the statements could not be corroborated for lack of documentation. We caution the users of the report to keep in mind that the statistical compilations and illustrations are prepared from data that were often incomplete and unverifiable. Statistics on Soviet bloc training efforts are also imprecise because:

--Some Soviet bloc recruiting is done without the knowledge of developing country governments; therefore, official statistics that exist are incomplete.

--U.S. officials piece together estimates of Soviet bloc scholarship offers from several sources; these estimates cannot always be verified.

--As new sources of information become available, estimates of numbers being trained are revised.

--Foreign students going to Soviet bloc countries for study unsanctioned by their governments often travel via a third country, making this activity difficult to track.

Statistics on foreign students studying in U.S. government-sponsored programs are also incomplete. Although USIA annually attempts to quantify the number of students participating in these programs in discharging its legislative mandate to coordinate government exchanges, officials readily concede the statistics are incomplete, unverified, and in some cases inaccurate. Duplicate reporting of some participants by more than one agency and failure of some agencies to report their participants contribute to the problem. The Institute of International Education publishes an annual statistical report on foreign students enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities which we have used in this report.[1] However, there is no mechanism for compiling information on the magnitude and nature of all non-federally sponsored exchange activities, which are estimated to represent 95 percent of all U.S. international exchanges.

Recognizing the shortcomings in the data, we nevertheless believe that the information presented in the report provides (1) the best available information on who, what, where, and why foreign students, particularly those from Latin America and the Caribbean, study in the United States and Soviet bloc countries and (2) a useful discussion and analysis of trends with which to reasonably gauge the U.S. and Soviet bloc levels of effort in the region.

This review was conducted from December 1982 to September 1983. Except as noted above, it was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government audit standards.

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[1] Open Doors 1981/82: (and other years), Institute of International Education.

CHAPTER 2

PROFILE OF U.S. AND SOVIET BLOC TRAINING EFFORTS

The U.S. and Soviet bloc governments offer students of developing countries a wide variety of academic, technical, and military training opportunities. The scholarship opportunities made available, however, differ widely in terms of the number and types offered, regional emphasis, and extent of funding.

Our observations on U.S. and Soviet bloc scholarship activities in developing countries, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean, are summarized below.

--Soviet bloc recruiting in developing countries is not a recent phenomenon. Since the mid-1950s the Soviet Union has sought to capture the political and economic goodwill created through exchange, education, and training programs.

--The Soviet Union and East European countries have maintained a continuous and growing lead over the United States in government-sponsored scholarships by tripling their scholarship offerings to developing countries over the last 10 years. However, if non-government students are counted, far more developing country students continue to study at U.S. educational institutions.

--U.S. and Soviet bloc education and training programs have not traditionally allocated a large percent of their scholarship programs to the Latin America and Caribbean region because of apparent higher priorities in other geographical regions. Nevertheless, Soviet bloc scholarships for the region have been increasing while the number offered by the United States has been decreasing.

--Several Caribbean Basin countries have become the focus of stepped-up Soviet bloc scholarship activity in the last 5 years, with the Soviet Union and Cuba serving as the predominant recruiters. In recent years, the United States has begun to implement new initiatives and projects to reverse the decline of its training programs and to counter the growing number of Soviet bloc scholarships.

The different characteristics of U.S. and Soviet bloc scholarship programs make a one-for-one comparison difficult. Moreover, depending on an individual's perspective, available

information can be used to make a case that either side is leading the other in providing training opportunities. While the information does not definitively prove the supposition for either side, it does show a series of trends that point toward increased Soviet bloc scholarship offers in the region.

WORLDWIDE GROWTH OF SOVIET BLOC TRAINING PROGRAMS

During the mid-1950s, the Soviet Union observed the political and economic advantages accruing to the United States from training programs that exposed the potential leadership of developing countries' governments to U.S. technologies and the social, political, and cultural aspects of American life. Partly out of a desire to share the goodwill created through such government-sponsored training programs and partly because it needed a cadre of developing country individuals with whom it could work, the Soviet Union initiated scholarship programs for developing countries.

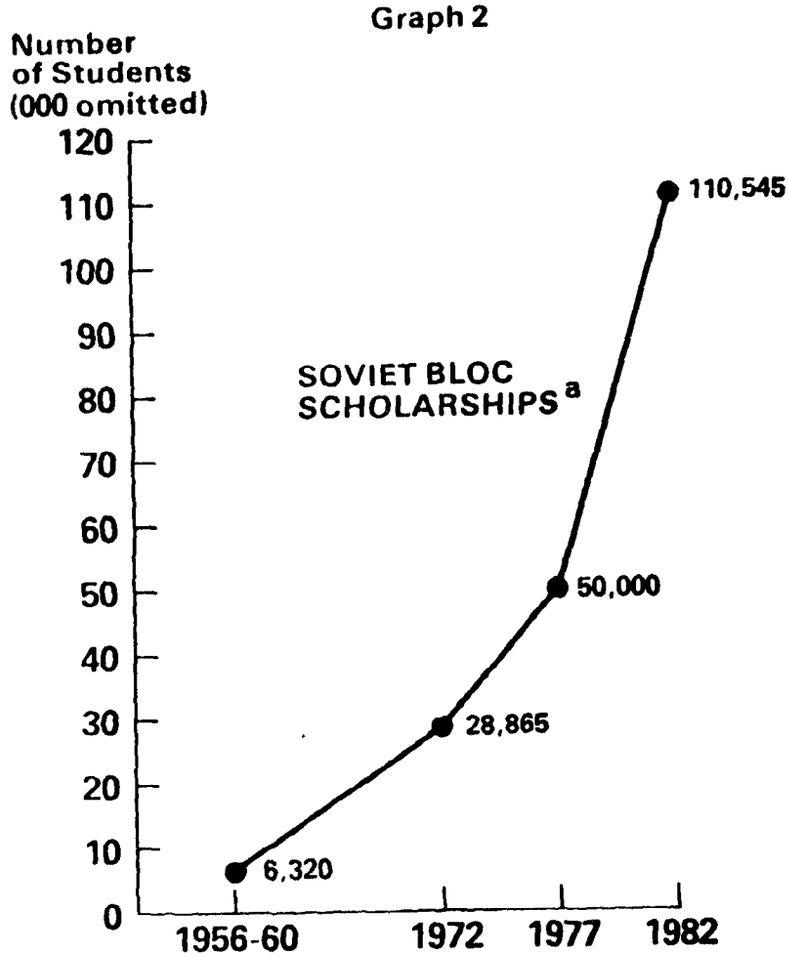
By 1956 the Soviet Union and East European nations were offering academic scholarships to about 1,000 students from a few developing countries. Since then, estimates are that nearly 300,000 students from over 100 countries have received academic, technical, and military training. Cuba has provided academic and technical training to another 50,000 students since the early 1960s. In 1982 alone, 50,000 students were in academic programs in the Soviet Union, 33,000 were in Eastern Europe, and 27,000 were in Cuba. These large numbers of foreign students reflect the development of more sophisticated and competitive programs and an increasing demand for higher education in many countries.

Available documentation indicates that the 83,000 developing country students in educational programs in the Soviet Union and East European countries during 1982 were academic students who had begun their studies at the undergraduate level. An additional 5,000 were attending short-term technical training and another 5,000 were receiving military training, largely related to foreign military sales.

Of the estimated 27,000 developing country students attending Cuban schools in 1982, about 14,000 were elementary and secondary school children and youth enrolled in the Isle of Youth Program. The remaining 13,000 were enrolled in academic and technical programs at universities and institutes. We did not obtain information on the size of Cuba's worldwide military training program.

Graph 2 illustrates the growth of Soviet bloc academic scholarship programs over the past 25 years.

Graph 2



[a] Estimates include Cuban academic and technical scholarships as well as youth and children studying on the Isle of Youth.

UNITED STATES LEADS IN NUMBERS OF NON-GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED STUDENTS

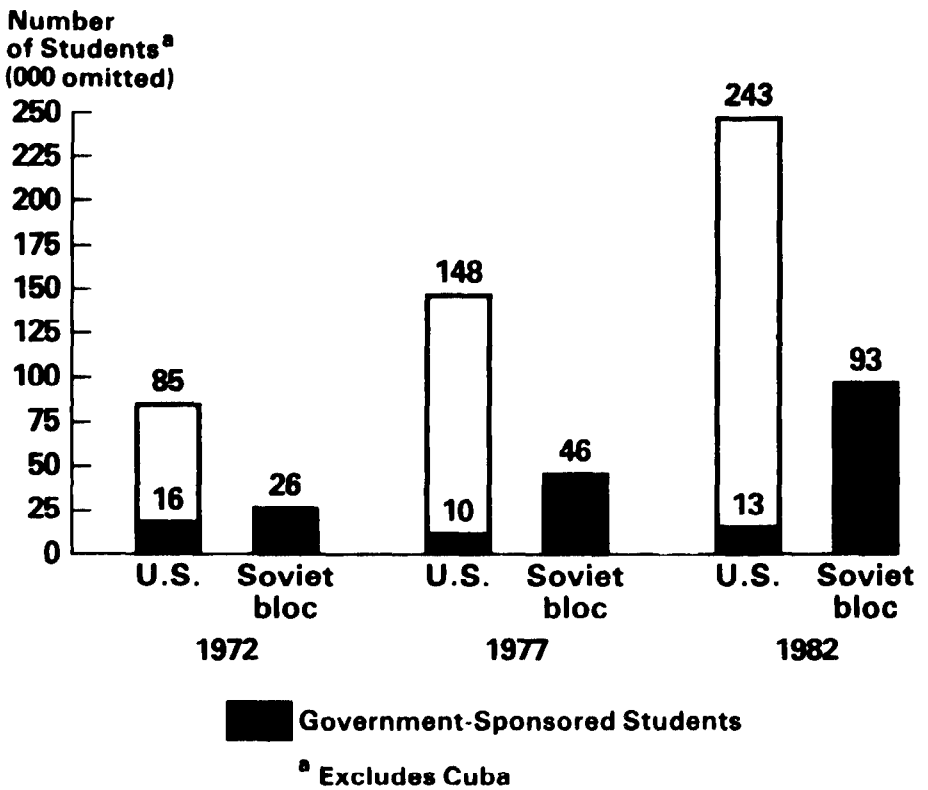
The number of developing country scholarships sponsored by the United States cannot begin to match the number being offered by the Soviet bloc. In 1982 the U.S. government offered about 12,500 scholarships while the number offered by the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe was approximately 83,500 scholarships.

The fact that colleges and universities in the United States open their doors each year to thousands of non-government-sponsored students from developing countries, however, greatly

expands the number studying in the United States. For example, during the 1981/82 academic year, over 240,000 developing country students were enrolled in U.S. universities. The vast majority paid their own tuition, books, room, board, and living allowances or were sponsored by their families, U.S. and foreign private institutions, or government ministries of their home countries. Foreign students in Soviet bloc countries, on the other hand, are almost entirely government-sponsored.

The United States has always enjoyed a large lead over Soviet bloc countries in the total number of developing country students enrolled in their respective universities, as shown in graph 3. However, the graph also shows that the Soviet bloc (not including the 27,000 developing country students attending Cuban schools in 1982) has a growing lead over the United States in terms of government-sponsored students, particularly over the last 5 years.

Graph 3



Although the United States sponsors only a small portion of the large developing country student population, various U.S. agency officials stressed the importance of this activity to U.S. interests. They pointed out that this bilateral activity has been an effective mechanism to enhance mutual understanding, improve communication on important issues, and foster respect for U.S. international policy decisions.

Since the early 1940s, the United States has sponsored scholarship opportunities for nearly one million civilian and military personnel of other countries, including those from developing countries. Although the number of scholarship opportunities available under U.S. government programs have been greatly reduced from their all time highs of the 1960s, the trend in the numbers has steadily increased over the last 5 years.

LATIN AMERICA IS NOT A HIGH PRIORITY REGION FOR U.S. OR SOVIET BLOC TRAINING PROGRAMS

Since 1956, Latin American and Caribbean students have represented only a small share of the total foreign student population in Soviet bloc countries at any given time, with the exception of Cuba. The Soviet Union and East European countries have consistently allocated the largest share of their scholarships to African countries and a significant portion to the Middle East.

The United States, on the other hand, has changed the regional focus of its scholarships. In 1972, Asia and Latin America received the largest shares, but in 1982 the emphasis shifted to the Middle East, as shown below.

Table 2

Regional Emphasis of U.S. and Soviet Bloc Training Programs[a]

	Latin America	Africa	Asia	Middle East
	(Percent of Total Students Sponsored)			
United States:				
1972	30	17	41	9
1977	28	24	25	20
1982	18	27	22	30
Soviet Bloc				
1972	11	45	13	31
1977	10	51	11	29
1982	10	46	16	28

[a]Excludes Cuba

The small percent of Soviet and East European scholarships allocated to Latin America and the Caribbean stem in large measure from lack of ties to the region. Many believe that Cuba allocates about a quarter of its scholarships to several Latin American and Caribbean countries, reflecting its cultural ties with Latin America, especially trade, language, customs, and climate. These factors make study in Cuba less of a cultural

adjustment for Latin Americans than study in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

In the Caribbean Basin countries we visited, government officials said that the purpose of their bilateral scholarship agreements with the Soviet bloc was to maintain some control over Soviet bloc recruiting activities rather than to increase social, economic, and political ties with Soviet bloc countries. These officials view the scholarships as additional educational resources to help meet the growing demand for undergraduate degree training in a period in which both students and governments are undergoing heavy economic strains. They expressed concern, however, about the agreements and their possible future implications as more students return from long-term study in Soviet bloc countries.

As shown in table 2, changes in the regional distribution of the Soviet bloc countries' scholarships have been small and have occurred gradually. For example, the percent of students from the Latin American and the Caribbean region being trained in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe changed only from 11 percent in 1972 to 10 percent in 1982. However, these gradual but subtle changes in the regional distribution of scholarships tend to obscure significant increases in the actual number of scholarships being offered to certain individual countries in the region by Soviet and East European countries.

The common focus for academic training in the United States and the Soviet bloc (excluding Cuba) appears to be Colombia, Peru, Panama, and, to a lesser extent, the Dominican Republic and Ecuador. Peru was the only Latin American country which sent individuals to both the United States and the Soviet Union for military training. It is believed that Cuba focuses overwhelmingly on Nicaragua but has also trained significant numbers from Grenada and Jamaica.

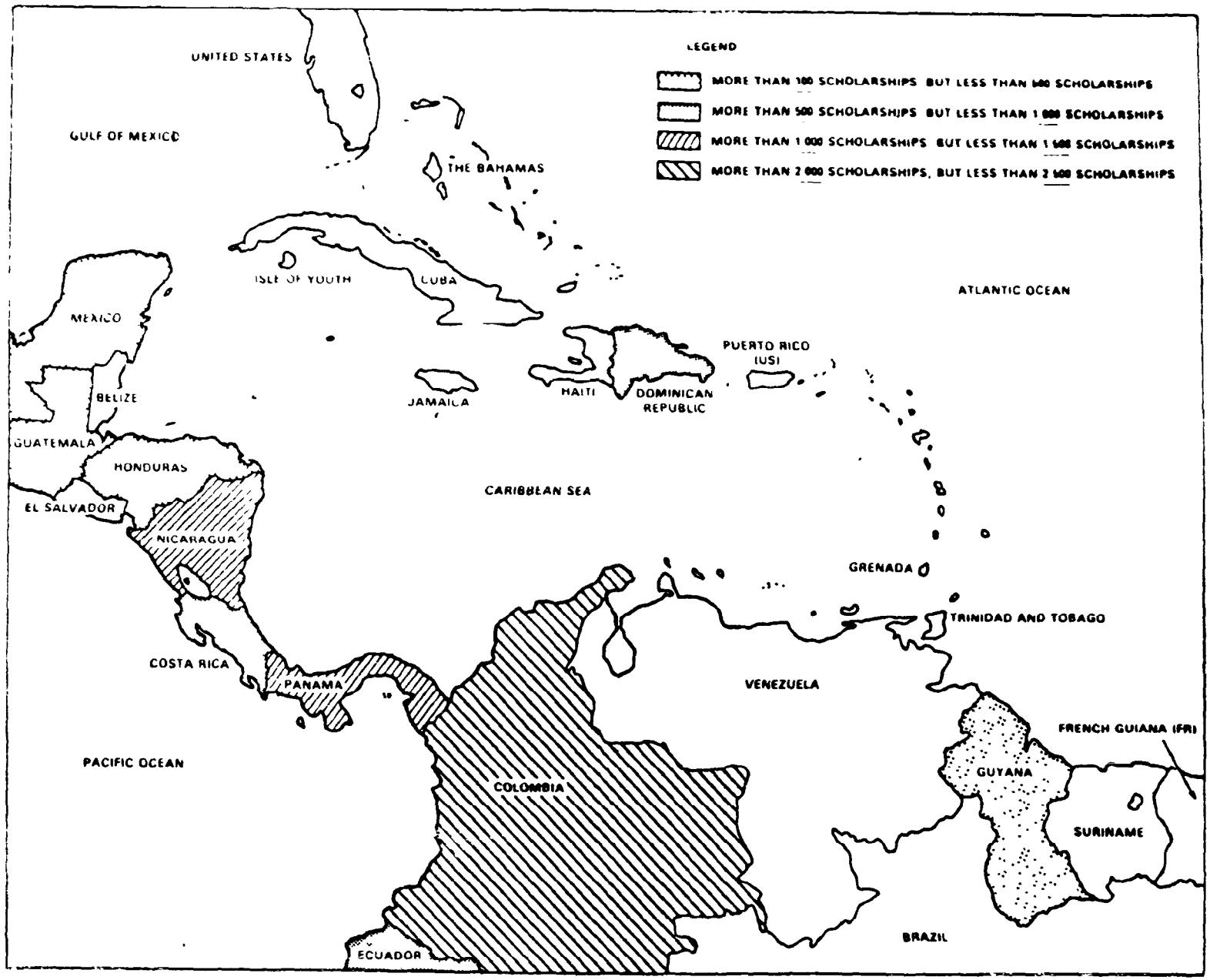
SOVIET BLOC RECRUITING IN CARIBBEAN BASIN

Between 1977 and 1982, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe collectively increased their scholarships from 1,825 to 4,950 to the Caribbean Basin countries of Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, and Panama.

Cuba has also actively recruited students from the region. U.S. information shows that Cuba provided an estimated 6,500 non-military scholarships (including the Isle of Youth) for Nicaragua and several Caribbean countries in 1982.

The map of the Caribbean Basin on the next page geographically illustrates the countries being targeted by the Soviet bloc for scholarships.

SOVIET UNION AND EAST EUROPEAN ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP ACTIVITY IN THE CARIBBEAN BASIN DURING 1982



U.S. response in the Caribbean Basin

The dramatic increase in Soviet bloc scholarship activities for Caribbean Basin countries over the 5-year period led to new U.S. training initiatives and projects in the region. For example, AID has initiated two major regional training programs since 1978, a portion of which are being administered by AID missions in specified Latin American countries, including some in the Caribbean Basin. Under these programs--the 5-year, $15-million Training Initiatives project and the 9-year, $5.87-million Training for Development project--AID missions are given maximum flexibility to tailor training programs to meet identified training needs of individual countries.

Over 450 individuals from the Caribbean Basin studied in the United States under these programs during fiscal years 1979 through 1982.

The most recent response to Soviet bloc recruiting in the region has been the 1982 congressional funding of a Caribbean Basin Scholarship Fund to provide additional training opportunities to the region. The resulting $7.5-million AID project is being implemented through five contractors, and most scholarship recipients have been selected and are attending school. Objectives of the project are to provide students in the Caribbean Basin with an alternative to a Soviet bloc education and training directed toward the development needs of eligible countries.

In all, the project is designed to provide diversified training opportunities in the United States to about 500 individuals over a 5-year period. The Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American University Council for Economic and Social Development are providing academic, vocational, and technical training at the undergraduate level, which represents a departure from AID's traditional emphasis on graduate education. The three other components administered by the Latin American Scholarship Program of American Universities, the Institute of International Education, and Partners of the Americas do not establish new programs but provide funding for some modifications of existing academic and technical programs sponsored by other U.S. agencies.

Scholarships were to be awarded to the extent possible to economically disadvantaged students and not to individuals able to support their own study programs in the United States. In August 1983, however, less than 6 months into the program, AID contractors were finding it difficult to reach such individuals. English proficiency requirements, a loan component for the OAS scholarships, and other factors lessen the consideration given disadvantaged students. AID, citing this point in its official comments on the draft of this report, said that English language training was provided to students whenever necessary. (See app. IV.). Yet, all the students selected by OAS to participate in this new AID undergraduate program already speak English

adequately--an added advantaged most often afforded only to upper-middle class students in developing countries--and are thus not considered in need of additional English language training.

AID's following comments on the draft also confirmed that some students already studying in the United States rather than new candidates were selected for a number of the Caribbean Basin Scholarship Fund scholarships.

> "The report states that some OAS students were already studying in the U.S. at the time of their selection. This is true because the OAS program design calls for completing some BA programs in one year. It is virtually impossible to find students who can complete a BA in one year in a U.S. university unless they have spent at least the junior year in an American university. Even though these students previously studied or are currently studying in the U.S., the needs criteria are being successfully applied."

Further questions raised by AID officials and others during the first year of the project included:

--Have student selections been based on identified country needs or do they reflect contractor preferences, particularly since AID missions had no input to project design?

--Did the rush to obligate funds and get students into programs result in the more developed Caribbean nations with more qualified candidates receiving the bulk of the scholarships?

--Do the 1- or 2-year scholarships offer true alternatives to the 4- to 6-year, all expense paid Soviet bloc scholarships?

--Can an international organization be expected to act in the best interest of the United States when administering a bilateral U.S. assistance program, and is this an appropriate mechanism?

AID has provided for an ongoing evaluation as a sixth component of the project. Information from this effort should be useful in considering a further response to Soviet bloc recruiting in the region.

AGENCY COMMENTS

The agencies generally concurred with the presentation of information showing the growth of Soviet bloc scholarships and the comparison with U.S. training efforts, particularly in the Latin American and Caribbean region in the last 5 years. DOD and AID also expressed additional viewpoints on several issues discussed in the chapter.

DOD

DOD said that our emphasis on the large number of non-federally-sponsored developing country students studying in the United States tends to downplay the significance of the developing country student population in the Soviet bloc under government sponsorship and that:

> "Soviet scholarships are generally offered to students from the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum who would not otherwise be able to obtain the education. The degree of commitment of these students to their benefactor is likely to be much higher than that of the self-supported Latin student. If the basic issue is U.S. Government sponsorship compared with Soviet sponsorship the introduction of statistics concerning non-government sponsored students is not germane to the issue. In connection with non-government sponsored students in the U.S., it should be noted that frequently such students do not return to their homelands and therefore are not in a position to influence their governments. Few students sponsored by either the Soviet Union or Cuba remain in either country and therefore, are in a position to influence their homelands and its institutions in favor of the Soviet-Cuban system."

During our review, we found little documentation measuring the returning students' perceptions and values on the education and training received in either the United States or the Soviet bloc countries. United States and Latin American and Caribbean officials agree on the need for more follow-up information on those returning students. General experience, however, tends to confirm that students generally form long-lasting feelings and ties with persons and institutions where they studied, regardless of whether the cost of the education was paid by the students or other parties. For this reason, education experts with whom we spoke, felt that non-government-sponsored students studying in the United States are important to any analysis such as this one.

In this review, we did not analyze the magnitude or effect of the "brain drain" on developing countries resulting from students not returning home. We were only presenting available data on the flow of students to the United States and Soviet bloc and their different sources of support. Therefore, our only comment on DOD's observation is that a U.N. Conference on Trade and Development study in the late 1970s reported that most students and some professionals working in developed countries plan to eventually return home.

DOD also expressed its viewpoint that certain factors contributed to the changes in regional emphasis in U.S. programs and to the reductions in the numbers of Latin American and Caribbean students trained in the United States between 1972 and 1982. Specifically, it said that legislative restrictions inspired by human rights and nuclear non-proliferation concerns cut off many Latin American countries from participation in Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) security assistance training programs. (See app. II.)

AID

In the OAS-implemented, AID-sponsored undergraduate program, AID emphasized that language training is provided when necessary. We recognize that the Agency's general policy is to provide language training "whenever necessary;" however, English language courses are not authorized under the terms of OAS-awarded scholarships funded by AID. As a result, economically disadvantaged students cannot be selected for study in the United States because they are unable to meet English language prerequisites when they apply for OAS scholarships. Moreover, they cannot afford to obtain it with their own resources. (See app. IV.)

CHAPTER 3

COMPARISON OF U.S. AND SOVIET BLOC APPROACHES TO TRAINING

In extending education and training to developing countries, the United States and Soviet bloc share a common objective of increasing economic, political, and military ties. Beyond this similarity lie marked differences in each country's approach to such training. U.S. programs emphasize graduate-level academic studies, whereas Soviet bloc programs emphasize undergraduate technically oriented academic programs. U.S. scholarships often must be supplemented by the participant's employer, host government, and/or personal resources, whereas the Soviet bloc often pays all expenses. The United States typically selects academically well-prepared participants who are often proficient in English, whereas the Soviet bloc compensates for the shortcomings of less-prepared students through language training and other preparatory courses. The United States encourages developing country participation in the recruiting process, whereas the Soviet bloc supplements government-to-government scholarship arrangements with other offers extended through Communist organizations.

This chapter examines these differing approaches in terms of types of programs offered, types of students targeted, and recruiting methods.

WHAT TRAINING PROGRAMS ARE OFFERED?

Soviet bloc programs

The Soviet Union offers a variety of academic, technical, and military training for developing country students. Soviet scholarships provide free tuition, books, medical care, winter clothing, monthly stipends, and, in most cases, round-trip transportation. Eastern European and Cuban scholarships also cover these expenses, except for round-trip transportation, which is usually the student's responsibility.

Academic and technical training

Most developing country students studying in the Soviet bloc are enrolled in 4- to 6-year undergraduate academic programs. The first 1 to 2 years of the program include extensive training in language and culture as well as some Communist ideology. Many programs are narrowly focused on skill development and emphasize field work to provide ample opportunity for practical application. The Soviet bloc offers few liberal arts programs. Common fields of study are medicine, law, economics, engineering, agriculture, mathematics, and natural sciences. Students tend to be grouped by nationalities within universities located in or near major cities.

One to 4-year technical programs train specialists, such as paramedics, midwives, elementary school teachers, and industrial supervisors. Vocational programs, lasting 6 months to 3 years, teach over 1,000 skills required in industry, trade, communications, and consumer services. Students at these schools receive about the same financial assistance as those attending academic programs.

Both academic and technical programs include some ideological training, although it is believed that such instruction has been reduced somewhat in recent years. Foreign students in the Soviet Union must take the same routine ideological training as their Soviet counterparts, including such courses as political economy, history of the Soviet revolution, scientific socialism, and Party history. After the first year, students may take additional ideological courses but are not required to do so. Cuban scholastic programs apparently contain more ideological content than those of the Soviet Union and East European countries.

Military training programs

Military aid is an important instrument of Soviet bloc policy toward developing countries and forms the basis for Soviet bloc penetration of many countries. Military training affords the Soviet bloc countries direct access to the developing countries and militaries involved.

According to U.S. information, much of the military training offered by the Soviet bloc is assumed to relate to military sales, primarily to traditional Soviet clients in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. These military training programs also reportedly provide highly specialized training to selected individuals who then return home to train others.

U.S. information also shows that extensive military training activities are believed to be taking place in Cuba and in several Latin American and Caribbean countries.

Cuba's Isle of Youth Program

Unlike the Soviet Union and East European countries, Cuba offers an extensive educational program for elementary and high school students from 12 developing countries at its Isle of Youth facility, 47 kilometers south of the Cuban mainland. Children as young as 9 years of age are grouped by nationality and subjected to a rigorous and regimented curriculum. Five days a week the children spend 6 hours in classes and 3 1/2 hours at physical labor oriented toward vocational skills,such as carpentry, painting, plumbing, bricklaying, and other specialties. Students spend 3 to 8 years on the Isle of Youth, and some move directly into Cuban universities or technical institutes, spending a decade or more in the Cuban educational system.

U.S. programs

Over the last 40 years, U.S. agencies have funded educational and training programs for leaders, teachers, and businessmen of developing countries. These programs, over the long-term, have been regarded as effective mechanisms for promoting goodwill and maintaining constructive dialogues with developing countries. Many of these benefits have been attributed to the social, economic, political, and military ties established during the recipient students' stays in the United States. The largest portion of these education and training programs are administered by the USIA, AID, and DOD. More than 25 other federal agencies also sponsor small scientific, technical, and academic exchange programs. The number of sponsoring agencies varies from one year to the next. The major programs administered by USIA, AID, and DOD and their different characteristics are briefly discussed below.

USIA Fulbright, Humphrey, and International Visitor Programs promote public diplomacy

The Mutual Education and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, as amended (22 U.S.C. 2451), authorizes three major programs aimed at promoting educational exchange and public diplomacy.

The Fulbright Program provides a wide range of graduate-level study, research, and lecture opportunities in the United States to foreign students, teachers, scholars, and professionals. Students are selected on the basis of open competition and scholarships go to the most qualified applicants, with no restrictions on their fields of study or career objectives. Faculty participants are selected from host-country universities as a way of helping to improve the quality of the host country's education process. Fulbright graduate students and faculty participants receive partial scholarships from USIA. The remaining costs are often covered by a combination of tuition and travel grants provided by U.S. and host-country institutions, tuition waivers from U.S. universities, and the students' personal funds.

The Humphrey Program, a specialized program begun in 1978 under the Fulbright legislation, targets a small number of mid-career professionals from either host governments or businesses for one year of non-degree study at U.S. universities. This highly selective program is geared to problem-solving rather than to academic disciplines, and professional work in agriculture, public health, planning and resource management, and public administration is emphasized. Candidates must demonstrate English language capability, academic excellence in an undergraduate program, and leadership qualities.

The International Visitor Program is designed to provide cultural exchange opportunities by exposing influential government and business leaders of other countries to U.S. government

and business institutions, cultural practices, and pastimes. In most cases, the program is limited to one-month guided tours of the United States that are specifically tailored to meet the needs of each visitor. Academic study is not part of this program.

AID training and education directed at identified development needs

Since 1944, AID and its predecessor agencies have trained a large cadre of developing country participants in the United States. AID's program, authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (22 U.S.C. 2151), provides both technical and academic study opportunities for developing country personnel through specific development projects and general training projects. Academic training programs are generally components of the projects and consist of 1 or 2 years at the graduate level. Technical programs usually have a duration averaging 3 months. In commenting on the draft of this report, AID pointed out that, while graduate rather than undergraduate training is emphasized, worldwide more than one-half of AID's training is of a short-term technical nature, with even greater emphasis placed on technical training in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

AID's strategy is to train trainers, strengthen the capabilities of host-government institutions, and develop managers who can exert leadership roles in their country's development. AID emphasizes fields of study needed to address identified development needs, including agriculture and rural development and land reform, energy, population, and health and nutrition.

AID generally encourages foreign students to get the necessary English language training in their home country before coming to the United States. However, English language training is provided in the United States when students are unable to study English in their home country or when more extensive study is required in this country.

DOD training strengthens defense capabilities

DOD's international training programs include the FMS and IMET programs. The FMS program includes sales of equipment and related training to friendly countries with adequate wealth to maintain and supply their own military forces or to assume a larger share of these costs. The IMET program provides instruction and training to military and related civilian personnel of friendly countries on a grant basis.

Beyond the formal military training that the various security assistance programs offer, the programs attempt to acquaint foreign trainees with U.S. institutions, culture, and citizens.

During their stay in the United States, foreign military service personnel are often assigned to U.S. families who help them better understand the American way of life.

DOD programs provide needed training to Army, Navy, and Air Force personnel of other countries and encompass a wide spectrum of courses, including graduate education. Many courses are preceded by English language training arranged in conjunction with the Defense Language Institute, English Language Center. In addition, the different branches of the U.S. armed forces provide on-the-job training at base facilities in the United States and overseas. In special circumstances, mobile training teams of U.S. personnel are sent to the requesting countries to provide on-site instruction.

DOD also administers a variety of programs that permit persons from selected countries to receive military training at the U.S. service academies. Some of the programs include the Foreign Academy Exchanges Program and the Foreign Admission Projects.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE TARGETED?

The United States and Soviet bloc do not appear to be recruiting the same types of individuals from Latin America. We were told that those attending U.S. academic and technical training are typically from middle and upper middle classes by developing country standards, often proficient in English, and usually academically well prepared.

Students targeted by Soviet bloc programs

U.S. and host-country officials in our case study countries frequently described students known to have accepted Soviet bloc scholarships as less affluent students without the financial means to pursue other academic alternatives. They also pointed out that only the Soviet bloc countries themselves know for sure whether these are the individuals they are trying to reach or whether they are the only ones who accept the offers.

The picture continually painted was that Soviet bloc scholarships, while not necessarily preferred by developing country students, are accepted because they require little or no financial outlay by the student, fulfill the desire for international travel, and offer possibly the only chance these individuals might have for bettering their social positions through advanced education. A clear consensus emerged that the majority of those recruited for study in the Soviet bloc would prefer to study in the United States or Western European countries if they were qualified and financially able to do so.

Despite past reports that the Soviet bloc was recruiting students who have not completed secondary educations, U.S. officials no longer believe this to be a widespread practice.

Most Soviet bloc programs now require a secondary degree for entrance because of previous experience with ill-prepared students.[1] Only the Cuban Isle of Youth Program appears to be geared toward younger students, and Nicaraguans are the only Latin Americans thought to be participating in this program.

Although some Soviet scholarships are reportedly given as favors to children of local Communist party members, party affiliation is not required, and the emphasis appears to have shifted from political affiliation to academic achievement. Mission officials in the Dominican Republic believe the Soviet bloc is trying to recruit more students from the middle classes and is not wasting its time on upper middle class students who can afford, and generally choose, an education in the United States or Western Europe.

Students targeted by U.S. programs

The types of individuals selected for U.S. programs reflect differing program objectives. The Fulbright Program provides a wide range of educational opportunities to include graduate students, faculty fellows, lecturers, and researchers. Because the program is highly selective, students from poor families are often unable to participate due to inadequate academic preparation and lack of English language proficiency, which is sometimes required. The need for Fulbright participants to supplement their grants from personal resources also tends to discourage economically poor candidates.

Other U.S. programs are similarly selective. The Humphrey Program requires candidates to demonstrate English language capability, academic excellence, and leadership qualities. International Visitors are selected for the program primarily because they are, or could become, influential in their home countries. AID often seeks individuals who can train others where expertise is needed to address identified development needs.

Candidates for IMET training are nominated by their own governments based on their positions within the military establishments, their academic and/or technical capabilities, and usually their leadership capabilities.

WHAT RECRUITING METHODS ARE USED?

The degree of formal bilateral exchange arrangements largely determines how the United States and Soviet bloc conduct recruiting in Latin American countries.

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[1]In the 1960s, students without secondary educations were recruited as a means of attracting students from lower economic classes who might be more sympathetic to Communist ideology. Many failed and had to be sent home, and a great deal of student unrest resulted.

Recruiting for U.S. training programs

U.S.-sponsored training opportunities are publicized through a variety of channels. The U.S. embassy, host-government ministries, official scholarship agencies, bilateral exchange commissions, host-country universities, U.S. and host-country private sector organizations, and U.S. contracting agencies all play a role in nominating and/or selecting students.

AID uses several methods to select trainees for its participant training program. For example, U.S. private sector contractors--currently numbering 60 to 80 worldwide--recruit, select, and place trainees in U.S. universities and institutions. Other participants are selected by AID mission officials, based on their personal knowledge of potential candidates or recommendations from host-government ministries. Public announcements of training opportunities are generally posted at universities, government offices, and other public buildings. In other cases, opportunities are simply spread by word-of-mouth among government and private sector personnel. AID often accepts the nominations of the host-government agency responsible for carrying out specific development projects. Sometimes candidates do not undergo examinations and personal interviews because U.S. mission officials are often aware of the applicants' qualifications through professional relationships.

In Latin American countries with bilateral Fulbright Commissions, such as Colombia, the Commissions recruit, screen, and make preliminary selections. The USIA cultural and public affairs officers serve as Commission members and work to promote areas of study that will engender greater understanding of the United States. In those countries without Commissions, grant opportunities are sometimes publicized in the media or made known to key people who in turn pass the information on to potential applicants. In still others, the processes of soliciting applications and interviewing and screening candidates are handled through contracts with organizations, such as the Latin American Scholarship Program of American Universities and the Institute of International Education. Following the screening process, nominations are forwarded to USIA headquarters and finally to the Board of Foreign Scholarships for final approval.

International Visitors are usually nominated and selected directly by a U.S. mission selection committee composed of major U.S. officials, whereas IMET participants are nominated by developing country officials. In both cases, Washington headquarters concurrence is required.

Recruiting by the Soviet bloc

The Soviet bloc recruits foreign students through (1) official government channels, usually under formal bilateral exchange agreements, and/or (2) unofficial, and often unsanctioned, channels, including local Communist parties, Communist

front organizations, and leftist-oriented trade unions. Recruitment is generally handled as a combination of the two methods, but in Latin American countries with no bilateral exchange agreements, the latter method is the sole way of recruiting students.

At least eight countries in Latin America have bilateral education or cultural agreements with the Soviet Union: Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guyana, Jamaica, Mexico, and Nicaragua. Such agreements are generally broad-based, so annual protocols are often negotiated to spell out mutually agreed quotas for scholarships and other conditions for types of programs and locations for study.

International scholarships and student loans are sometimes administered by agencies specifically set up for this purpose or through government ministries, such as education or foreign affairs. These agencies sometimes seek to control the types of Soviet bloc scholarships they will handle. For example, they may restrict the fields in which scholarships will be accepted and reject others because of their ideological emphasis or poor academic rating. In some cases they may insist on publicizing the opportunities, evaluating the applicants, and selecting the students without involvement by the Soviet bloc. In other cases they may openly discourage students from accepting Soviet bloc scholarships.

Officials in the countries we visited recognize, however, that the Soviets can, and do, circumvent recruiting restrictions. Repeated violations of developing country agreements have occasionally led some governments, such as Colombia, to cancel their bilateral agreements with the Soviet Union. In Colombia, Soviet pledges to adhere to the rules coupled with Colombia's desire for more scholarships led to reinstatement of the agreement. We were told, however, that if the Soviets confront restrictions they cannot honor they simply make more scholarships available outside official government channels.

Soviet bloc recruiting not sanctioned by the host government is conducted through local Communist parties and other organizations. This type of recruiting usually supplements the recruiting done through official channels, but in some countries, such as the Dominican Republic where diplomatic relations are absent, it is the sole method of Soviet bloc recruiting.

Scholarships are advertised through Communist organizations, student organizations, labor unions, and other organizations. Applications are accepted not only from party affiliates but from anyone wishing to apply. Scholarship committees within the local Communist party reportedly review applications and forward preliminary selections to Moscow for final approval by the ministry of education.

Latin American officials expressed concern over their inability to know which students and how many were being recruited in this manner. They termed it impractical, if not impossible, to track this activity because the offers are made outside their channels and because travel to Communist countries is often done via a third country.

Another area of concern repeatedly voiced throughout our review was clandestine recruiting of labor personnel for short-term ideological training in the Soviet Union. U.S. officials in Colombia and the Dominican Republic told us that democratic labor leaders in those countries had voiced concerns that members of leftist unions go to the Soviet Union for training aimed first at producing political activists and second at teaching labor unionism.

Such training is believed to be highly political and an area which should be closely monitored. These and similar activities are reported to Washington, but we know of no in-depth analysis of such information by U.S. agencies.

CHAPTER 4

OFFICIALS' VIEWS ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF SOVIET BLOC RECRUITING

In Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Panama, there was no consensus of views on the implications and significance of increased Soviet bloc recruiting in Latin America and the Caribbean region. Instead U.S. and host-country government officials as well as officials from the private sectors expressed a wide range of views on the subject. At one end of the spectrum are those who do not perceive the situation as serious enough to warrant additional or new U.S. programs as a countermeasure. This group believes that most of the students return home with a strong dislike for communism and its systems. They also see the United States as having an edge over the Soviet bloc because, including self-supported students, far more Latin American students study in the United States than in the Soviet bloc.

At the other end of the spectrum are those who believe that Soviet bloc recruiting could pose serious future implications for U.S. interests in promoting democratic processes in the region. They advocate significant increases in educational assistance to the region to remedy the disparity between U.S. and Soviet bloc efforts. Some suggest radical departures in the types of training to be provided as well as the individuals to be targeted under U.S. programs.

Between these two divergent viewpoints are those who are undecided as to whether Soviet bloc recruiting poses a serious problem either to the region or U.S. interests. While this group does not discount these possible implications, they believe that the United States should not overreact to Communist efforts with new programs but should monitor the situation to determine if actions are needed. This group tends to advocate continued support for U.S.-sponsored training opportunities through traditional programs that have proven effective in reaching influential government and private sector leaders.

The major topics of concern are as follows.

--Disparity between U.S. and Soviet bloc training.

--Entrance of Soviet bloc trained people into government service.

--Soviet bloc ideological training.

--U.S. training opportunities as alternatives to Soviet bloc scholarships.

--Quality of Soviet bloc training.

--Inadequacy of data on U.S. and Soviet bloc training.

The following sections discuss these concerns and the diverse views expressed to us by appropriate U.S., host country, and private sector officials.

DISPARITY BETWEEN U.S. AND SOVIET BLOC TRAINING EFFORTS

Some public and private sector officials believe that increased Soviet bloc recruiting, coupled with stable or even declining U.S. efforts, represents a potential long-term threat of Communist influence in the region. They see this disparity between U.S. and Soviet bloc efforts as damaging to U.S. interests because Latin Americans may infer that the United States does not view the region as a priority in its foreign policy. These individuals believe that the Soviet bloc will capitalize on such a perception by stepping up recruiting.

Dominican Republic officials linked their own national security concerns to U.S. security interests and urged immediate U.S. action to increase educational opportunities to their country. Costa Rican officials feared the future impact that large numbers of returning students would have on their country. They estimated that within 5 years over 1,000 students would have returned from training in the Soviet bloc. They strongly urged that the United States increase its educational offerings now rather than wait until the problem reaches crisis proportions.

That assessment, while mentioned by some individuals on all fronts--agencies in Washington, government contractors, and U.S. mission and developing country officials--was not universal. Others believe that engaging in a "numbers game" with the Soviet Union is not a proper response, particularly in the absence of a full understanding of the scope of Soviet bloc scholarship activities, their interrelationship with other Soviet bloc activities in the region, and the impact of returning students on developing country and U.S. interests. Some believe that increased U.S. educational assistance, if warranted, should focus on improving economic conditions, filling development needs, and improving relations with Latin American and Caribbean countries rather than attempting to compete with the Soviet bloc on a one-for-one scholarship basis.

These individuals downplayed the significance of Soviet bloc activities, pointing out that:

--The number of self-supported Latin Americans studying in the United States and Western Europe more than compensates for the difference between U.S. and Soviet bloc-sponsored students.

--The clear superiority of U.S. education over that offered in the Soviet bloc makes numerical comparisons meaningless.

--Most Latin American students accept Soviet bloc education because that is their only choice; if qualified or financially able, the vast majority would prefer to study in the United States.

--The numbers do not mean much because the Soviet bloc must always expend much more effort in Latin America than its Western counterparts to overcome the natural affinity Latin America has for the West.

--The overwhelming proportion of students trained in the Soviet bloc have negative experiences which cause them to return disillusioned with Communist society, if not outwardly anti-Communist.

Some Colombian and Dominican Republic officials echoed this latter point. They said that students generally return from their studies with a greater appreciation for domestic systems. U.S. officials in Panama estimated that less than 5 percent of those studying in the Soviet bloc actually return as committed Communists and that most are either indifferent or even hostile to communism. Colombian officials told us that the combination of language difficulties, weather, social environment, restrictions on movement, food, personal attitudes, and demanding academic duties have led about 10 percent of those who go to drop out and return to Colombia within 2 years.

ENTRANCE OF SOVIET BLOC-TRAINED PEOPLE INTO GOVERNMENT SERVICE

One concern frequently stated in the case study countries was that many returnees from Soviet bloc countries experience difficulty obtaining employment in the private sector and, as a result, often secure positions in government ministries. U.S. officials told us that few individuals trained in the Soviet bloc have risen to power in developing country governments in the region. They point out, however, that because large-scale Soviet bloc recruiting in Latin America is a relatively recent occurrence, many returnees from 6-year academic programs have not yet reached professional levels where they could wield political influence.

One U.S. official in Costa Rica was concerned, not only about those few students who return from their studies as card-carrying Communists, but about all those who study in the Soviet bloc. He expressed the view that these individuals are bound to be influenced by the ideological nature of their education regardless of their socioeconomic backgrounds and political

leanings. We were told that Panamanian officials had related this same concern in discussions with U.S. officials in Panama. They noted that some of their own ministry staff had received training in the Soviet bloc and that the University of Panama and the public electric company also had hired returnees.

Widespread private sector discrimination against these returnees was reported to clearly contribute to their concentration in the public sector. Private sector employers said they were reluctant to hire returnees because they (1) had reservations about the quality of education received by the students and (2) feared that these people might have a disruptive influence on their companies' operations.

Some individuals believe that as more students study in the Soviet bloc, a "critical mass" of individuals will eventually be formed in some government ministries, thereby enabling them to influence international and domestic policies. They contend that even though students often have negative experiences in the Soviet bloc, they still hold a sense of gratitude for being given an educational opportunity otherwise not open to them. One State Department official believes that this sense of gratitude could create a situation which will build upon itself. He explained that just as U.S.-trained officials in developing country government service have sought out U.S. educational opportunities for their subordinates, officials trained in the Soviet bloc may encourage their subordinates to study in those countries where they received training. The added dimension of the Soviet-bloc scholarships being free could add impetus to the trend, particularly in light of current economic conditions which make it difficult for some developing countries to sponsor students abroad.

SOVIET BLOC IDEOLOGICAL TRAINING

Even those officials who viewed Soviet bloc scholarship activity in less serious terms than others were concerned over training which appeared to be primarily ideological rather than academic. Although they could accept the inherent ideological component of Soviet bloc academic programs, they opposed training programs which are heavily geared toward ideological indoctrination.

Recruiting through Communist political parties and friendship organizations was consistently criticized more often than the scholarship programs handled through official government channels. The suspicions are that much of the training offered in this way is ideological, granted to leftist-oriented individuals, and geared toward inciting disruption rather than transferring knowledge. Developing country officials are particularly concerned over this type of recruiting because they have no control over either the content of the educational programs or the students who receive the training.

Specific educational programs cited as the source of concern included labor-related training in the Soviet Union and undergraduate scholarships at Friendship University (formerly Patrice Lumumba Friendship University) in Moscow. U.S. officials in Washington told us that any Soviet bloc scholarship in economics or law should also be viewed with suspicion because these subjects are clearly taught from a Marxist viewpoint.

Some U.S. and developing country officials fear ideological training because a Communist presence is already being felt in certain sectors of developing countries' society, particularly at universities and in some labor markets. Embassy officials in one case-study country reported that host-country officials were concerned "that not only is strong political indoctrination being implanted in the minds of young people, but that several sectors of society are in danger of being monopolized by the aggressiveness of Communist countries." Host-country officials believe that increasing numbers of individuals trained in the Soviet bloc could exert a disruptive influence in such sectors.

U.S. TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AS ALTERNATIVES TO SOVIET BLOC SCHOLARSHIPS

Some officials, particularly those in the countries we visited, believe that the United States does not offer training opportunities which could provide realistic alternatives to Soviet bloc scholarships. They believe that programs are not suited to the needs of students most likely to accept Soviet bloc scholarships and that the United States should consider altering the mix of its programs.

U.S. and developing country officials with this view tended to advocate

--more targeting of poorer students unable to study in the United States without assistance;

--more emphasis on short-term technical studies related to specific development and job market needs; and

--less emphasis on English language proficiency which excludes most economically poor students.

The framework of existing U.S. programs clearly poses difficulties in offering more educational programs for economically poor students. U.S. programs emphasize graduate rather than undergraduate education. In most Latin American countries, the Institute of International Education is the only organization that offers an undergraduate exchange program and even its program is in danger of becoming accessible only to candidates from upper class and wealthy families due to the decline in the proportion of costs covered.

Similarly, some developing country officials pointed out that not enough technical training opportunities exist. Directing more technical training opportunities to lower socioeconomic levels would necessitate some provision for Spanish-speaking instructors or English language training. These individuals believe, however, that these additional costs are warranted and that, in fact, the United States is missing an important chance to influence the future direction of some Latin American countries by concentrating its programs on the elite. They refute arguments that individuals from lower classes cannot influence future policies by citing historical instances of revolutions arising from organized cadres at the grassroots level. These individuals believe that U.S. programs need to become more focused on lower economic levels if the influence of individuals trained in the Soviet bloc is to be countered.

On the other side of the argument, some believe that the United States should stay with its traditional programs. These individuals believe that graduate and postgraduate degree programs best use available funds, not only because the long-term potential of reaching more people is greater but also because this is the training most developing countries need and want. They point out that many developing countries now have colleges and universities with good undergraduate programs and local credit institutions to help academically qualified but economically disadvantaged students. Thus, they believe that the United States should concentrate its resources on training needs that cannot be met in-country.

Overall, they believe that existing U.S. programs have proven effective in meeting their objectives, offer a good framework of training opportunities, and should be strengthened rather than diluted by new and unproven undergraduate programs. In their opinion, the high selection standards of U.S. graduate and doctoral programs improves the chances that participants will be future leaders who will have favorable impact in their home countries upon their return and that this factor more than compensates for the relatively small numbers directly served.

QUALITY OF SOVIET BLOC TRAINING

Many people with whom we spoke agreed that U.S.-sponsored programs are usually superior to those offered in Soviet bloc countries. Few disputed, however, that Soviet programs are improving. Some developing countries have successfully urged Soviet bloc countries to improve their universities' curriculums by reducing the ideological content of their programs. They have communicated their specific educational needs to Soviet and East European officials and have encouraged them to tailor programs to meet these needs. Further, they are ironing out with Soviet bloc representatives problems related to

accreditation of academic programs and, in doing so, may gain wider private sector recognition of Soviet bloc degrees.

Colombia works openly with Soviet bloc countries to upgrade the quality of the curriculums and to encourage private sector managers to consider hiring Soviet bloc-trained applicants. Colombian officials point out that one benefit of Soviet bloc scholarships is that students who would be unqualified or financially unable to obtain advanced education are given an opportunity for education and social mobility through these scholarships. Also, "brain drain," which has been such a problem with Western scholarships, is virtually eliminated when students study in Soviet bloc countries.

Despite reservations concerning acceptance of Soviet bloc scholarships, Costa Rican officials conclude that refusing scholarships would not stem Soviet bloc offers but simply force them underground. They told us they will continue to accept the scholarships because Costa Rica needs all the advanced education opportunities it can get for its students, particularly during the country's current economic strain. Costa Rican officials fear other countries will not take up the slack if they were to refuse Soviet bloc scholarships. For similar reasons, they hire Soviet bloc-trained individuals for government service despite the political risk involved because the private sector is not willing to take a chance on them. The private sector would prefer to hire individuals trained in the United States and Western nations.

The growing demand for undergraduate training in the region, coupled with fewer scholarships being made available by the United States and other Western nations, has elevated the acceptability of Soviet bloc scholarships. While some developing countries question the quality of a Soviet bloc education, their bilateral agreements, policies, and actions may actually be supporting the growth of such offers. This changing environment has aroused uneasy feelings among U.S. officials that the United States is somehow "losing it" by being unable or unwilling to commit the resources necessary to compete with Soviet bloc scholarship offers. This issue, more than any of the others, brings out the ambivalent feelings of many who do not want to get into a numbers game with Soviet bloc countries on the one hand yet do not like the future prospect of a growing gap between U.S. and Soviet bloc efforts.

INADEQUACY OF DATA ON U.S. AND SOVIET BLOC TRAINING

Some people felt that the United States should not plan a response to Soviet bloc recruiting activities until the extent and implications of such training are better understood. The reliability of available statistics is questionable, not only for students being trained in the Soviet bloc countries but even

for those being trained under U.S.-sponsored programs. Throughout our review we encountered numerous contradictions in statistical data for both U.S. and Soviet bloc training. In some cases, statistics maintained in Washington differed significantly from those we collected in-country.

Follow-up information on students returning from the Soviet bloc is not often developed. Perceptions on the scope of Soviet bloc activities and returning students' home and work lives varied in the case study countries among public and private sector representatives as well as among U.S. officials there. We encountered some individuals who believed the statistics on Soviet bloc scholarships to be grossly overstated and others who believed them to be understated. Others believed that if more complete follow-up information is gathered on returning students' home and work lives, then there would be better understanding of the problem and what should be done.

USIA officials in Washington do not believe their information on U.S. government-sponsored exchanges is complete or reliable and concede that they cannot quantify exchanges taking plane under private sector auspices. USIA is charged with implementing a legislative mandate (22 U.S.C. 1461-1) to coordinate government exchanges and has allocated 7 staff years to carry out this mandate. Rarely, however, have more than one or two people been assigned to the coordination unit. Attempts have been made to compile program statistics, but staff shortages have prevented much analysis of them.

The problems encountered in coordinating all U.S. exchange programs are well documented. USIA officials advised us that, although they believe such coordination has become increasingly important due to the number of agencies, organizations, and private concerns involved, budgetary limitations have hindered progress toward this end. One official voiced the opinion that the shortcomings in coordination noted in a 1978 GAO study[1] still exist despite USIA efforts over the past 5 years.

U.S. mission officials in one country we visited particularly believe that coordination of U.S.-sponsored exchanges at the field level is also inadequate. They feel that the disparate focus of various agencies plus the lack of field representation for some programs contributes to a situation where no one is particularly aware of what others are doing. Their concern was that hundreds of alumni of U.S. government programs have returned home but little is known about them.

Determining the scope of Soviet bloc scholarship activity in individual countries is also difficult. U.S. government statistics on students traveling to Soviet bloc countries are

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[1]Coordination of International Exchange and Training Programs--Opportunities and Limitations, (ID-78-37) July 24, 1978.

revised as more information becomes available. However, many people with whom we spoke were skeptical about the reliability of the data reported.

Differing perspectives of the extent of Soviet bloc recruiting within individual countries clearly confuse assessments of what should be done. Many held the view that more monitoring of Soviet recruiting efforts, in the context of other Soviet bloc activities in the region, is needed to analyze whether a U.S. response is needed and what form it should take.

AGENCY COMMENTS AND OUR EVALUATION

The USIA and DOD, in commenting on the draft of this report, presented additional information and views on our discussion of the inadequacies with existing data available for assessing the need for additional U.S. assistance.

USIA

USIA said that the draft accurately described difficulties the it has in coordinating U.S. government exchanges. (See app. III.) It commented that it was in the process of creating a data base on U.S. government exchanges to help (1) further future studies of U.S. and Soviet bloc scholarships and (2) coordinate exchange policy among federal agencies involved in training foreign students.

DOD

DOD concurred with our concerns on the inadequacy of available data on U.S. and Soviet bloc training offers in Latin America. (See app. II.) It said, however, that the draft of this report "makes a case for Soviet Bloc designs and inroads in Latin America based on its training and education programs and the need for the U.S. to counter these gains."

It is not the purpose of this report nor was it within the scope of our review to offer a judgement as to whether the facts support increased U.S. efforts to counter Soviet bloc gains; it was the purpose of our review to compile pertinent information and issues on U.S. and Soviet bloc training and education programs in Latin America.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND SOME CONSIDERATIONS IN DEVELOPING FUTURE PROGRAMS

Our study of U.S. and Soviet bloc recruiting in Latin America and the Caribbean did not yield conclusive evidence to suggest to what degree, if any, the United States should respond with increased educational assistance to the region. It did however, provide some important information on the U.S. and Soviet bloc levels of training in the region. Both the congressional and executive branches have actions pending to increase federally supported educational assistance for certain Central American and Caribbean countries. We believe information on the following issues will assist in continuing deliberations on training opportunities.

--Should the United States alter the mix of its programs to reach different students?

--Can increased support for traditional U.S. training programs effectively respond to changing needs in the region?

--Should more emphasis be placed on in-country educational assistance?

--Can the United States employ more cost-effective methods in providing educational assistance?

The ensuing sections of this chapter discuss our observations concerning these issues.

During this study, we identified a broad spectrum of opinions on the significance of the U.S. need for response to increased Soviet bloc recruiting of students from the region. Some officials believe the situation is not serious and that no response is needed. On the other hand, student recruiting, coupled with other Soviet bloc activities in the region, could pose future security implications for some Latin American countries and, as a result, for the United States. Concrete effects may be felt as increasing numbers of people trained in the Soviet bloc rise to positions in their home countries where they might influence government policies. Likewise, the potential disruptive force posed by a Soviet bloc-trained cadre concentrated in student and labor sectors is of concern to many.

Any response to Soviet bloc recruiting will need to weigh these security concerns against the cost of developing new forms of educational assistance to the region, recognizing also that

many of the region's problems stem from poor economic conditions. Consideration of increased educational assistance should therefore be undertaken not in isolation from but in concert with consideration of other types of U.S. economic and security assistance.

Continuing congressional deliberations should also consider the cooperative endeavor between public and private sectors that educational exchanges represent. The opportunities for achieving a successful U.S. response may be enhanced with a flexible approach that considers the unique characteristics of individual countries; extent and nature of Soviet bloc recruiting in a given country; current state of individual countries' indigenous educational systems; extent to which returning students could influence developing countries' policies and programs; U.S. programs that have proven to be the best suited to identified needs; and U.S. approaches that have been effective in the past, including lessons from the new Caribbean Basin Scholarship Fund project.

A thorough assessment such as this cannot be made without a better understanding of the interrelationship of government and private sector training efforts in individual countries. USIA, in discharging its mandate to coordinate government exchange programs could assist such an assessment.

Finally, as part of any assessment to determine whether new types of educational assistance are needed in the region, we believe that U.S. officials need to obtain a fuller understanding of the extent, objectives, and implications of Soviet bloc recruiting in individual countries. In such an assessment, however, they need to recognize that determining the scope of Soviet bloc scholarship activity in individual countries is difficult. The lack of reliable data and statistics on the extent of Soviet bloc recruiting within individual countries clearly complicates assessments of what should be done.

Our observations, which we believe pertinent to the issues previously cited, are discussed below.

SHOULD THE UNITED STATES ALTER THE MIX OF ITS PROGRAMS TO REACH DIFFERENT STUDENTS?

U.S. officials have varying opinions as to whether Soviet bloc recruiting in the region poses problems significant enough to warrant a U.S. response. While the possible future implications of Soviet bloc recruiting have led some to advocate at least limited steps to monitor their efforts, others are pressing the administration and the Congress to take immediate action to directly counter the Soviet bloc scholarship programs.

A response geared to directly counter the number of Soviet bloc scholarship offers assumes that if the United States offers significantly more scholarships comparable to those offered by

Soviet bloc countries, fewer individuals will accept Soviet bloc offers. The approach would be to offer more undergraduate study opportunities, technical and vocational training, and labor-related training. The United States would seek to recruit from a wider range of socioeconomic levels, provide more English language instruction and any needed remedial or preparatory course work, and underwrite the high cost associated with academic undergraduate scholarships. This approach is being tested currently under the Caribbean Basin Scholarship Fund Project.

There are some disadvantages to such an approach.

--Attempting to bridge the numerical gap between U.S. and Soviet bloc training opportunities would be costly--an undergraduate scholarship in the United States can cost $22,000 a year, excluding international travel. Short-term technical training programs can be equally expensive, with monthly costs averaging $3,400 per participant, excluding international travel.

--U.S. programs in the past have emphasized graduate rather than undergraduate training opportunities. New mechanisms would need to be explored and start-up costs would be incurred.

--Recruiting from lower socioeconomic levels may result in increased costs associated with language instruction and remedial instruction.

--Undergraduate offerings in some of the countries are adequate but in others they are not. Some countries prefer graduate scholarships and technical training instead; program flexibility would therefore be needed.

--Providing anything less than all-expense scholarships to the United States may defeat the program, as current economic conditions make contributions less likely to be forthcoming from developing country governments and students.

--Student demand for scholarships is so great that, even with increased U.S. offerings, Soviet bloc scholarships would probably still be accepted.

The expansion of U.S. opportunities comparable to Soviet bloc offers are particularly difficult with respect to undergraduate scholarships. The high cost, uncertain payoff in terms of U.S. interests, improving capacity of developing countries to meet this need themselves, and general disinterest on

the part of U.S. administrators in promoting undergraduate training lead to the conclusion that expanding undergraduate scholarships would not be widely supported.

In selected situations, however, it might be desirable for the United States to attempt to directly counter certain Soviet bloc efforts. For example, Soviet bloc recruiting from leftist labor unions for activist training was a concern heard throughout our review, particularly since some countries are experiencing labor unrest. In selected countries, consideration could be given to increasing assistance through programs which promote democratic unionism, such as the AID-funded American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) education programs. Since 1962 AIFLD has provided training to over 425,000 workers and labor leaders from Latin America and the Caribbean; over 3,800 received their training in the United States.

Similarly, increased levels of AID technical training might be warranted as a counter in those countries where large numbers of Soviet bloc technical scholarships are being offered. The technical training program of the Inter-American University Council for Economic and Social Development under AID's Caribbean Basin Scholarship Fund project, if proven effective, could also provide expanded technical training opportunities. It should be recognized, however, that these are usually short-term programs and would not provide real alternatives to the longer term Soviet bloc scholarship offers.

In attempting to reach individuals at lower academic levels, recognition should be given to the fact that university and private sector support for less qualified candidates may not be as forthcoming as it has been for the more traditional graduate study opportunities. This could further increase government costs for participants.

CAN INCREASED SUPPORT FOR TRADITIONAL U.S. TRAINING PROGRAMS EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO CHANGING NEEDS?

Some U.S. officials fear that trying to counter the scholarship programs of Soviet bloc countries by offering comparable educational opportunities in the United States would divert resources from traditional U.S. training programs. These officials believe that existing U.S. exchange programs have effectively achieved their purposes and that the best response would be to increase support for these traditional programs. For this approach, more money would need to be committed to AID's Participant Training program and the Fulbright, Humphrey, International Visitor, and IMET Programs.

The disadvantages of using these traditional programs are that they generally do not reach individuals most likely to accept Soviet bloc scholarships, average participant costs are high, and program mechanics are such that increased funding

would not necessarily mean that those countries in the region most in need of expanded U.S. educational assistance would actually receive them.

There are advantages, however, to increasing support to long-standing programs.

--The programs are widely known and respected and regarded as effective in providing mutually beneficial exchanges, filling development needs, and increasing economic, political, and military ties with other countries.

--Mechanisms are already in place for recruiting and selecting students and, therefore, adding new participants would avoid additional costs associated with start-up.

--Logistical and other problems have been worked out; thus the risk of failure is not appreciably increased as more participants are added.

--Private sector support for these programs, including financial support and in-kind services, has traditionally been strong and can generally be relied upon to bolster U.S. efforts.

--These programs are widely perceived as high-impact programs because they target influential people and promising candidates who may be expected to exercise leadership roles in their respective professions.

Increasing support for new training approaches at the expense of traditional programs would be met with some opposition. Recent history serves as evidence, when USIA's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs was singled out for fiscal year 1982 budget cuts. Members of Congress, other U.S. officials, the academic community, and the private sector mounted a vigorous and successful campaign to stave off the proposed funding reductions. Further, in November 1983 the Congress voted to expand funding for traditional USIA exchange programs rather than to fund new programs proposed by the administration.

SHOULD MORE EMPHASIS BE PLACED ON IN-COUNTRY EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE?

Because of the high cost associated with bringing more of the region's students to the United States, additional resources would likely fund only a small number of additional U.S.-sponsored exchanges. As an alternative to providing opportunities in the United States, consideration could be given to less costly in-country educational programs. This approach assumes

that increasing U.S. ties with developing countries is not contingent on resident experiences in the United States and that trading off this type of educational assistance could be done without sacrificing U.S. objectives. More resources could be devoted to faculty exchange programs, curriculum development, improvements to educational institutions, and in-country English language instruction as well as to increased contact with Peace Corps volunteers, technical trainers, and other U.S. training personnel. Increased support to regional training facilities could also be part of this strategy.

Below are some of the advantages of increasing in-country educational programs.

--In-country educational programs are generally less expensive than sending individuals to the United States for training.

--In-country training by U.S. instructors exposes many more individuals to American ideas and technologies than can be reached through scholarship programs.

--Costs associated with English language instruction could be reduced if more students received instruction in their home country where possible; faculty exchanges could increasingly be used to improve the English-teaching capabilities of regional or individual developing country universities.

--Familiarity bred through increased contacts between U.S. and developing country institutions could serve as an impetus for increased private sector support for foreign student programs.

While the advantages of in-country training are recognized, particularly with respect to cost, many individuals with whom we spoke believe it is not a substitute for study opportunities in the United States. They pointed out that:

--Foreign students cannot be as strongly influenced nor gain as good an understanding of American culture from a U.S. instructor as from an actual living experience in the United States.

--English language training given in the United States is more effective than in-country instruction due to the students' need to immediately practice the language.

--Existing programs, such as the Fulbright Program, have difficulty attracting U.S. instructors to participate in exchanges in some of the region's countries.

In considering the advantages and disadvantages of in-country training, it should be recognized that AID, USIA, DOD, and certain universities and private sector exchange organizations already have programs in place. Expanding these government programs and/or contributing to private sector efforts may be an effective means to respond to Soviet bloc recruiting in selected countries.

CAN THE UNITED STATES EMPLOY MORE COST-EFFECTIVE METHODS IN PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE?

Continuing budgetary pressures may dictate that U.S. administrators continue to emphasize those programs which maximize the impact of limited federal education funds by tapping into the extensive programs of the private sector. This approach recognizes that the private sector handles a significant number of international educational exchanges which occur between the United States and foreign countries. Under this approach, U.S. administrators could use the limited federal funds allocated for U.S.-sponsored programs to complement the significant private sector efforts underway to extend more educational opportunities to the foreign students of developing countries.

Some U.S. agencies employ this strategy by working with such organizations as the Institute of International Education, the Latin American Scholarship Program of American Universities, and the Partners of the Americas. Such private sector organizations have demonstrated their ability to expand the impact of limited federal funds by obtaining tuition waivers, airfare assistance, U.S. corporate scholarships, and other private sector contributions for foreign student exchanges and support services. The total value of in-kind services voluntarily donated through these organizations, though rarely calculated, should not be underestimated. Several agencies point out, however, that American universities are tending to increase tuition rates for foreign students and at the same time are reducing tuition waivers and training internships.

Below are but a few examples of the ways private sector organizations here and abroad bolster U.S.-sponsored training programs.

--Small U.S. government grants to the Institute of International Education, the Binational Centers, and the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs for student counseling services both here and abroad promote and facilitate U.S. educational opportunities as well as enhance the experiences of foreign students already studying in the United States using private sources.

--Revolving educational loan programs, such as the AID-assisted Educational Credit Foundation of the Dominican Republic, provide self-perpetuating financial assistance for study in the United States. The students' pay-back rate has been over 95 percent.

--The International Executive Service Corporation established by the American Chamber of Commerce of Costa Rica is sending retired U.S. businessmen/technicians to some countries in the region for the purpose of transferring skills; they provide their services on a no-salary, expenses-only basis.

--U.S. air carriers are supporting educational exchanges by providing international transportation for up to 200 Latin American students beginning U.S. study each year.

--The Latin American Scholarship Program of American Universities has arranged educational exchanges for an estimated 4,000 Latin American and Caribbean graduates and faculty members since 1964. In doing so, it has arranged matching contributions from various international agencies and public and private sector sources that were essential to covering the cost of these exchanges.

--AFL-CIO supplemented AID resources in providing labor-related training through AIFLD to more than 10,000 Latin Americans in 1982.

--Caribbean Basin Scholarship Fund private sector contractors are expected to generate an additional $2.74 million from their own resources and from other private sector sources to supplement AID funding of $7.5 million for the project.

--Partners of the Americas assists USIA in conducting various educational exchange programs. It calculates the "multiplier effect" of public and private seed funds at a ratio of 12 to 1.

Nevertheless, some officials believe there is still room for improvement in the cost-effective use of federal funds. AID officials, for example, are frustrated that decentralization of some training programs has resulted in the overseas missions funding some programs which are more costly than those conducted through AID/Washington-funded contractors. Others point to the proliferation of AID training contractors as indicative of possible duplicative administrative costs. Still others suggested

that the United States could greatly expand the impact of limited exchange dollars by increasing support services to the large numbers of self-supported foreign students in the United States. Enrichment programs and other support services aid their integration in the United States, enhance their experiences, and thereby serve U.S. policy goals.

There are certain disadvantages in expanding cost-effective strategies that use limited U.S. funds to complement private sector exchange organizations. First, U.S. assistance through private sector intermediaries is less direct than under traditional programs administered directly by U.S. agencies. There is a loss of government control and therefore no assurance that the same participants would be selected under a deliberate government process. Second, the effectiveness of some of these programs in increasing international ties with developing countries, while assumed, has not been proven. It is also possible that the U.S. government may not be adequately credited for its role in providing assistance through these indirect mechanisms.

Notwithstanding these reservations, the rapidly rising cost of underwriting educational opportunities for foreign students may dictate that limited federal training resources be allocated in ways that will complement and bolster private sector efforts. In our opinion, limited resources are best spent where they can serve as a catalyst to private funds and to fill gaps for needed services where private funds would not otherwise be forthcoming. Because private sector efforts can be used to serve U.S. foreign policy objectives, U.S. officials may wish to encourage their efforts with supplemental assistance, seed and matching funds, and other ways which as yet may not have been explored.

AGENCY COMMENTS AND OUR EVALUATION

Overall, the agencies said that they found the conclusions to be generally thorough, balanced, and useful. The USIA provided additional information about its new youth initiative program, while the Departments of State and Defense expressed some reservations about possible inferences and implications that might be drawn from the report's overall conclusions.

DOD

DOD said the draft report implied that enough money is being spent on educational assistance by the United States in the Latin American and Caribbean region. (See app. II.)

Recognizing that perspectives differ concerning the benefits of training opportunities offered students from Latin America and the Caribbean region, we have attempted to present fairly the differing interpretations of available information. Our information was not intended to imply that U.S. investment in education in the region was adequate to counter Soviet bloc

efforts. The statistics and graphs present the numbers of students studying in the United States and Soviet bloc countries for information purposes and to illustrate the difficulty of making one-on-one comparisons of U.S. and Soviet bloc efforts.

Department of State

The State Department believes that a wait-and-see attitude could pose serious consequences not only for the respective countries in the region but also for the United States itself (See app. I.); more specifically, that:

> "Training and educational programs are by definition long term investments. By the time that "conclusive evidence" on the impact of the Soviet program emerges it will be too late to devise cost-effective efforts to offset any Soviet advantage and to secure U.S. interests. Similarly, any "fuller understanding" of Soviet motives and successes will likely emerge only in the long term, after which U.S. capacity to respond will be diminished."

USIA

USIA said that existing traditional U.S. training programs must be an essential part of any future U.S. strategy for developing a flexible and effective response to the Soviet bloc scholarships and therefore deserve increased support. (See app. III.) Because of traditional programs' limitations, USIA noted that new programs are also needed to give priority attention to the upwardly mobile youth and future leaders from all sectors of developing countries.

USIA noted that its Office of Youth Exchange is planning an initiative to help stimulate expansion of overall youth exchanges with developing countries. Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic will be the first two Latin American countries scheduled to participate in this initiative. USIA said that youth exchanges can be (1) cost effective, (2) expanded under the auspices of the private sector, and (3) an attractive alternative to the ideological-oriented youth camp programs offered by the Soviet bloc.

APPENDIX I

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Comptroller
Washington, D.C. 20520

29 MAR 1984

Dear Frank:

I am replying to your letter of February 16, 1984, which forwarded copies of the draft report: "U.S. and Soviet Bloc Training Offered to Latin American and Caribbean Students: Factors for Consideration in Developing Future U.S. Programs."

The enclosed comments on this report were prepared in the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs.

We appreciate having had the opportunity to review and comment on the draft report. If I may be of further assistance, I trust you will let me know.

Sincerely,

Roger

Roger B. Feldman

Enclosure:
As stated.

Mr. Frank C. Conahan,
Director,
National Security and
International Affairs Division,
U.S. General Accounting Office,
Washington, D.C. 20548

APPENDIX I

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

March 9, 1984

MEMORANDUM

TO: M/COMP - Mr. Manion

FROM: ARA - James Michel

SUBJECT: U.S. and Soviet Bloc Training Offered to Latin American and Caribbean Students: Factors for Consideration in Developing Future U.S. Programs

GAO note: The deleted comments refer to Department of State suggestions for draft report revision which have been incorporated into the final report.

Tone of the Digest

The Digest (pp. i through v) does not reflect the more affirmative tone of the report itself, especially the Conclusion (p. 38). The opening paragraph of the Digest notes the absence of "conclusive evidence to suggest" how the U.S. program should proceed and calls for

"fuller understanding of the extent, objectives and nature" of the Soviet program.

Training and educational programs are by definition longterm investments. By the time that "conclusive evidence" on the impact of the Soviet program emerges it will be too late to devise cost-effective efforts to offset any Soviet advantage and to secure U.S. interests. Similarly, any "fuller under- standing" of Soviet motives and successes will likely emerge only in the longterm, after which U.S. capacity to respond will be diminished.

The Report

Taking into account the above comments, the Department of State finds the report generally thorough, balanced, and useful in its conclusions. A few specific editorial recommendations are noted in the attached copy of the text.

INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY AFFAIRS

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON D C 20301

In Reply Refer to:
I-10333/84

Reference: I-21958/84

14 JUN 1984

Frank C. Conahan
Director, National Security and
International Affairs Division
U.S. General Accounting Office
441 G St N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Mr. Conahan:

This is the Department of Defense response to the General Accounting Office (GAO) Draft Report, "U.S. And Soviet Bloc Training Offered to Latin American and Caribbean Students: Factors for Consideration in Developing U.S. Programs," dated February 16, 1984 (GAO Code No. 472019) - OSD Case No. 6451.

The Defense Department generally concurs with the facts presented in this report. However, the comparison of the U.S. with the Soviet Union and its allies without any differentiation between the aims and objectives of the two forces carries with it the unfortunate perception of "moral equivalency" between the two forces. This concept is currently being exploited by Soviet propagandists in the Latin American press. In addition, DOD believes that the focus of the report is misplaced. The emphasis appears to be on the numbers of persons trained by the U.S. as compared to the numbers of those trained by Soviet Bloc countries. Although basically factually correct, the Department of Defense (DOD) disagrees with the implication of the report that enough money is being spent by the U.S. in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The report omits any consideration of the fact that many Latin American countries were cut off from participation in FMS and IMET funded training programs as a result of legislative restrictions inspired by human rights and nuclear non-proliferation concerns. The U.S. has, through such restructuring of military training for valid non-military reasons, cut itself off from its ability to influence an entire generation of military personnel in certain Latin American countries.

DOD also disagrees with the GAO conclusion that sufficient statistical information is not available to determine if greater efforts are needed on the part of the U.S. to counter the growing number of persons trained by the Soviet Bloc. DOD further disagrees with the implication that students returning from Soviet Bloc training are ideologically neuter and therefore do not constitute an immediate threat to their countries or the security interests of the U.S. (Detailed DOD comments are enclosed.)

It should also be noted that the report does not concern itself with training offered to Latin American military personnel by our NATO allies, a factor which has become important in the military equation in that part of the world. The Soviet Union continues to offer no cost training to the Peruvian Armed Forces and has reportedly made such an offer to the armed forces of Bolivia.

The Department of Defense appreciates the GAO interest shown in this area and is pleased to note the favorable comments contained in the report concerning the International Military Education and Training Program.

Sincerely,

RICHARD L ARMITAGE
Assistant Secretary of Defense
(International Security Affairs)

Attachments
a/s

GAO DRAFT REPORT - DATED FEBRUARY 16, 1984
(GAO CODE NO. 472019) OSD CASE NO. 6451

"U.S. AND SOVIET BLOC TRAINING OFFERED TO LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STUDENTS: FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION IN DEVELOPING FUTURE U.S. PROGRAMS"

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS

* * * * *

FINDINGS

o **FINDING A: A Worldwide Growth Of Soviet Bloc Training Programs.** GAO found that during the mid-1950s the Soviet Union initiated a scholarship program for developing countries and has sought to capture the political and economic goodwill created through exchange, education, and training programs. GAO further found that the Soviet bloc has maintained a continuous and growing lead over the U.S. in government-sponsored scholarships by tripling its scholarship offerings to developing countries over the last 10 years. GAO concluded that any consideration of increased educational assistance should be undertaken not in isolation from but in concert with other types of U.S. economic and security assistance. (pp. 10, 11, and 38.)

DOD COMMENT: Concur.

o **FINDING B: United States Leads In Numbers Of Non-Government-Sponsored Students.** GAO found that the number of developing country scholarships sponsored by the U.S. cannot begin to match the number offered by the Soviet Bloc, however, if self-supported students are counted, far more developing country students continue to study at U.S. educational institutions while foreign students in Soviet bloc countries are almost entirely government-sponsored. GAO further found that although the number of scholarship opportunities available under U.S. programs have been greatly reduced from their all time highs of the 1960s, the trend in the number has steadily increased over the last 5 years. GAO concluded that the U.S. should consider whether increased support for traditional U.S. training programs provide an effective response to changing educational needs in the countries in the region. (pp. 9, 11, 13 and 38.)

DOD COMMENT: Partially concur. The Department of Defense concurs with the facts presented. However, DoD nonconcurs with the implication of the report which tends to downplay the significance of the total number of persons studying under Soviet sponsorship by emphasizing the number of

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self-sponsored students studying in the U.S.. Soviet scholarships are generally offered to students from the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum who would not otherwise be able to obtain the education. The degree of commitment of these students to their benefactor is likely to be much higher than that of the self-supported Latin student. If the basic issue is U.S. Government sponsorship compared with Soviet sponsorship the introduction of statistics concerning non-government sponsored students is not germane to the issue. In connection with non-government sponsored students in the U.S., it should be noted that frequently such students do not return to their homelands and therefore are not in a position to influence their governments. Few students sponsored by either the Soviet Union or Cuba remain in either country and therefore, are in a position to influence their homelands and its institutions in favor of the Soviet-Cuba system.

o **FINDING C: Latin America Is Not A High Priority Region For U.S. Or Soviet Bloc Training Programs.** GAO found that U.S. and Soviet bloc education and training programs have not traditionally allocated a large percent of their scholarship programs to the Latin America and Caribbean region because of apparent higher priorities in other geographical regions. GAO further found that the United States has changed the regional focus of its scholarships from Asia and Latin America in 1972 to the Middle East in 1982 while the Soviet Union and East European countries have consistently allocated the largest share of their scholarships to African countries and a significant portion to the Middle East. GAO also found that Soviet bloc scholarships for the Latin American/Carribbean basin region have been increasing while the number offered by the U.S. has been decreasing--gradual but subtle changes in the regional distribution of scholarships tend to obscure significant changes in the actual number of scholarships being offered to individual countries by Soviet and East Bloc countries. (pp. 9, 13, and 14.)

DOD COMMENT: Partially Concur. The Department of Defense concurs with the facts as presented in the report but does not concur with the implication that regional priorities have shifted. Legislative restrictions on the provision of security assistance to various Latin American countries for human rights and nuclear nonproliferation reasons have contributed to the change in regional emphasis.

o **FINDING D: Soviet Bloc Recruiting Efforts And U.S. Response In Carribbean Basin Countries.** GAO found that (1) several Caribbean basin countries have become the focus of stepped-up Soviet bloc scholarship activity in the last 5 years (from approximately 1,800 to 5,000 to

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Columbia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, and Panama) and (2) Cuba has actively recruited students from the region. GAO also found that in recent years the United States has begun to implement new initiatives to reverse the decline of its training programs and to counter the growing number of Soviet bloc scholarships, i.e., the Agency for International Development (AID) initiation of two major regional training programs since 1978. GAO concluded that the opportunities for achieving a successful U.S. response may be enhanced with a flexible approach--one which considers the unique characteristics of individual countries; nature and extent of Soviet Bloc recruiting efforts in a given country; current state of individual countries' indigenous educational system etc. (pp. 14 -17, 38 and 39.)

DOD COMMENT: Concur.

o **FINDING E: Comparison of U.S. And Soviet Bloc Approaches To Training.** GAO found that although the U.S. and Soviet bloc share a common objective of increasing economic, political and military ties, there are differing approaches to training in terms of programs offered, students targeted and recruiting methods employed. GAO found that (1) U.S. programs emphasize graduate-level academic offerings whereas Soviet bloc programs emphasize undergraduate, technically oriented academic programs, (2) the U.S. and Soviet bloc do not appear to be recruiting the same types of individuals from Latin America--those attending U.S. academic and technical training are typically from middle and upper middle classes, often proficient in English, and usually academicaly well-prepared versus students who accept Soviet bloc scholarships, are described as less affluent, working class youth without the financial means to pursue other academic alternatives, and (3) U.S.-sponsored training opportunities are publicized through a variety of channels such as; the U.S. embassy, host-government ministries, official scholarship agencies, bilateral exchange commissions, whereas the Soviet bloc recruits foreign students through official government channels and unofficial channels including; local communist parties, communist front organizations and leftist-oriented trade unions. GAO concluded that student recruiting, coupled with other Soviet bloc activities in the region, could pose future security implications for some Latin American countries and, as a result, for the United States itself. GAO also concluded that the Congress and the executive branch should consider whether the U.S. should alter the mix of its programs to reach different students. (pp. 20-28, 38 and 39.)

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DOD COMMENT: Concur. It should be noted that the individuals being trained to the Soviets and their allies are generally given formal ideological training while American training is apolitical with the view that exposure to an open society will foster an appreciation and understanding of our pluralistic and democratic society. DoD would like to emphasize that Soviet bloc activities in Latin America presently do pose security implications for the respective countries and for the U.S. itself. There is sufficient evidence to indicate that problems exist at the present time, and that they will only worsen in the future if present trends continue.

o **FINDING F: Officials' Views On The Implications Of Soviet Bloc Recruiting.** GAO found a wide range of views expressed by U.S., developing country, and private sector officials on the implications of stepped-up Soviet bloc recruiting in Latin America and the Carribbean; some officials believed that increased Soviet bloc recruiting and stable or declining U.S. efforts, represented a potential long term threat of Communist influence in the region while an equal body of opinion downplayed the significance of Soviet bloc activities. GAO further found (1) the concern expressed that large numbers of individuals trained in the Soviet bloc are entering government service where they could influence future policies, (2) some officials believed U.S. training opportunities may not offer real alternatives to Soviet bloc scholarships and believed U.S. programs need to become more focused on lower economic levels if the influence of individuals trained in the Soviet bloc is to be countered and (3) others, believed that the U.S. should stay with its traditional programs since many developing countries now have good undergraduate programs and local credit institutions to help academically qualified but economically disadvantaged students. GAO concluded that the Congress and the Executive Branch will need to weigh these security concerns against the cost of developing new forms of educational assistance to the region. GAO also concluded that the question will need to be addressed as to whether more emphasis should be placed on in-country educational assistance. (pp. 29-34, 38 and 39.)

DOD COMMENT: Concur.

o **FINDING G: Improving Programs Seen As Enhancing The Competitiveness Of Soviet Bloc Training Programs.** GAO found that although most agreed that U.S. sponsored programs are superior to those offered in Soviet bloc countries, the Soviet programs are improving. Some

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developing countries have made progress in (1) urging Soviet bloc countries to reduce the ideological content of their programs, (2) communicating their educational needs to Soviet and East European officials, and encouraging them to tailor programs to meet these needs, and (3) working out problems related to accreditation of academic programs. GAO concluded that this changing environment has aroused uneasy feelings among U.S. officials--this issue more than any of the others brings out the ambivalent feelings many have of not wanting to get into a numbers game with Soviet bloc countries on one hand yet not liking the future prospect of a growing gap between U.S. and Soviet bloc efforts.(pp. 34 and 35.)

DOD COMMENT: Concur.

o **FINDING H: Data Seen As Inadequate To Assess The Need For Additional U.S. Training Opportunities.** GAO found that the reliability of available statistics is questionable not only for students being trained in the Soviet bloc countries but even for those being trained under U.S.-sponsored programs. GAO found that perceptions on the scope of Soviet bloc activities varied and that problems encountered in coordinating U.S. exchange programs are well documented. GAO concluded that U.S. officials need to obtain a fuller understanding of the extent, objectives, and nature of Soviet bloc recruiting in individual countries as part of any assessment to determine whether new types of educational assistance are needed in the region. GAO further concluded that the question needs to be addressed as to whether the U.S. can employ more cost-effective methods in providing education assistance. (pp. 35-37, 37 and 38.)

DOD COMMENT: Partially concur. The Department of Defense concurs with the facts as presented; but, it does not concur in the finding that a more adequate data base is needed to assess the necessity for additional U.S. training opportunities. The report makes a case for Soviet bloc designs and inroads in Latin America based on its training and education programs and the need for the U.S. to counter these gains, notwithstanding the reported inadequacy of the data. DOD further nonconcurs that the question of more cost-effective methods in providing educational assistance needs to be addressed. The Department's methods are cost effective, but national policy issues (as addressed in the response to Finding C) have limited the provision of U.S. educational assistance in the area.

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APPENDIX III

United States Information Agency

Washington D C 20547

Office of the Director

USIA

March 23, 1984

Dear Mr. Conahan:

The G.A.O.'s draft report on U.S. and Soviet Bloc scholarships in Latin America and the Caribbean is an extremely useful survey of the situation. Your staff is to be commended for the extensive research effort which obviously went into the report. I believe that it is a positive contribution to our understanding of the troubling and changing patterns of scholarship support, about which accurate information is normally so hard to obtain. Our detailed comments on the draft report are attached.

We are in complete agreement with your conclusion that the best American response to expanded Soviet scholarship programs in the region will be flexible, taking into account the unique characteristics of individual countries, the extent of Soviet bloc educational activities in each country, the character of indigenous educational systems, which U.S. programs are best suited to identified needs, and approaches that have been effective in the past. USIA is currently planning a Central American Scholarship Program, as part of the Administration's Jackson Plan for Central America, which will take all of the above factors into account for each country in the region.

USIA recognizes the limitations of traditional exchange programs in reaching upwardly-mobile youth in Latin American countries and will give priority attention to reaching future leaders from all sectors through the program we will put together when Congress approves the Adminstration's proposals.

I note with satisfaction the strong level of approval which your staff reported was widely voiced concerning our existing programs and the strong arguments cited in the report for expanding them. Increased support for our traditional programs is an essential part of any strategy for developing a flexible and effective U.S. strategy to deal with the Soviet challenge in this area.

Mr. Frank C. Conahan, Director
National Security and International
Affairs Division
United States General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

APPENDIX III

The concern expressed in the report about strengthening USIA's activities in the exercise of its mandate to coordinate U.S. Government exchanges is well taken. USIA's Coordination of U.S. Government Exchanges Unit (E/AAX) is in the process of creating a data base on U.S. Government exchanges, which will prove useful both for further studies such as this G.A.O. report and for attempts to coordinate exchange policy on an inter-agency basis, as needs dictate.

I thank you and your staff for a very timely and informative study.

Sincerely,

Charles Z. Wick

Charles Z. Wick
Director

APPENDIX III

USIA Comments on General Accounting Office Draft Report: "U.S. and Soviet Bloc Training Offered to Latin American and Caribbean Students: Factors For Consideration in Developing Future U.S. Programs"

I. General Comments

The G.A.O. report is essentially accurate in its use of available data. Its discussion of U.S. government exchanges policy alternatives and the advantages and disadvantages of each course of action is excellent. The report is to be commended for its objectivity and understanding of the issues involved in trying to come to terms with the immense growth in Soviet Bloc scholarship activity over the past few years. As the report indicates, this aggressive expansion of the Soviet presence in Latin America and the Caribbean has become a source of increasing concern for statesmen, educators and the general public in both the region affected and the United States.

The information presented in the study closely parallels the results of a recent USIA draft report* on the situation in the countries of Central America.

* "U.S./Central American Exchanges: No Longer Declining, But Overtaken in Size by Soviet Effort," a report from the Coordination of U.S. Government Exchanges Unit, Office of Academic Programs, November 30, 1983.

The major conclusions of this report were as follows:

1. The Soviet Union and its allies are now sponsoring more Central Americans for educational and training purposes than the total number of Central Americans who come to the United States for education or training of all kinds.

2. While overall numbers of Central Americans studying in the U.S. are high, barriers for study in the U.S. by talented youth from the lower socio-economic classes are very high.

3. The decline in U.S. Government-sponsored exchange programs appears to have ended but present programs and funding levels are not likely to provide any major upswing in overall exchange figures.

4. U.S. Government-sponsored exchanges are not structured to provide many opportunities for students from lower socio-economic classes.

A copy of the full report is attached.

II. Data Limitations

We appreciate the conclusion expressed in the G.A.O. draft report concerning the paucity of reliable data about Soviet Bloc exchanges. Accurate information about the quality of Soviet Bloc education, the impression it makes on Latin American students and what students are able to do with their Soviet Bloc degrees when they return home is needed. These information gaps are critical deficiencies in our understanding and concerted efforts should be undertaken wherever possible to obtain this kind of information. However, the growing chorus of concern expressed by knowledgeable observers in the region, which is noted in the report, leads us to conclude that the Soviet scholarship effort is a real problem that the U.S. Government must address. The Reagan Administration has recognized the problem and its proposals for a Central American scholarship program speak directly to this concern.

We are aware that comprehensive data about U.S. Government exchanges are not readily available either. The problems and costs involved in collecting such data were recognized by the G.A.O. in its 1978 report on exchange coordination, cited on page 56 of the present draft report. USIA's Coordination of U.S. Government Exchanges Unit (E/AAX) is in the process of creating a data base on U.S. Government exchanges, which will prove useful both for future studies like this G.A.O. report and for attempts to coordinate exchange policy on an inter-agency basis, as needs dictate.

III. Observations on Specific Portions of the Text

A. Non-sponsored students in the U.S. (pp. i, ii, 8,9,11-13: It is more correct to label the 95-98% of foreign students in the U.S. who are not sponsored by the U.S. Government as "non-sponsored" students, rather than "private sector exchanges." The most recent edition of the Institute of International Education's informative survey of foreign students, Open Doors, estimates that more than two-thirds of foreign students in the U.S. are paying for their education "primarily with personal and family funds." Only 2.3%, according to Open Doors, receive U.S. Government support.

We believe that the distinction between getting an education "on your own" in the United States and participating in a structured exchange program is an important one. The fact that most foreign students are here "on their own" is both a tribute to the perceived strengths of American higher education and a source of concern in terms of their acculturation to American life and the limited opportunities many have to really get to know Americans, when these opportunities are not provided as part of a structured program.

USIA, through its Student Support Services Division, works with foreign student counselors, colleges and community groups to help provide non-sponsored foreign students with opportunities for integration into American life. Very often, however, campus and community efforts fall short. The painful example of the behavior of many Iranian students during the 1979-81 crisis with Iran illustrates the limited usefulness of comparing total foreign student enrollment in the U.S. with Soviet Bloc figures to determine relative favorable impact of our programs and theirs.

In contrast, USIA exchange programs are structured to provide support for foreign students adjusting to life in the U.S., so that they do not become alienated and hostile due to "culture shock" (a particular problem for "Third World" students who may come from cultures very different from ours). Other government-agency and private-sector exchange programs also seek to address this concern through a variety of special orientation and enrichment programs.

B. Military and Civilian Programs (pp. ii, iii, 21, 23,24): If military training figures are excluded, the imbalance between U.S. Government and Soviet Bloc training is even greater than the four-to-one ratio reported on p. iv. Military training figures should not be considered simply another form of technical training but, rather, handled at all times as a separate category.

C. Cuba (p. ii, 12): Training for Central American youth in Cuba has shown a dramatic increase in the recent past, as indicated in the attached study from USIA's Office of Research. The Cuban figures should be included at all times as part of overall Soviet Bloc figures to assure that the reader has an accurate basis for comparison.

IV. Youth Exchange

Except for Cuba, the draft report does not address what the U.S. and the Soviet Bloc are doing with youth exchange programs. USIA believes that youth exchange programs (15 to 19 year olds) play an important role in influencing successor generation attitudes and values, since people are socialized, learn basic political values, employment skills and critical judgment in secondary schools. Consequently, while the narrative and statistics contained in the report are not concerned with youth exchange, many of the general trends and implications are relevant to beginning/expanding youth exchange programs in Latin American and Caribbean countries and we see an important role for these programs in addressing the problem of increasing Soviet exchanges in this region.

Youth exchanges are cost effective, can be expanded through frameworks already in place and operating under the auspices of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and are an effective and attractive alternative to the often one-sided, ideologically oriented youth camp programs offered by the Soviet Bloc. U.S. youth exchange programs offer balanced two-way exchanges, provide wider exposure to all aspects of both societies for the participants, and create more valid cross-cultural experiences. Private sector involvement (the NGOs) brings community and other resources to these programs which offer a dimension not readily available in programs funded and managed solely by the federal government.

USIA's Youth Exchange Initiative was designed to capitalize on these private-sector assets. Through USIA's Office of Youth Exchange we are studying how to stimulate expansion of overall youth exchanges with "Third World" countries. The first two countries of Latin America scheduled for inclusion in this initiative are Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic.

APPENDIX IV

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D C 20523

SENIOR ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR

MAR 28 1984

Mr. Frank C. Conahan
Director
National Security and International
Affairs Division
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Re: Agency for International Development (A.I.D.) Comments on the GAO Draft Report: "U.S. and Soviet Bloc Training Offered to Latin American and Caribbean Students: Factors for Consideration in Developing Future U.S. Programs" (GAO/C/NSIAD-84-109)

Dear Mr. Conahan:

The comments which follow on the subject report relate to fact, policy and statements of interpretation and are limited to the programs funded and managed by the Agency for International Development.

We agree with the overall thrust of the report and with the GAO's conclusions that any new and expanded U.S. effort in international training should be flexible and considered in concert with other types of U.S. economic and security assistance.

Following are our comments on those parts of the report that do not accurately represent the A.I.D. participant training program:

Page 4 - The table on (pages 4 and 5) forms the basis for the comparisons made throughout the report. The table excludes Soviet bloc students in training courses of less than six months duration. A.I.D. figures do include such students and, in fact, the majority of A.I.D.'s technical participants attend training courses lasting less than 6 months. The official A.I.D. figure for U.S. training in FY 82 is 7,885, of which 48% are academic and 52% technical (non-degree) participants. This figure excludes third country and in country training.

Page 16 - The report states that two projects, the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American University Council for Economic and Social Development programs, depart from A.I.D.'s emphasis on graduate education. This is not true. A.I.D.'s policy is to support both technical training and academic training, primarily at the graduate level. A.I.D. in fact sponsors more participants for short-term technical training than it does for academic training.

On the same page, the report gives the impression that the Partners of the Americas program may be a graduate-level program. Partners of the Americas' major emphasis is on short-term technical training.

Pages 16 and 17 - The report states that the requirements for English language proficiency and the loan component for the OAS scholarships have eliminated most disadvantaged students from consideration for the OAS program. These factors do not eliminate disadvantaged students. English language training is provided to students whenever necessary. Furthermore, the loan component of the OAS program provides that students repay only a small percentage of the original loan and this can be done over an extended period of time once the students have returned to country. The OAS screens out most students who have the capacity to fund their own training. Others that remain in this category are usually screened out by AID/W or the USAID field missions during the final approval process.

Page 17 - The report states that some OAS students were already studying in the U.S. at the time of their selection. This is true because the OAS program design calls for completing some BA programs in one year. It is virtually impossible to find students who can complete a BA in one year in a U.S. university unless they have spent at least the junior year in an American university. Even though these students previously studied or are currently studying in the U.S., the needs criteria are being successfully applied.

Page 20 - The report indicates that U.S. scholarships often require trainees to supplement USG-provided funds with personal resources. A.I.D. requires a 25% counterpart contribution in all projects, but this is usually met by international air fares and salary continuance. These are normally met by the trainee's employer or by the host government, not by the individual participant. The OAS component of the Caribbean Basin Scholarship Fund does require repayment of a small part of the total training cost. The loan portion is small, can easily be met by U.S. trained participants upon their return, and has not constrained the number of applicants from the disadvantaged target group.

On the same page, the report states that the U.S. emphasizes graduate level academic training. While it is true that A.I.D. stresses graduate rather than undergraduate training, more than half of A.I.D.'s training is short-term technical (i.e., non-degree) programs. Figures for the Latin American and Caribbean region indicate even greater emphasis on technical training:

LAC Participants in Training

Fiscal Year	Academic	Technical
1978	577	986
1979	477	900
1980	440	886
1981	281	927
1982	191	867
1983	281	1,049

Page 20 - Reference is made to language and remedial study provided by the Eastern bloc countries. Although it is A.I.D.'s general policy to "top off" English language training in the U.S. after most of the language training has taken place in the home country, A.I.D. does provide considerable English language training in the U.S. If students are unable to study English in their home country, more extensive study in the U.S. is authorized. Also, for short courses and observation visits in the U.S., interpretors are sometimes provided. And in a few instances short term programs and some graduate-level programs are offered in Spanish.

A.I.D. also provides remedial training. Many, if not most, students who come to the U.S. for graduate study are required by their universities to complete prerequisite undergraduate courses before proceeding with their graduate level work.

Undergraduate training has not been an A.I.D. priority area for several reasons:

1. A.I.D. policy provides that training be conducted in-country or in third countries if institutions are available to offer that training. U.S. training should be considered only if training at those levels is not feasible. Most BA-level training in the LAC region can take place in-country or in third countries.

APPENDIX IV

2. A.I.D. training is based on program or country needs for development. Graduate students and short-term technical trainees working in development-related fields generally are enrolled in programs designed to upgrade specific job related skills or knowledge. Because BA candidates frequently do not have jobs, it is more difficult to make the development linkage.

3. Bachelor degree students often want to remain in the U.S. for advanced degrees which then results in extended stays of six or more years. This time extension often reduces their desire to return home, especially when their ties to a work environment no longer exist.

4. BA-level trainees are often not as mature as graduate level students and their ability to complete a four year academic program are not as predictable.

5. Host governments often prefer to use A.I.D. funds for programs with more direct development impact than many undergraduate programs have.

Page 23 - The Participant Training Program had its start in 1944, not in 1941.

Page 24 - A.I.D. training programs are probably less middle and upper class oriented than the study implies. Students in the field of agriculture or primary health care, for example, are likely to be of modest background. A.I.D. is also conducting more short-term vocational training in U.S. junior colleges than in prior years. The majority of A.I.D. participants are mid-level government employees not necessarily from the highest socio-economic and privileged groups. Increasingly, short-term training for the private sector involves basic level skills training.

Page 25 - U.S. universities and private sector contractors who handle A.I.D. participants currently number about 60-80, but may represent as many as 100-120 separate contracts. They select participants in consultation with the A.I.D. Mission and host country government.

Page 44 - Reference is made to international organizations such as the Institute of International Education (IIE) and the Latin American Scholarship Program of American Universities (LASPAU) which are able to obtain tuition waivers for foreign students. While this was certainly true in the past, the increasing pressures being applied to American universities to increase tuition rates for foreign students will greatly reduce and possibly eliminate tuition waivers and training internships in the future.

We appreciate the opportunity to respond to this draft GAO report and hope these comments are useful.

Sincerely,

N.C. Brady
Senior Assistant Administrator
for Science and Technology

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