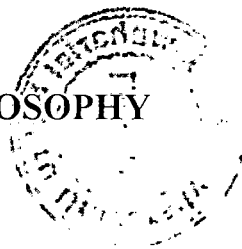


**CONCEPT OF NATIONAL SECURITY
UNDER CIVILIAN RULE IN ARGENTINA:
A CRITIQUE**

*Dissertation Submitted to
Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirement of
the award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY



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July 2001

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "CONCEPT OF NATIONAL SECURITY UNDER CIVILIAN RULE IN ARGENTINA: A CRITIQUE" submitted by ROHAN SINHA in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY of this University is his own work, and has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other University.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Professor Abdul Nafey
(Supervisor)

Professor Rajendra K. Jain
(Chairperson)

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To
Mummy and Daddy

CONTENTS

		PAGES
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS		
INTRODUCTION	National Security in Argentina	1-8
CHAPTER I	Repression, Regression and Recession: National Security Doctrines Under The Military.	9-42
CHAPTER II	Consolidation of Insecurity: National Security in a Transitional Democracy.	43-72
CHAPTER III	Rapprochement and Integration : New Regionalism Under Civilian Rule.	73-94
CHAPTER IV	Pragmatism or Negotiated Dependence: New Foreign Policy Orientation in a Post Cold War Paradigm.	95-112
CONCLUSION	A Critique of the Evolving National Security Paradigm	113-117
BIBLIOGRAPY		118-128

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is an opportune moment for me to thank and express my gratitude to all those who have made it possible for this work to see the light of the day.

First, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Abdul Nafey, who provided me with his valuable advice and guidance. Without his help, this dissertation could not have taken shape

I am also grateful to Prof. Fereira and Prof. Chawla for their constant support and encouragement. My sincere thanks to them, they have been a great source of motivation.

I express my thanks to the library staff of Jawaharlal Nehru University and Institute for Defence and Strategic Analysis who facilitated the completion of this work.

I take this opportunity to express my deep-felt gratitude to my parents, my sister and Lakshmi for their unwavering love, affection and moral support. Your presence have seen me through some of the most trying times.

A big Thank You to my friends Toy, Varuni, Bravin, K.B., Ananya, Rajesh, Mathew, Jayaraj and Aruna. Without you guys, I don't know what I have done.

Last, but not the least, I would like to thank Tarun and Hemant for the patience and understanding they displayed, while typing this dissertation.

NEW DELHI
25th July, 2001

ROHAN SINHA

INTRODUCTION

NATIONAL SECURITY IN ARGENTINA

National security as a concept is a relatively modern phenomenon, which gained currency in international relations after the initiation of the great super power rivalry that had overshadowed much of the contemporary history. However, in spite of the widespread proliferation of the term, its true meaning or rather a definitive interpretation has eluded scholars, bureaucrats, and politicians alike.

Although remaining inherently vague¹, due to a lack of consensus over its parameters, national security in its broadest sense signifies a country's preoccupation with its national interests that incorporated its human and physical resources. It denotes a process, whereby the country seeks to reduce its vulnerabilities and enhance its defenses not only against external threats, but also those that emanate within its frontiers.

An analysis of the concept becomes difficult due to its multidimensional character and the complexities that it poses, thereby leading scholars to maintain that national security could only be interpreted in relation to specific contexts and issues.

¹ Barry Buzan, "People, States and Fear", Pp.7.

During the Cold War, the term came to acquire a predominantly militaristic connotation, which provided it with a hollow and narrowly focussed interpretation. Such an approach tended to be reductionist in its disposition, with the military emerging as the single most important component of the entire model².

National security in the Cold War context was identified as a derivative of power, the quintessential realist concept that tended to reduce inter-state relations in terms of perpetual power struggle. Thus, realist perception came to define national security as the position of the state in that power struggle, vis-à-vis its competitor, or in terms of stability of the overall balance of power³.

At the height of Cold War, national security became a favourite symbol that was used to justify strategies designed, at considerable cost to enhance a country's economic, military and political structures⁴.

This period of international turmoil had a profound impact on the international political system as well. By dividing the world in two separate spheres of influence, each intent to out do the other, national security inevitably came to be denoted in terms of military and technological innovations, large scale proliferation that was fine tuned with the prevailing balance of power.

² Ibid. Pp.4.

³ Ibid. Pp.7.

⁴ Robert O. Keohane, "After Hegemony: Cooperation and Dissent in the World Political Economy", Pp.6.

However, the inherent contradictions in such an approach, with its militarised interpretations was that it tended to remain actor oriented, i.e. a notion of security bound to the level of individual nation states. Although, such an approach had the advantage of superficially providing a basis for consensus, it also permitted a wide range of approaches and policies, some counter productive, to be brought under the national security umbrella.⁵

Critics of this realist interpretation of national security have emphasized the self-defeating contradictions that are inherent in such an approach. They maintain that in spite of the widespread advance in military power and technological advancement; nations in the world continue to remain insecure.⁶

With the transformation in the international political economy in the seventies, the concept of national security was given a new facelift. The phenomenal growth in international trade and the emergence of free market liberal economic strategies, vigorously pursued by the OECD countries, resulted in a rapid growth of international economic dependence. This was primarily due to the greater involvement of governments in the operation of modern capitalist economies.⁷

Due to this growing interdependence among states, attempts were made to discard the realist stance that had come to prevail in international relations, that

⁵ Barry Buzan

⁶ The Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, "Common Security: A Blueprint for Survival", Pp.4.

⁷ Robert O Keohane

stressed on national security as the primary national objective, and that the threats that a nation perceived were omnipresent and perpetual.

By the mid eighties, new interpretations were being given to the term, thereby expanding the scope for its analysis, scholars began to assert that in an era of complete dependence, when the linkages between domestic and foreign policy had emerged stronger, the notion of “national interests”, in its conservative sense had become increasingly redundant.⁸ These changes also rendered absolute the traditional maxims of international relations – that states will act in their national interests or seek to maximize their power – became ambiguous.⁹

Instead a new philosophy of idealism emerged that began to stress on greater cooperation and harmony to prevail between states. This liberal spirit that called for the cessation of all hostilities, also began to emphasise on more peaceful means of conflict resolution. It called for a greater role for multilateral institutions such as the United Nations, in dispute settlement. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union in August 1991, the Cold War, that had imposed rigid constraints on international politics, came to an end. The dissipation of the global bi-polarity led to the emergence of multipolar politics, as economically powerful nations began to assert their claims on the global sphere.

⁸ Robert O Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, “Power and Interdependence”, Pp.8.

⁹ Ibid. Pp.8.

The complex interdependence was renewed with vigour as each nation began to bilaterally or multilaterally enhance its international position. This period was marked by two factors:

- 1) The primacy of economies over the more traditional strategic concerns.
- 2) The substitution of diplomacy instead of force and coercion as the viable means of limiting disputes.

Moreover, new patterns of inter-state relations have emerged that have replaced the more conservative nationalist paradigms of the Cold War. The newfound reliance on international trade and migration of investment has increased the dependence that exists between countries and has given an impetus to the growth of regional blocs that have necessitated a partial surrender of state control. This new picture is in abject contradiction to the past, where national sovereignty and dominance were the prime motivations for state behavior.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND ARGENTINA

Argentina, just like any other Third World nation has been profoundly affected by the changes that have taken place in the international political and economic systems. Under different governments, the country has tried to adapt to these evolving conditions either by aligning with the dominant forces or by maintaining an abstentionist stand.

However, such an approach has been more pertinent in the political sphere rather than in the economic. It has come a long way from the position of prestige and

glory that it commanded in the 19th century, and has found itself among the ranks of nations that have achieved not even half the level of its growth. This has been a painful reminder for the Argentines who have a strong belief in their nation's destiny. The asymmetrical dependence that pervaded Argentina's relations with external capitalist forces in the 20th century has obstructed the development of strong economic structures that can resist the distortions that accompany complex economic interdependence.

Even in the political sphere, the country has suffered immensely due to the underdevelopment of its political structures that has often been sidelined to further partisan interests. Moreover, unlike other developing countries, where the political process has been under the complete control of an elite class that also controls the economic resources, in Argentina the popular classes have often been highly politicised and incorporated within the state machinery.

This phenomenon of the large-scale involvement of the various state structures within the decision making process has made Argentina different from other developing countries. It has provided the country with a strong nationalist orientation, and aspirations to emerge as a powerful force in the global order.

However, these aspirations of the nation could not materialize. With the emergence of the Cold War, Argentina along with the rest of the region became entangled in the bipolar confrontation and came under the hegemonic influence of the United States. The US intent on excluding the hemisphere from the perceived threat of global

communism imposed unilateral conditions on these nations under the pretext of securing its national interests.

While initiating its global defense against the threat of communist aggression, American policymakers became aware of the structural deficiencies of the Latin American countries that had highly unequal and skewed income distribution. These structural distortions were seen as ripe grounds for the proliferation of left oriented guerrilla and insurgency movements.

This dichotomy between its internal and external dimensions has been intensified due to a lack of homogenisation of its various social classes, especially when deciding upon the nation's long-term objectives. Various social actors hardly agree on a common concept of national interests or a common vision for the country's development.

This inability of its national leaders to chart a course for the long-term development of the nation has had its repercussions on other important spheres of decision making process. The most prominent example of this myopia is in the sphere of national security.

National Security as a concept has always fascinated Argentine leaders who have used it effectively to channel the nationalist sentiments of its masses. Be it Peron's 'Third Way' or the Military's defense of Western Christian, capitalist values, national security has been a prominent vehicle to advance these interests.

My purpose in studying this concept is to distinguish and determine the prevailing patterns of National Security paradigms that have been used by both military and Civilians regimes that appeared after the fifties and sixties. An attempt will be made to find the determinants that have shaped these orientations and the implications of these doctrines.

My first chapter broadly deals with the National Security orientation of the military, the causes that led to the emergence of its national security doctrines and its duplications on the Argentine society.

The second chapter deals with the transition to the civilian rule, that issues and problems that had emerged from the military's security policies and the new security paradigm given by the civilians.

The third chapter concerns with the new integrationist trends that emerged in the Latin American region, the causes that made the Argentine leadership to drop all hostilities and embrace unprecedented cooperative approaches to issues relating to regional and national security.

My fourth chapter deals with the new foreign policy orientation that was provided to the country by its new president Carlos Menem and his contributions in instilling a radically different perspective on national security.

My last chapter will conclude by presenting a critique of the evolving patterns of national security thought, which has emerged in contemporary Argentina.

CHAPTER-I

REPRESSION, REGRESSION AND RECESSION: NATIONAL SECURITY DOCTRINES UNDER THE MILITARY

EMERGENCE OF BUREAUCRATIC-AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

The resurgence of authoritarian regimes in Argentina in the decade of sixties and seventies heralded a new era in the country's political history. Varying substantially from its predecessors in its disposition, the new regimes signified the evolution of the Argentine military from an archaic caudillismo patterned force to a modern institution maintaining high levels of the professionalism.¹ Latin American scholars dubbed these regimes 'Bureaucratic-Authoritarian' (B-A), owing to their distinctive corporatist organisation and decision-making structures.²

This "praetorian"³ take over, which reflected a significant change in authoritarian politics, brought few interesting points into focus. In the first place, it was centred on the prevailing theory of modernisation, which postulated that greater industrial development in due course, would produce more stable democratic and

¹ Brian Loveman and Thomas M. Davies, "Politics of Antipolitics", Pp.27.

² Guillermo O'Donnell, "Tensions in the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian State and the Question of Democracy", Pp.293.

³ Praetorianism is described as a society in which all institutions and structures such as the church, labour, students, military etc., are highly politicised. However, the existing political institutions are incapable of accommodating the various political demands of the different sectors. It leads to a condition of anarchy, where dominant class or group would impose itself upon others, usually by rejecting all legal controls to check such usurpation. (See Samuel Huntington, "The Soldier and the State" and Alfred Stepan, "The Military in Politics: Changing Patterns in Brazil".

egalitarian social structures.⁴ Secondly, it represented an end to the long tradition of military interventions to further individual or partisan interests.⁵ These interventions brought out the pervasive obsession among the armed forces for national security and well being, its concerns regarding the country's political and economic underdevelopment and its diminishing prestige in the regional and international power dynamics. Thirdly, this phenomenon was not an isolated development restricted only to Argentina, but a process that engendered identical results in several other countries of the subcontinent, notably in Chile, Brazil, and Peru among others. It was the near similar orientations of these regimes that made their outcomes strikingly similar.

This convergence of visions and objectives across the entire length of the continent in a relatively short span of time, point towards a complex interplay between a wide gamut of factors, both internal (domestic) and external (regional/hemispheric and international). A host of issues, ranging from the prevailing political disorder to poor economic management; territorial concerns to ideological/cultural imperatives acted in collusion to present the military with a distinct developmental bearing. To quote Fernando Enrique Cardoso, "It was the military institution as such which assumed power in order to restructure society and the state."⁶ This restructuring was carried out in the name of national security.

⁴ Fernando Enrique Cardoso, "On the Characterization of Authoritarian Regimes in Latin America", Pp.33.

⁵ 'Partisan' is used to express the traditional allegiance of the military with the conservative oligarchic class to preserve its institutional interests and that of the 'elites' by subordinating the popular classes.

⁶ Fernando E. Cardoso, "On the Characterization of Authoritarian Regimes in Latin America", Pp.35.

The period of Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Regimes (B-A) in Argentina begins with the military coup in 1966, followed by the installation of General Onganía as the president of the Republic. It signified the transfer of the political decision-making process into the hands of a military junta that espoused the institutional interests of the various branches of the military.

Many factors were responsible for the emergence and consolidation of these authoritarian regimes. More than a decade of populist rule had led to severe weakening of the socio-political structures of the society. Argentina's experience with populism under Juan Peron had produced a defective political process and a highly politicized popular sector, enjoying a large share of the state's resources.⁷ The widening economic stratification and poor redistribution of national income had resulted in an intensification of poverty and underdevelopment. This led to a situation where growing public discontentment could not be sufficiently channeled within the political process, making the country a ripe ground for incipient communist insurgencies. Latin America in general had witnessed an explosion of left wing guerrilla and insurgent groups, in the aftermath of the successful Cuban revolution under Fidel Castro.

The Armed Forces, alarmed at these developments and the potential 'threats' that they posed to the well being of the country, seized political control.

⁷ The populist phase began in Argentina in 1948, under Juan Peron, who used his charismatic leadership to organise one of the strongest Trade Union movements in Latin America. By successfully incorporating the popular classes within the political process, he not only consolidated his own position but also vastly empowered a group that traditionally had little presence in elite dominated politics. For a detailed description of Peronist Argentina, (see J. KirkPatrick, "Leader and Vanguard in Mass Society").

This response was also due to the extreme distrust prevailing amid the military officers towards the civilian capabilities in countering the communist onslaught.

A critical evaluation of these regimes and the policies that pursued point to the pervasive influence of its national security concerns on its decision-making. Envisaging a state of 'total war', persistent and unyielding threats looming large over the pursuit of national objectives, the military incorporated all potentially relevant aspects of national autonomy and defense, especially those relating to economic development and ideological homogeneity into the realm of military responsibility.⁸

Under the B-A regimes, the primacy of national security was absolute and its overwhelming influence was seen in each and every policy that it undertook. Security was treated in a wide, holistic manner that included an amalgamation of various dimensions of security, such as political security, economic security, and territorial security among others. However, it was the strategic and military dimension of security that became pre-eminent.⁹

Several factors worked in conjunction to make the military's security perception distinctive from the past. Among these, the role played by 'professional' values and ideals, and the influence of geopolitical and geo-strategic interests played a pivotal role in shaping the military's national security paradigm. There were other factors too. Some cultural, such as the historical role of the armed forces

⁸ Deborah Norden, "Democratic consolidation and military professionalism: Argentina in the 1980's." Pp.156.

⁹ David Pion-Berlin, "Military Autonomy and Emerging Democracies in South America", Pp.86.

as a political interlocutor and its extreme distrust towards civilian policy-makers¹⁰. Others socio-political and economic factors, such as the intensification of the nation's asymmetrical dependency and low growth, large scale political violence and disorder, and an unusually high degrees of politicization of the popular classes, all presented a significant threat to the military's conception of national well being and interests.

The military's security perception was also influenced and affected by certain developments in the international sphere. The Cold War bi-polarity had encompassed almost the entire globe, dividing the world into two opposing spheres of influence, representing the two power blocs. The United States had managed to insulate the entire hemisphere against the threat of communist expansion by entering into multilateral and bilateral agreements with other hemispheric nations. These agreements institutionalized hemispheric security through multilateral institutions such as the Organization of American States (OAS), Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Pact), and other military exchange programmes. The US also distributed advanced weapons and armaments and infused the Latin American militaries with comprehensive national security doctrines that had an inward orientation, regarding security.

THE INFLUENCE OF PROFESSIONALISM

The influence of professional ethics over the military's national security orientation was not a short-term phenomenon. The infusion of western

¹⁰ See edited speech of the three commanding generals of the Argentine armed forces in Brian Loveman and Thomas M. Davis Jr., ed, "Politics of Antipolitics", Pp.176-178.

professionalism began in the end 19th century when the Argentine armed forces began to interact with the militaries of major European powers, such as the German and the British. Professionalism was instrumental in converting the Argentine military from its traditional caudillo orientation to a modern professional military.

This transformation of the armed forces into a professional cadre army went along simultaneously with the introduction of modern weaponry and establishment of military training schools, mostly under the supervision of foreign military advisors.¹¹

Professionalism instills in an institution the superiority of technical values and experience. It involves advancement based on technical competence, formal training and seniority.¹² Although such ethics had been transplanted into the Argentine military, its effects on its institution were quite distinct from those of the industrially advanced nations. The amalgamation of the country's realities, read distinctive geopolitical concerns, lack of cohesive and well defined political structures, presence of a weak and fragmented polity prone to potentially destabilizing elements, and above all a shattered economy elicited different response from the military. There were other influences too. Firstly, the entire process of professionalisation occurred outside civilian supervision. The military had always enjoyed a high degree of autonomy vis-à-vis the civilian governments regarding military issues. Professionalism outside civilian control resulted in a contradiction of its potential roles. The military's assessment of its objectives that was to be much more systematic and organised after professionalism, became more

¹¹ Warren Schiff, "The Influence of the German Armed Forces and War Industry on Argentina, 1880-1914", Pp.49.

¹² Paul W. Zagorski, "Democracy versus National Security: Civil-Military Relations in Latin America", Pp.72.

obscured. The military was torn between compulsions arising out of technical and nationalist concerns. In Argentina, due to a delayed process of professionalism taking place in a different context, the military could not always make a clear distinction between technical and nationalist imperatives.¹³ This was further compounded by a lack of consensus, regime illegitimacy and the hyper mobilization of various sectors in the society. Thus, military involvement in politics represented the influence of nationalist concerns that forced the military to intervene when it felt that national welfare and objectives were being threatened by the action or inaction of the civilian governments.

This omnipresent conflict over potential missions among the armed forces was reflected in the speech of the Army Commander-in-Chief (later, President) General Organic, who while addressing the conference of American Arms in 1964 endorsed the acceptance of positive norms of the constitution on part of the military. According to him, under the mandate of a Republican order the armed forces had to remain “apolitical”, nondeliberative and essentially subordinate to legitimately constituted authority and “unequivocally respect the constitution and the law of the land.” However, the conflict existing within the armed forces in developing fixed parameters for its activities was highlighted in his argument that “in emergencies this disposition of the armed institution for the service of the constitution certainly ought not to permit them to remain impassive, under the

¹³ Paul W. Zagorski, who has specialized in authoritarian regimes, defines a professional military in terms of its technical role within the state, which is granted a sufficient degree of autonomy within its specific sphere of activity (technicism) and exists for the good of the nation (nationalism). He is of the opinion that most developed western nations managed to keep these two conflicting notions separate, in their military, leaving a largely a political military. Paul W. Zagorski, “Democracy and National Security: Civil-Military Relations in Latin America”.

pretext of a blind submission to the established power, so that they would convert themselves into instruments of an illegitimate authority.”

Ongania’s statement explains the behaviour of the later day military regimes, in which a technologically and organisationally professional military defined both military and political functions within its purview, which was far from being politically subordinate, unlike in Western democracies. Consequently, the key aspect of its set of ideological and role beliefs which oriented its decision-making.¹⁴

This tendency of the Argentine military to overstep traditional “professional” roles has made Latin American scholars to categorise these values as pertaining to a revised ethic of “new professionalism”.¹⁵ Under new professionalism, the basic tenets of professionalism remained the same but the military assumed new missions and functions, engaged to a wide-ranging process of nation building and ferreting out subversion.¹⁶ Such a role expansion was also partly induced by US concerns over the vulnerability of the Latin American countries to guerrilla warfare and internal subversion.

Thus, the “new professionalism” directed the military to focus on internal problems. The emergence of the military governments converted Argentina into “a national security state”, which entailed a military penetration of the rest of the society.

¹⁴ Deborah Norden, “Military Professionalism in Argentina”. Pp. 55.

¹⁵ Alfred Stepan, “The Military in Politics: Changing Patterns in Brazil”, Pp.

¹⁶ Zagorski, “Democracy versus National Security: Civil-Military Relations in Latin America”, Pp.74.

GEOPOLITICAL INFLUENCE ON NATIONAL SECURITY DOCTRINES

The military's orientation towards national security and defense appeared extremely responsive to the prevailing geopolitical considerations of the period. Geopolitics had always influenced the Latin American militaries long after its disappearance in Europe in the second half of the 20th century.¹⁷ However, its effects were more pronounced in the five largest countries of the region that had substantial territories under their control. The military while imbibing its professional orientation had also appropriated these geopolitical elements while conceptualizing its own security needs. However substantial changes were made keeping in mind the different context under consideration.

Under the B-A regimes, the military's defense was based on a geopolitical conceptualisation of the omnipresent threat facing the nation. The military followed an organic vision of nation-state, which had a Darwinian approach to its external relations.¹⁸ Given the traditional hostilities between Argentina with Chile and Brazil, and the well-developed and institutionalised geopolitical concerns,¹⁹ even insignificant events were given serious security undertones.

The concept of geopolitics as a separate field of study appeared in Europe towards the end of 19th century. Given the tacit dependence of the military on imported European and later American strategic prescriptions, these found their

¹⁷ Jack Child, "Geopolitics and Conflict in South America: Quarrels Among Neighbours"

¹⁸ Deborah Norden, "Transformation of Argentine Security." Pp.243.

¹⁹ By institutionalize, I mean the incorporation of geopolitical concerns into military academies and setting up of institution specializing in the subject.

way into their institutional mindset²⁰ Given the territorial nature of its external disputes, these ideas found ready takers.

After the end of World War II and the imposition of superpower politics, geopolitics reemerged as an important field influencing international power dynamics in the quest to extend global spheres of influence. The importance of physical and human resources became paramount since they provided the pillars of support over which a war could be sustained.

Traditional Argentine geopolitical concerns were infused and amalgamated with the new developments taking place in the larger sphere of international relations. As a result, a new ideological dimension was added to the existing geopolitical prescriptions. In this context, the influence of American geo-strategic doctrines on the Argentine military was enormous.²¹ The American strategic concerns of insulating the hemisphere from communist influences found flavor with almost all the militaries of the region. Given the phase of extensive cooperation among American and Argentine armed forces through institutional cooperative mechanisms, the armed forces were deeply impregnated with anti-communist ideals.²² Additionally, Argentine geopoliticians were profoundly influenced by the organic version of state and its development. This mission postulated that a state like a living organism is in a continuous process of expansion using the physical and human resources available at its disposal. Due to the perennial needs and limitation of resources, countries in a process of expansion are likely to devour weaker and less developed states.²³ This Darwinian interpretation of national security proved to be extremely detrimental since it proscribed the country to be

²⁰ Klaus Dodds, "Geopolitics and the Geographical Imagination of Argentina", Pp.160.

²¹ Jack Child, "Geopolitics and Conflict in South America: Quarrels Among Neighbours", Pp.68.

²² Klaus Dodds, "Geopolitics and the Geographical Imagination of Argentina", Pp.172.

perpetually under threat from expanding neighbors. Also, it allowed the military to legitimize its excessive role in all spheres of decision-making under the pretext of national defense.

Geopolitical elements provided the links between the strategic policies of the military with those having socio-political and economic implications.²⁴ Geopolitical concerns integrated the state's military imperatives with economic and political factors under the umbrella of strategic security and defense. This meant that the geopolitical and geo-strategic concerns of the state became inversely proportional to the development of its socio-political and economic structures. Such an understanding emerged from the geopolitical notion that underdeveloped and disorganized state structures represent the weak links in a nation's security and are vulnerabilities that are prone to the influence of destabilizing forces.²⁵

Geopolitical factors influenced the state's decision making on two levels. Firstly, it dealt with the physical and natural resources of the country. Secondly, it stressed upon the development of its human resources.

Geopolitical concerns regarding natural resources induced the Argentine obsession with its territories and were instrumental in generating extreme nationalist sentiments regarding the 'patria', especially among the armed forces.²⁶ The entire nation lived under the illusion of enormous territorial losses suffered just

²³ Ibid. Pp.160. And Jack Child, "Geopolitics and Conflict in South America: Quarrels Among Neighbours", Pp.66.

²⁴ Klaus Dodds, "Geopolitics and the Geographical Imagination of Argentina", Pp.169.

²⁵ Ibid. Pp.169.

²⁶ The 'Patria' symbolised 'Motherland' but its significance was more than geographical. It invoked extreme nationalist sentiments in a society whose origins were founded on immigration and a transplantation of culture. For the argentinians this obsession with the national frontiers had embedded in its historical and cultural processes.

after its independence.²⁷ Argentina's claim over the Falklands/Malvinas islands and the subsequent war over its possession with Britain in 1982, and its claims in the Antarctic region were also guided by geopolitical factors.²⁸

The military's geopolitical concerns underwent considerable changes in the 1950s largely to accommodate the Cold War realities. The military incorporated the geopolitical doctrines advanced by American security strategists who opined that communist elements could find easy access to the western hemisphere due to the structural weaknesses of the Latin American countries. Citing prevailing conditions of economic under development and large-scale political chaos as ideal breeding ground for incipient leftist insurgencies, these doctrines identified depoliticisation and exclusion of popular representation from the decision making process among its broad range of counter measures. It also prescribed and legitimised coercive measures against the civilian populace under the garb of intricately defined national security doctrines. These doctrines were largely responsible for the military's infatuation with internal security since they stressed more on internal origins of threat than on external.

The outcomes of this geopolitical orientation of the military were varied and complex. In order to protect its position as the "doorway to the Pacific" and preserve its identity as a "tricontinental" nation, the military regimes identified a

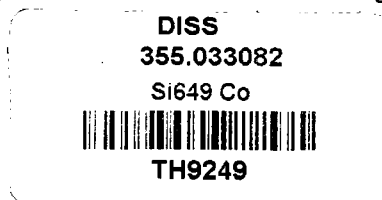
²⁷ The Argentines considered themselves as the rightful heir to the territories of the Viceroyalty of the Rio de la Plata region. This created the popular belief that Paraguay, Uruguay, and parts of Chile and Brazil belong to Argentina. See Jack Child, "Geopolitics and Conflict in South America: Quarrels Among Neighbours", Pp.42.

²⁸ Jack Child, "Geopolitics and Conflict in South America: Quarrels Among Neighbours", Pp.42. And Klaus Dodds, "Geopolitics and the Geographical Imagination of Argentina", Pp.152.

number to potential threats emanating from external sources.²⁹ Therefore, when the British Crown awarded the sovereignty of the Beagle Channel islands to Chile, the junta almost declared war against it. An indication to the high levels of hostilities can be gauged from the fact that in December 1978, the military had conducted emergency safety drills in the event of a Chilean air raid over Buenos Aires.

Argentine geopolitical concerns also guided its extreme distrust and skepticism over Brazilian expansion.³⁰ Brazil, in the post World War II period, had achieved significant growth in its industrial capabilities. The emergence of Brazil as the major regional power made the military wary on two counts. On one hand, Brazil's predominance threatened Argentina's 'Manifest Destiny', its goal of becoming the undisputed leader of Spanish America and the region's dominant power.³¹ On the other hand, it made the military nostalgic about its past when Argentina was the most advanced among all Latin American nations.³²

The geopolitical concerns of the military regarding Brazilian expansion forced the military regimes to adopt a cautious approach towards developments taking place within the region. Brazil's close relations with the U.S. caused substantial consternation among the Argentines who accused their neighbours of



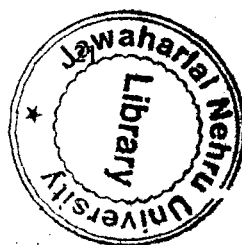
²⁹ Argentine geopoliticians had postulated the concept of a tricontinental Argentina, where in Argentina apart from sharing the south American continent would also have the Archipelago (South of Tierra del Fuego) and the Antarctic sector thereby making it the 'doorway to pacific' by bringing the channel under Argentine control.

³⁰ Jack Child, "Geopolitics and Conflict in South America: Quarrels Among Neighbours", Pp.43.

³¹ Ibid. Pp.43.

³² Ibid. Pp.46.

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being a stooge to American interests.³³ One of the motivating factors for this rivalry was the protection and safeguarding of natural endowments. Post-World War II period had witnessed substantial industrialisation drives by the Southern Cone countries in order to reduce their dependence on external sources. Capital and raw materials, essential ingredients of industrialization were given topmost priority and attempts were made to be self sufficient in them. These concerns over the control and exploitation of physical resources often resulted in conflictual situation especially among the border areas where national frontiers were poorly defined. Such sentiments that often aroused large-scale nationalist sentiments reflected the geopolitical concerns regarding empty uninhabited spaces and the hinterland perception.³⁴ Thus, Argentina and Brazil often assumed aggressive postures over issues, such as, the hydroelectric resources of the Rio de la Plata basin and the unspecified resources of Antarctic region over which both claimed sovereign control.³⁵ Argentina was also wary of an alliance between its traditional rivals, Chile, Brazil and Britain since it had the potential to off set the strategic balance of power in the region.

Argentina's claim over the Antarctic region was also an effect of its geopolitical perceptions. The vast uninhabited snow lands of the Southern Pole were assumed to possess vast quantities of mineral resources, including hydrocarbon supplies. These resources were to be the key input for a modern

³³ Ibid. Pp.45.

³⁴ Klaus Dodds, "Geopolitics and the Geographical Imagination of Argentina", Pp.158.

³⁵ The Argentine- Brazilian rivalry has also spilled over to the three buffer states of Uruguay, Paraguay and Bolivia. Apart from the conflict over Paraguayan hydroelectric energy, the two nations have had differences over Bolivian oil, gas and iron ore. Jack Child, "Quarrels Among Neighbours: Geopolitics and Conflict in South America", Pp.100.

industrially advanced Argentina. Additionally, an Antarctic region belonging to Argentina was also crucial for its identity as a Tricontinental nation and in defense of the bioceanic principle under which Argentina controls the Atlantic Ocean and Chile, the Pacific.³⁶

The most controversial issue containing geopolitical undertones was the armed invasion of the Falkland/Malvinas islands in 1982. The territorial dispute that originated in 1833 had undermined the historical friendship between the two nations by the beginning of the 20th century. Although the issue evoked considerable nationalist hysteria among the Argentines, it only attracted aggressive posturings sporadically. However, the Proceso regime after the exhaustion of aggressive diplomatic campaigns went ahead with an armed invasion of the islands. Although many factors are held responsible for this invasion, geopolitical factors have also been considered as an important motive underlining the entire exercise.³⁷

The implications and manifestations of the geopolitical concerns of the B-A regimes were felt primarily on two interrelated sectors:

- 1) Military Defense and Strategic Security
- 2) Foreign Relations.

³⁶ Ibid. Pp.45. And Klaus Dodds, "Geopolitics and the Geographical Imagination of Argentina", Pp.161.

³⁷ Jack Child, "Quarrels Among Neighbours: Geopolitics and Conflict in South America", Pp. 113.

MILITARY DEFENCE AND STRATEGIC SECURITY

Geopolitical concerns had a direct effect on the strategic orientation of the B-A regimes. The military, guided by geopolitical compulsions often adopted a contentious approach to its relations with its neighbours. Behind the creation of a national security state, lay a perception of omnipresent threat to national interests from these sources. Therefore, drawing similarities with the ongoing Cold War 'security dilemma', any development in the rival camp was looked upon as a potential hazard to national interest.³⁸ The regional balance of power was kept at equilibrium, with the military attempting to offset any advantages to its rivals by similar undertakings. Strong geopolitical prescriptions also made the military to assume control of a vast military-industrial complex, so that the country's requirements for military inputs could be indigenously met. Under the B-A regimes, due to an enormous thrust to its industrial capabilities, the military had emerged as the largest entrepreneurial class in the economy.

GEOPOLITICAL IMPLICATIONS ON FOREIGN POLICIES

In the sphere of external relations the B-A regimes incorporated few geopolitical doctrines of the period. Reflecting strong geopolitical concerns, the Argentina foreign policies emphasized an aggressive approach to the numerous conflicts with its neighbours. Regarding territorial conflicts, and especially those relating to the South Atlantic region, the country often carried out vociferous

³⁸ The term 'security dilemma' was first coined by Robert Jervis to express the inversely proportional relationship existing between two or more conflicting camps, wherein an increase in one state's security decreases the security of others.

diplomatic initiatives.³⁹ However, although Argentina's relations with its traditional rivals, Brazil, Chile and U.K. turned extremely sour, the period also witnessed several attempts to achieve a commonality of views on many issues. Geopolitically, such integrationist drives have been explained as efforts to fill in the vacuum caused due to the declining influence of the US over its Southern counterparts.

During the B-A regimes, the Argentina participation in the Non-Aligned Movement progressively declined. The third clout in a predominantly bipolar world, the peronist orientation of the 'Third Way' was discarded by these regimes. Instead, the regional supremacy of the US was voluntarily accepted and its strategic doctrines and views were impregnated within their own institution. This explains the strong anti-communist stance adopted by the armed forces and its ideology in the internal warfare. (Paradoxically, this influence of US strategic views on the military took place at a time when the overall hegemony of the US was on the decline in its own hemisphere, and each nation was trying to redefine its position, facilitated by the relative autonomy presented due to diminishing American influence). Nevertheless, American weapons were the mainstream of the Argentine armed forces and it proved beneficial to the military to tow the US line. The extent to which the military went to accommodate US interests was clear in the training of the Contra rebels, during the 1980's where the military provided its infrastructure to train pro-American insurgents to unsettle a democratically elected government. The Argentine attempts to garner U.S. support could be in some measure a strategy to counter the threat arising out of the close Brazil-US relations.

³⁹ The importance of the South Atlantic was often exaggerated by geopoliticians who emphasized on the strategic dimensions of the region as a seaway for Middle East oil to the U.S.

The B-A regimes of the sixties and seventies had imbibed considerable American doctrines within its own national security orientation. But this is not to say that the military was in absolute subservience to American dictates. There were many issues on which the military differed with the Americans. One of the main issues of divergence was the Argentine position on nuclear issues, specifically regarding international denuclearisation efforts. The Argentine refusal to ratify instruments such as NPT and the regional Treaty of Tlatelolco was a point of difference with the US. Another issue that caused further rifts between the two nations was the Argentine decision to export wheat to the Soviet Union in 1979, in spite of a comprehensive embargo propagated by the US. Ironically, the concept of large-scale political repression conducted by the military was appropriated from the US doctrines of internal warfare and won its tacit approval. Later, under the Carter Administration, these same policies were criticized and condemned as human rights violation. On the whole, apart from few differences of opinion, the B-A regimes were completely receptive to US influence, although these were legitimized as a national security imperative with strong geopolitical orientation.

ECONOMIC DETERMINANTS OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY DOCTRINE

Economic factors were one of the prime motivations for the military's national security orientation, along with professional ethics and geopolitical elements. The economic chaos brought upon by the populist policies of Peron had left the country severely bankrupt and the extensive public sector created under it proved to constantly drain the scarce resources available in the economy. In this regard one of the more publicised objectives of the B-A regimes was to bring about

greater economic development, which then would lead to greater security. Such a position was consistent with the prevailing notion in international relations that security and development were mutually congruent and that greater development would result in more security.⁴⁰ The military also believed that a strong economy would make the country less vulnerable from potential threats of external aggression or internal belligerency.

There were two important aspects to the military's economic orientation:

- 1) The military's association with free market, neoliberal economic policies. According to the armed forces the populist governments had transferred too large a portion of the country's resources to the popular sector. The restriction on imports through high tariffs and other protectionist measures and a lack of foreign participation in the economy had led to inefficient and unproductive economic structures. Moreover, the excessive reliance of the domestic entrepreneurs on extensive state support further contracted the level of economic activity. The B-A regimes sought to undo the damage by reducing the massive budget deficit and removing protectionist tariff barriers, which they felt diffused the control of the market.
- 2) The military was extremely uncomfortable with the asymmetric dependence of the economy on external sources. With the failure of the import substitution industrialization (ISI) strategies, the country had remained in

⁴⁰ Robert McNamara, ex US Secretary of State was a main proponent of such a view. He established the equation "security is development and without development there can be no security. In David Pion-Berlin, "Latin American National Security Doctrines: Hard- and Softline Themes", Pp.17.

the quagmire of underdevelopment. With all economic activity coming to a halt due to an inflated economy and stratospheric levels of inflation, the state maintained unhealthy levels of dependence. Therefore the B-A regimes tried to reduce the states role in the market but introduced stringent measures to regulate the economy. Thus, although private sectors were encouraged to participate and public sector undertakings were disposed off, the sectors representing core military interests were consolidated. The military industrial complex, Direccion Generales de Fabricaciones Militares, were provided with enormous opportunities to expand, turning the armed forces into the largest entrepreneurial class in the economy.

The economic objectives of the B-A regimes, especially under the Proceso de Reconstruccion Nacional (PRN) in 1976, have often shared if not dominate importance with other security concerns. The military adopted a free market approach reducing the excessive state participation in the economy. The protectionist measures imposed by the populist regimes that protected various economic classes, such as high wage levels, subsidies, and tariff barriers were discarded. In order to make the economy more responsive to the market forces the B-A regimes also resorted to devaluation of the national currency, wage freezes and high levels of taxation. This move proved extremely detrimental as domestic manufacturers lost their markets to cheaper imports, which flowed freely due to the elimination of all tariff barriers. It was a classic case of the state using the coercive apparatus at its disposal, to try and subordinate individual interests to those of its own, which it felt was larger and more important.

The military's economic orientation has been called vague, mainly because it contradicted the strong nationalist disposition reflected in all other spheres of decision-making. It had no apparent domestic beneficiaries other than the military institution itself.⁴¹ Traditionally, the military had been an ardent supporter of the conservative oligarchic class. However, during the B-A regimes, these economically dominant groups suffered as much as the popular sectors. The liberalising of imports sounded the death knell of these entrepreneurs since they could not be as competitive as external producers. The popular sectors suffered enormously under the B-A regimes due to a decline in real wages, loss of employment and rising costs that resulted in extreme hardships and impoverishment.

In spite of the negative effects that its policies produced, the military remained preoccupied by macro economic variables, such as inflation, and budget deficits rather than the structural deficiencies present in the economy. They were of the opinion that such problems should be marginalised and harsh measures imposed for reviving the sagging economy. Consequently, the civilian sector was excluded from any kind of economic decision-making, while the military kept it insulated from all popular demands.

MANIFESTATION OF NATIONAL SECURITY DOCTRINES

The repercussions arising out of the B-A regimes security policies were broad and made significant structural adjustments to the state machinery. Due to the broad integrated approach adopted towards national security, the effects were also

⁴¹ David Pion-Berlin, "Of Victims and Executioners: Argentine State Terror, 1975-1979". Pp. 73

variegated. By invoking a situation of 'total war' in which threats were identified from all sectors, the military turned the nation into a militarised state. Its response, which was an amalgamation of various factors that included economic, political, and military, turned the entire state apparatus against the polity. The manifestation of the military's national security orientation can be classified under the following fields.

POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF NSDS

The political manifestations of the military's security policies highlight its exclusionary attitude towards the society at large. The military identified the primary threat to national security to come from the popular sector which was highly politicized and its interests well entrenched in the state structures. In order to depolitize the masses and reduce their divisive influence on the state, the B-A regimes heavily clamped down on the political process. In order to establish an insulated decision - making environment, it excluded all forms of interest representation such as trade unions, political parties and lobbying groups. It also deactivated the electoral process, proclaiming the military junta as the supreme decision making body. It also retained technocrats into the state's administrative structures, thereby altering the conditions for policy formulation. These technocrats, although possessing considerable expertise in their areas of speciality, had little political experience and remained impervious to the interests of the society at large.

However, the most controversial of all its policies were those regarding its concern with internal security. In a move unprecedented in the country's history the entire state coercive apparatus was turned against its populace, unleashing wide

spread state repression. Arising largely out of the belief that the civilian populace, especially the popular classes had turned against the state's interests, the B-A regimes resorted to physical and psychological tactics to suppress the discontented masses.

Initially targeted against the budding insurgency movements such as the Montoneros, these NSDs slowly brought the entire society under its purview. Once it had achieved its objective of eliminating the insurgents, it turned its entire security apparatus involving regular army, paramilitary forces and intelligence services. Its definition of a guerilla became ambivalent and included anyone who represented a threat against national interests. The target of its coercive tactics were generally trade unionists, academicians, school teachers, lawyers etc, who were identified as harbouring communist sentiments. Conservative estimates have placed those disappeared to be around nine thousand, although rough estimates put the casualties to be over twenty thousand.⁴²

The internal security orientation had a deep rooted influence of American and French counter-insurgency strategies, which had been acquired during the close cooperation among military officers during the fifties and sixties, when the military had won the tacit approval of the American government which appreciated its efforts to keep the Soviet influence at bay. However by 1978, this relationship between the military and the US turned sour due to the global concern regarding its policies of perpetuating state violence over the unsuspecting citizens. Under

⁴² Garry W. Wynia, "Argentina: The Frustration of Ungovernability", Pp.28.

president Jimmy Carter, the US prohibited all kinds of weapon sales to Argentina along with Brazil and Chile in response to their poor human rights record.

An important aspect of the B-A regimes' internal security orientation was the criterion used for the selection of its victims. Scholars have highlighted the diverse nature of its victims from teachers, scientists, workers and clergy to professionals, housewives and children at the receiving end of the state suppression and maintain that there were no clear ethnic or religious patterns to these atrocities, nor any racial ones.⁴³ The magnitude and diversity of these tactics also point to it being a deliberate, well-calculated policy decision adopted by the government. These tendencies have prompted certain scholars to label the high levels of state violence as an outgrowth of its ideological leanings which were primarily guided by two factors, one, its indigenous variant of national security doctrine, and second, its version of free market economics. Once the threat of subversives had declined, the military directed its repression towards those perceived to present a threat to its long-term economic objectives.

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF NSDs

The economic component of the military's security perception shared equal if not more, importance with its more traditional strategic concerns. Economic security was necessary to instill growth and development in the society. This growth in turn would lead to more security by making the nation less vulnerable

⁴³ Pion-Berlin, D., and George A. Lopez, "Of Victims and Executioners: Argentine state terror 1975-79, Pp. 71

from external and internal threats. This notion that greater development led to greater security, formed an integral part of its national security doctrine.

The economic concerns of the military focussed on several economic and social problems facing the country. Economic causes that shaped the military's orientation were the high levels of inflation, low levels of capital accumulation, low savings, uncompetitive export sector, high budget deficits, among many others. The inflated economy propped up by high wage levels and massive budget deficits had shown negative growth patterns. Highly protectionist policies had made the domestic industries inefficient and due to the restrictions on imports, the economy was almost cut off from the international economic system. Moreover, the country's reliance on agricultural and primary exports for its foreign exchange had proved detrimental because of the low levels of value addition and unequal terms of trade, had denied increased revenues.

The economic concerns of the B-A regimes were also cognizant of the social implications of an impoverished economy. Poor income distribution and unequal patterns of development had resulted in extreme stratification of the social sector. The high levels of discontentment brewing within these groups posed a potential threat to the stability of the regime. This perception of the military that discouraged any change in the existing status quo of the social order explains its close interdependence with the traditional oligarchy and its institutional antagonism towards the Peronists. At the same time they illustrate the basic premise over which its exclusionary and coercive strategies were drawn. This interplay of

multithematic security concerns was what made the entire national security paradigm of the military, distinct from the past.

The B-A regimes were deeply influenced by the nature of the international economic system. The prevalence of free market ideology for optimum economic growth found favour with the military thinkers. As a result, the earlier policies of economic exclusion promulgated by Peronists were discarded in favour of closer economic integration with global markets. Expanding the industrial base was also attempted to diversify its portfolio of exports. An important factor for the economic orientation of the B-A regimes was the presence of technocrats in the decision-making process, especially regarding economic issues.

The implications of these policies were many and they did not produce the expected results. In some ways, the failure of its economic strategies eroded the legitimacy of its security orientation. It negated its claim that the armed forces due to its discipline, efficiency and love for the 'patria' would succeed where the corrupt civilians had failed. The efforts to integrate the economy with international market also proved counter-productive. Under the Proceso a substantial reduction of protectionist barriers and devaluation of the national currency was carried out in order to boost exports. This led to the collapse of the domestic economy, which could not face the competition from external producers. The only beneficiary of this was the importer.

In order to reduce high budget deficits the B-A regimes resorted to high taxation and privatised government owned industries. It also induced wage freezes to reduce the inflation. This led to a decline in real wages and further

impoverishment of the masses. By prohibiting civilian representation through labour unions and interest groups, the military excluded civilian presence. The imposition of harsh economic policies in the name of collective growth and security disillusioned the masses, which were further subjected to high degrees of state repression. As a result, key labour unions were targeted and its member's incarcerated to avoid any opposition to its economic policies.

Another important implication of the particular economic orientation of the military was in the field of investment. Due to the high levels of government deficit and slow economic activity, the state was unable to support its developmental programmes, especially those related to infrastructural development. According to the military's security imperatives, high levels of development, especially the infrastructure necessary for this growth was mandatory. Therefore, a priority was given to make the country independent in strategic areas such as energy, heavy industries, and efficient exploitation of resources, transport and communication. In order to finance such mega projects, the government resorted to large-scale private borrowing from the international financial system. This was the prime cause for the debt crises that gripped the country in the early eighties and is responsible for the instability that it suffers to the present.

MILITARY IMPLICATIONS OF NSDs

The military implications of the B-A regimes proved extremely detrimental to the country. Argentina, converted into a 'militarized state' witnessed an excessive preoccupation with military solution towards security. Threats that were ignored under civilian regimes, or which required little attention, gained

prominence in the military security concerns. This coupled with the exaggerated response to these threats, led the country to an armed conflict with Great Britain and to the brink of one on many occasions.

As mentioned earlier, Argentina had traditional conflicts with its neighbours, Chile and Brazil which were yet to be resolved. These disputes were fuelled by many factors and were mostly territorial in nature. Since all these countries were being ruled over by military regimes, and the dispute involved territories and natural resources any effective solutions to these problems had little chance to succeed. This period saw an intensification of hostilities between long time rivals and Argentina on several occasions assumed aggressive postures to defend its territories from these external threats.

The culmination of its policies regarding the military aspect of national security was the 1982 war of the South Atlantic, with Britain over the sovereignty of Falklands/Malvinas Islands. Although this dispute was a long-standing one, emerging during the early years of independent Argentina and had considerable geopolitical importance attached to it, it had been put on the backburner by the preceding civilian regimes. However, under a military guided by its reactive security doctrines, the issue led to an armed conflict that began with an Argentina invasion of the island and ended with its defeat. This defeat caused a severe blow to the military institution and was one of the primary causes for its downfall.

Argentina under the B-A regimes almost went to war over the Beagle Channel Island with Chile adopted an extremely hostile stance towards Brazil and although there were no armed conflicts, the two nations were constantly at each

others' throats regarding a wide range of issues from energy and natural resources, Brazilian-US integration and clash of respective 'Manifest destinies'.

The security orientation of the B-A regimes also resulted in an arms race in the subcontinent. In a classic case of security dilemma propagated by Robert Jervis, the three rival nations tried to offset the strategic imbalance by resorting to massive purchases of sophisticated weaponry.⁴⁴ The Argentina-Brazilian rivalry also assumed nuclear dimension, with both countries enhancing their nuclear capabilities under the military regimes. For Argentina, which had a more advanced nuclear programme, this nuclear disparity was necessary to offset the Brazilian supremacy in conventional warfare.⁴⁵ Both the nations refused to ratify various non-proliferation treaties like the NPT the Treaty of Tlatelolco and continued to develop their capabilities despite international and regional pressure.⁴⁶

FOREIGN POLICY UNDER B-A REGIMES

The implications of national security doctrines had a profound impact on the nations' behaviour in the international system and its relations with other states within the region and without. Its security orientation made it susceptible to potential threats and all disputes and discords were sensitively dealt with. By making national security fundamental to its policies, the military government provided a firm, realistic and militarised character to its external relations that reflected its deep distrust of its neighbours and their expansion at Argentina's cost.

⁴⁴ See Appendix

⁴⁵ Jack Child, "Geopolitics and Conflict in South America: Quarrels Among Neighbours", Pp.102.

⁴⁶ Aldo C. Vacs, "A Delicate Balance Confrontation and Cooperation between Argentina and the United States in the 1980s", Pp.29.

It also reflected their concerns regarding the minor role that Argentina played within the international political system and its aspirations to emerge as a dominant regional power.⁴⁷

The foreign policies of the B-A regimes and its response to various international issues reveal the increased role of the military institution in determining the external orientation of the country, and the replacement of civilian interests by military ones had long term implications. One of the salient features of its foreign policy formulation was the excessive stress on military solutions rather than through diplomatic channels. This was however, an obvious result of a militarized state, where all potential threats were dealt with in an exaggerated manner, where solutions often exceeded the limits required by the prevalent threat.

The objectives of its foreign policies can be broadly categorised into two spheres, economic and the more traditional, strategic. There were other determinants too, such as ideological homogeneity, however they can be interlinked with the two, especially with the strategic sector. Foreign policy formulation under normal circumstances⁴⁸ would involve the representation of interests of the various sectors within the state, promoting coordination among the various state structures, interest groups and other representative bodies to churn out collective and harmonised objectives that define and shape its external relations. Thus, in a civilian participatory democracy, the foreign policy denotes the accommodation of various sectoral interests. It also vents out certain collective sentiments, such as

⁴⁷ G. Pope Atkins, "Latin America in the International Political System", Pp.32.

⁴⁸ Democratic civilian rule based on participatory political system.

those regarding nationalism and the life for great global role, that involves identifying or reacting against issues that have no direct bearing on national interests.

Under the B-A regimes, the foreign policy formulation reflected the excessive preoccupation with military solutions. Such responses often led to exaggerated reactions that finally proved to be more detrimental than of any real value. A stark example of this was the entire decision making process, which was largely exclusive and limited mass representation. This was primarily because the military identified political threats to be pervasive in nature (coming from all spheres, external and internal) and was ambiguous in defining who its enemies actually were. Moreover, the sectors over which these threats prevailed were also vast requiring a broad variegated defense with the preeminence of the military component.

The exclusionary nature of decision-making negated the importance of solutions that were favoured more by civilians. Thus, the entire security perception was drawn largely from the military's institutional interests, and represented concerns that primarily affected the armed forces. As such, geopolitical considerations, economic independence, and ideological homogeneity, the dominant influences over the military institution became major components of the country's foreign policy.

Under the authoritarian regimes, the external orientation of the state was essentially regional rather than global. This was mainly because the military identified a larger portion of its threats to emanate from regional forces rather than

those outside the hemisphere. A rare exception to this was its longstanding dispute with Great Britain over territories in the South Atlantic Ocean.

Another important characteristic of its foreign policy was the preeminence of strategic sectors over others such as economic. Therefore, although economic factors were given special importance and generally prevailed over other variables, even they could be compromised upon when in conflict with its strategic concerns. A glowing example of this was the Argentine decision to make Soviet Union as its principal trading ally although politically it continued to oppose its expansionist designs and exclude it from the Western Hemisphere.⁴⁹

An important aspect of the regime's external disposition was its position vis-à-vis the hemispheric hegemon, the US. This was not an Argentine problem alone but was collectively faced by all Latin American nations, who found little room to maneuver for an independent, self-assessed orientation. Therefore, the scope for Latin American states to tow an independent line (including Argentina) was limited by the imposition of US security concerns over them. With the US defining parameters for the security of the hemisphere and imposing controls on the scope for establishing relations with extra hemispheric regions, there was little these nations could do to improve their standing. This was apparent more in the strategic sector, than in the economic sector.

The foreign policies under military rule had caused deep-rooted structural distortions in the country's relations with other countries. Its foreign policies were

⁴⁹ Aldo C. Vacs, "A Delicate Balance Confrontation and Cooperation between Argentina and the United States in the 1980s", Pp.27.

an important tool for its economic objectives and centred on its desire to tap greater external resources for national development. The military's security concerns shaped its foreign policies in two ways. First, the military realised the underdevelopment of its economy and its dependence on few limited external sources. This economic dependence made the country vulnerable to forces outside of its control. The B-A regimes tried to reduce this by initiating greater commercial relations with other regions of the world, such as Japan and Germany. By diversifying its dependence it attempted to make the state less vulnerable to external destabilizing forces. Another important economic aspect of its foreign policies was the rudimentary integrationist attempts launched by the regime. However, these had to be aborted, since the basic premise on which they were undertaken, i.e. the exclusion of the US from the region, had reversed. An essential objective of the external orientation under the military was to diversify its sources of finance and investment for its several ambitious developmental projects. Thus foreign policies played an important role in attracting foreign investment into the economy.

Another important aspect of its foreign policy was its relations with the US, the regional hegemon. Under President Jimmy Carter, its policies were severely criticized for human right violations and led to a restriction on all fields of cooperation. During this period, the Argentine government tried to widen the scope of its external relations, to include the Soviet Union. However, with initiation of a new presidency under Ronald Reagan in the US, the military regime resumed its earlier stance, identifying many common security concerns between the two nations.

Thus, the foreign policy orientation of Argentina under the B-A regimes displayed varied characteristics. It attempted to promote objectives, which were predominantly military in character and reflected the interests and ideologies prevailing within the military institution. It involved a realist interpretation to its relations with other states, evaluating potential risks to its security. National security was fundamental to all policy formulation and often led to exaggerated responses. It led to an escalation of conflicts that traditionally lay dormant. Thus, this period saw intensification of Argentina claims over the sovereignty of many disputed territories and Antarctica. The government also opposed many international treaties such as NPT and Treaty of Tlatelolco, which threatened its own security concerns.

CHAPTER-II

CONSOLIDATION OF INSECURITY: NATIONAL SECURITY IN A TRANSITIONARY DEMOCRACY

After a prolonged period of authoritarian rule, Argentina's return to democracy in 1983 signified a new era of civilian dominance over the chronically unstable political system. A political watershed, the transition symbolized the realization of the hopes and aspirations of millions of Argentines, who had endured the most brutal repression and economic impoverishment during the seven yearlong military reign. Stung by the bitter experience of the latest in a long series of military interventions, there was a growing consensus among all the social sectors, that were unanimous in their opposition to any recurrence of the past. The painful memories of the merciless physical and psychological coercion launched by a rampaging military initiated a collective affirmation in democratic values and ideals and in the supremacy of the constitutional order.

If the transition signified the return of the marginalized civilian sectors into the mainstream political process, for the armed forces it meant an end to another bitter round of political control under the burden of its failures. For all purposes, ranging from institutional imperatives to mounting civilian pressure, it was forced to surrender its control and initiate a profound assessment of its failures in relative isolation from the political process.

The political changeover led to the reemergence of civilian sectors in the decision-making process and relegated the once powerful military to the sidelines of national politics. Once in power the civilian policy makers no longer subscribed to the exigencies that had determined the military's orientation during the Proceso. This led to an extensive restructuring of the government's priorities and objectives, with the civilians discarding the 'national security state' model of the Proceso. Justifiably, the biggest casualty of this transformation was the issue of national security that no longer remained as predominant in the process of policy formulation, as it was under the military. Unlike the military, whose primary objective was to ensure defense of 'national sovereignty' and elimination of potential threats at all costs, in contrast, the civilian government found this very same militarised model as its primary foe, since it formed the biggest obstacle to any sort of democratic consolidation.

As mentioned earlier the process of determining desired levels of national security is complex, where a government, be it civilian or military, engages into a complex process to identify potential threats to national sovereignty and interests, and using the resources available at its disposal formulates a viable defense to eliminate such threats. Since such a complex and extensive process warrants an elaborate assessment of national vulnerabilities and a coordinated response among various state institutions, any variation in its determinants would substantially alter its outcome.

Argentina, under the government of Raul Alfonsin underwent a process similar to what has been described above. The nascent civilian government not only rejected

the existing doctrines that encapsulated the military's notion of security, but also attempted to punish the military and incorporate it with in the democratic order. To do so, Alfonsin took recourse to several legal and political measures that were aimed to significantly weaken the military institution, and ensure its subordination to constitutional provisions. This apart, the government also initiated unprecedented steps to reduce the country's level of threat perception. This was accomplished by a variety of measures such as greater regional cooperation with erstwhile rivals, restricting the influence of geopolitical concerns through restructuring of military curricula, etc.

Therefore, the national security orientation of Argentina underwent drastic transformations simultaneously with the change in the country's political order primarily due to the government rejection of the earlier model.

THE PROCESO IN PERSPECTIVE

Although the preceding chapter covers in detail the emergence of bureaucratic authoritarian regimes and its preoccupation with national security, it is helpful to have an overview of the consequences of the military rule and its subsequent impact on the incipient Alfonsin government. It would also facilitate an understanding of his various strategies aimed at replacing the military's security apparatus with one that is more compatible with civilian needs.

The military intervention that occurred in 1976 was in response to the growing socio political and economic disorder that had pervaded the Argentinean society and

threatened national and the military's institutional interests. The emergence of urban communist, guerrilla groups further deteriorated the situation. In reaction to the growing crisis of the state and influenced by the prevailing ideological influences over its institution, the military moved to the forefront of politics and imposed a harsh, authoritarian rule.

The primary objective of the military was to carry out a "reorganization nacional", a national reorganization drive aimed at restoring the country's past glory. However, it also explicitly called for a radical restructuring of the society, which would facilitate the successful realization of its developmental objectives, at the same time, decrease the threats emanating from potential rivals and vulnerabilities. Therefore, national security had a prominent position on the military's agenda and influenced profoundly its policies.

In order to consolidate national defense and enhance national security, the military created elaborate National Security Doctrines (NSDs) that provided an integrated approach to maintaining security. More importantly, it combined development with the more traditional notions of security, thereby providing a holistic approach to national security. Some of its components were; internal security, religious and ideological conformity, marginalisation of civilian sectors, economic participation among others. There was no cohesive definition to national security, however it signified an interrelated set of concepts about the state, development, counter

insurgency, warfare and above all security. It adopted a multi-thematic approach laced with both conservative and progressive ideology.

This extensive national security perception, that combined developmental and security theories forced the military to adopt an aggressive posture while eliminating potential threats and vulnerabilities. At the same time, radical measures were implemented to achieve its developmental aspirations that promised to foster economic growth and eliminate traditional imbalances, which hindered development.

The military's failure to fulfill its desired goals precipitated its downfall and led to the resurgence of democratic order. However, the severe impact of the Proceso resulted in profound alterations in the Argentine society, drastically affecting the options of the civilian government. In this significant manner, the military continued to affect the decision making of Raul Alfonsin's government.

THE LEGACIES OF THE PROCESO

The fundamental objective of the armed forces in acquiring political control was to safeguard national sovereignty, strengthen national defense and fulfill its developmental objectives under a prolonged military rule. Guided by intricate security doctrines that provided an all-encompassing definition of security, the Proceso regime implemented a range of policies that caused substantial restructuring of the social, economic and political structures. The Proceso's confrontationist disposition also resulted in the escalation of regional hostilities that led to all out conflict with Britain

and a near war with Chile. These policies also led to extensive civilian casualties when the military launched a comprehensive strategy of internal warfare against subversive groups based on meticulously drawn strategies. Moreover, its developmentalist approach called for a virtual exclusion of the civilian sectors that were seen as corrupt and inefficient. In order to ensure civilian marginalisation, the military prohibited the civilians from the political process. It also called for the civilians to compromise on individual rights and freedom in order to consolidate national security.

POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROCESO

On realizing the need to exclude civilian sectors from the decision making process in order to achieve its developmental goals, the armed forces prohibited and controlled all levels of political participation. This was especially directed towards sectors that had traditionally opposed the military, such as the Peronists and trade unions.¹ The basic premise over which the military rested its initiatives was that it considered the civilians corrupt and inefficient to control the nation and signified an obstacle to its own objectives.

The implications of the military's exclusionary policies were many. Firstly, it stopped the participation of what was otherwise a highly politicized society that historically had played an important role in determining the government's policies. Although, the only way it could do so was with the full support of its coercive apparatus.

¹ The Proceso regime declared the Peronist party and the Confederacion General de Trabajadores (CGT), the country's largest trade union illegal in order to diffuse their power and to depoliticise them.

Secondly, in the absence of civilian politicians, the military involved technocrats who had little knowledge of what the polity wanted. As a result, a good proportion of its initiatives had a negative impact on the society. One of the most controversial policies of the military was regarding its counter-insurgency missions, and its impact on the society at large. In an exaggerated response to a relatively limited subversive threat, the military unleashed its entire war machinery on the society, and in the process produced large-scale civilian casualties. Those specifically targeted were lawyers, academicians, journalists, trade union leaders and social workers. These groups were suspected of harboring and promoting communist ideas and values, and a threat to the western Christian capitalist order that the military subscribed to.

In what was called the “Guerra Sucia”, the military established an elaborate network consisting of intelligence services, death squads and torture camps, to trace and eliminate the entire communist base from the Argentine society. This was carried out through organized and meticulous preparations that inflicted substantial physical and psychological damage on the society.²

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROCESO

The most distinguishing characteristic of the Proceso that set it apart from the earlier military interventions was the strong focus on economic growth of the country. The salient feature of the Armed Forces economic policies displayed a strong influence

² For more information on the military’s policies towards the trade unions, see Laura Tedesco, “Hope and Disillusion: Democracy in Argentina.”

of neo-liberal free market developmental strategies currently in favour in the more developed nations. That is, the military relied on free market fiscal and monetarist policies to achieve economic growth that promoted the market, as the factor determining economic change. The new neoliberal orientation sought a break from the past in terms of state's involvement in the economy. The ISI model had witnessed a strong state centric model of economic development with the state foraying into varied economic activities. This model of economy had seen the state not only affecting consumption but also provided employment to the large industrial working class. In the state centric model, the domestic entrepreneurial class was given extensive sops to establish industries through heavy subsidies and other protective measures. This had made them dependent on the government patronage, making them lose their efficiency. The Proceso's economic policies reversed the existing ISI model of economic growth and instead, adopted the neoliberal model that had gained prominence after the collapse of Bretton Woods and due to the increase in global trade in the seventies and eighties. The neoliberal economy model brought the market to the forefront of all economic activities working on the law of comparative advantages. It propagated greater economic integration through free movement of goods and capital. It prescribed a minimum role for the government, reduction in tariff barriers and state subsidies, and large economic restructuring to streamline production, achieve efficiency and remain technologically advanced.

The impact of these radical changes proved decisive for the national economy, in the sense that these changes profoundly altered the relations between various

economic structures. The succeeding civilian regimes found these imbalances irreversible, and at the same time, blocking all efforts at development. First and foremost, the economic orientation of the military led to a greater integration of the domestic economy with the international economic system, thereby increasing its vulnerability to external factors and development. In this regard, the Proceso's economic policies proved to be paradoxical to its security concerns since they had the unintended affect of intensifying Argentina's asymmetrical dependence, on external capitalist forces.

The second aspect of the military's economic orientation was the increased impoverishment of the society. The neoliberal strategies led to a considerable reduction in the state's role in the economy. As a result the unemployment level increased once the Proceso began to dispose under productive structures. Additionally, the government also reduced the level of social welfare expenditures affecting vital sectors, such as health care housing and education.

The military's harsh economic restructuring measures caused innumerable damage to the domestic bourgeois class, mainly through the reduction and abolition of heavy subsidies that they enjoyed under the ISI program. Moreover, the adoption of free market reforms meant that Argentina had opened its markets to be accessed by the global market forces. This meant that the domestic producers had to compete with more advanced foreign goods. With the reduction in import taxes, the external producers had no problem to access the domestic markets.

The maximum damage caused due to the neoliberal economic reforms was due to the decline in wages and income for the vast civilian sectors. The military in order to facilitate its economic program had resorted to extensive wage freezes. However, with the Proceso's failure to curb inflation, the consumers could no longer access the markets. This led to a severe recession in the economy leading to its near collapse. During this period, the percent growth of pauperization was at its highest, reflecting the stagnancy prevailing in the economy.

The culmination of the Proceso's economic strategies was the military's nationalisation of private debts that had been accumulated under the Proceso. With the state taking over the responsibility of servicing its debt obligations, the Argentine inclusion in the international economic system became definite. The Proceso's failure to check growing levels of inflation and the collapse of the national currency provoked large-scale transfer of income outside the country. These capital flights considerably exacerbated the debt problem.

FOREIGN POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROCESO

The Proceso regime was founded on the security needs of the military as well as on its other institutional interests. An important component of its security concerns was the protection of the 'patria' (motherland), which had inspired the military institution since its inception coupled with the extensive geo-political influence casting it influence on the armed forces. The concern about defending and protecting national territories emerged as an integral part of its security perception. This view to preserve

“national sovereignty” deeply manifested itself in the foreign policy sphere under the Proceso.

Argentina had a conflictual relationship with its neighbours, Chile and Brazil; mostly over ill defined borders and rights over disputed territories. These conflicts had remained latent during a greater part of their history due to the respective government’s preoccupation with other pressing concerns. With the advent of the military at the center stage of decision- making process, issues that signified geo political concerns or pertained to 'national sovereignty' gained preeminence and gained favour as important determinants of foreign policy behaviour.

The emergence of these historical conflicts as flashpoints of intense nationalist overtures, under the military highlighted two salient features:

- 1) It represented the influence of extensive geo-political factors on the military institution.
- 2) It highlighted the declining and power of the US hegemony and its failure to induce the Latin American governments to tow its line.

The relative decline of the US influence occurred due to the diminishing importance of Latin American countries for US policy makers. So far, the US had been successful in uniting the Latin American governments (with the exception of Cuba) under collective regional security mechanisms, such as the Inter American Treaty for Reciprocal Assistance and multilateral institutions like the OAS.

These institutions rallied almost the entire hemisphere behind what were largely US security concerns pertaining to the global cold war. These security and other multilateral institutions not only accommodated Latin American security concerns but also proved beneficial due to a host of benefits received under its provisions.

With the decline of US influence, these multilateral institutions lost their importance as negotiation grounds for future conflict resolutions. Also, the ineffectiveness of its provisions brought back the historical conflicts to the forefront. For Argentina, the decline of US hegemony signified greater independence in forging ties with other international powers. Under the presidency of Jimmy Carter, US pursued extensive policies that alienated the Proceso regime from the US led security. US criticism of human rights violations during the Proceso and the subsequent prohibition on sales of arms and weapons in 1978, incited the armed forces to seek strategic partnership elsewhere and reduce the country's dependence on US products.

The manifestation of these measures was:

- 1) The forging of closer ties between Argentina and Soviet Union.
- 2) Relative independence in foreign policy orientation, especially relating to regional development, which did not clash with overall U.S. security and strategic needs.

Therefore, it came as no surprise to observers, when Argentina and Chile came dangerously close to a war over the contentious issues of sovereignty over Beagle

Channel Islands. Referred to the Vatican for arbitration as a last ditch measure to avoid certain war, the issue reflected the excessive preoccupation with territorial concerns and national sovereignty. Similarly the relations between Argentina and Brazil also soured due to the aggressive foreign policy posture of the Proceso. Profoundly skeptical of the growing Brazilian influence in the hemisphere and the threat to its own national security, the process escalated latent hostilities, mainly once the vast hydroelectric sources of power in the Rio de la Plata region and the Brazilian claim over the Antarctic.

Other areas of importance where the military's heightened national security orientation had a negative impact on the country's external behaviour were regarding the issue of strategic balance of power between Argentina and its rivals, which had both conventional and nuclear dimensions to it. The huge military buildup initiated under the process distorted the prevailing equilibrium in the region. The military's support to the nuclear weaponisation programme also threatened to escalate the region as a nuclear flashpoint. In this regard, Argentina's refusal to ratify the various international and regional non-proliferation instruments, such as the NPT and the Treaty of Tlatelolco also provoked considerable international consternation against the process.

MODE AND PATTERN OF THE DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION

In the face of increasing setbacks to its policies and the increasing civilian opposition to its continuation in power, the armed forces forced a growing dilemma

regarding the legitimacy of its regime. With the collapse of its developmentalist model and the attendant problems that got unleashed in the society, the military became increasingly divided among themselves over the question of prolonging the process or the return back to the barracks. The failure of achieve its targets resulted in an intense debate within the armed forces, where certain sectors felt that non-military activities tend to blur the attention from more professional objectives, and that the military political adventure backfired. However, certain segments emphasized the need to prolong the process learning the failures on the civilians.

No longer able to resist the growing civilian pressure and condemnations of its policies, the military and the nation as well as boost its legitimacy by launching an invasion of the disputed Falkland/Malvinas islands. Only revived the sagging move, the invasion not only revived the sagging morale of its troops, but also secured the unwavering support of the civilians, given the strong nationalist undertones of the dispute.

Though, initially the invasion worked to Argentina's advantage, as the months progressed, the tides had reversed against Argentina. Due to poor organization and planning, poorly trained troops and certain costly miscalculations, the military failed to consolidate its initial successes. Moreover, the lack of support from the regional security mechanism (the Rio-pact) and hostile behaviour of a supposed ally (US) also hastened the military's defeat.

Therefore, in a shocking end to almost two months of warfare, the military regime had to surrender to a vastly superior British force. Although the defeat was not just because of the military's inadequacies, and other miscalculations also proved decisive. However, for the military, the defeat proved crucial in destroying whatever limited legitimacy remained of the process. Ironically, the reasons for initiating the war were never questioned, and the defeat was attributed to the military's inadequacies and the treacherous role of the US. Moreover, the ensuing international condemnation and Argentina's isolation in the international political order further turned the balance against the military. Another factor that diminished the military's control was the intensification of inter-service differences in the wake of the Falkland/Malvinas war. In the face of such collective resistance, the military had no option but to relinquish power.

The Argentine transition to democracy displayed characteristics fundamentally different from those occurring elsewhere in the region. Firstly, due to the military's diminished bargaining power, they could not dictate the terms and conditions of the transfer. This meant that the military was unable to erect mechanisms to protect its constitution from possible civilian reprisals.³ Secondly, a consolidated and unified civilian opposition against the Proceso, which had emboldened after the long exclusion from politics. In the face of a concerted civilian opposition, the military had to accept whatever was decided by their civilian counterparts, and could not ensure the survival of its policies.

REDEMOCRATISATION AND THE CHALLENGES BEFORE ALFONSIN

Although Raul Alfonsin's elections as the country's President signified an end to the terrible Proceso experience, it did not in any measure secure the consolidation of his regime from similar events in the future. Though he gained unanimously from the deteriorated influence of the armed forces and from the widespread civilians support extended to his government he also had to resolve many structural unbalances that continued unabated or emerged fresh during the Proceso.

The challenges faced by Alfonsin were many and they all impinged upon his greatly limited resources. Moreover, since many of the Proceso implications unfolded slowly, the true potential of these problems were realized much later. Among the many imbalances that were confronted by the new government four predominantly stand out.

- 1) The complex pattern of civil-military relations and unchecked power of an interventionist military.
- 2) The massive external debt burden and the poor state of the domestic economy, threatened to obstruct all efforts towards initiating growth. Moreover, the redirection of scarce national resources to outside forces threatened to institutionalize the asymmetrical dependence on dominant international economic forces at the cost of greater impoverishment.

³ (Military's attempts to enact laws to exempt prosecution against human rights violations)

- 3) Escalation in hostilities with regional rivals and other extra-hemispheric powers (Great Britain) that had altered the security balance in the region, and led to its militarization.
- 4) A resurgent trade union movement that threatened to block the entire developmental strategy and hold the government hostage through coercive activities.

The effects of these factors on the national security perception of Alfonsín were profound and complex. First of all, the government outrightly rejected the prevailing national security “inspired decision making apparatus, and attempted to install its own model that was more compatible with its objectives. Secondly, the civilian government undertook steps to undo the damage caused by the Proceso’s national security doctrines.

In order to diffuse the high level of threat to its survival and its interests, the Alfonsín administration tried to eliminate potentially destabilizing elements, and incorporated his opposition with the democratic system. Since the very beginning the armed forces were identified as the primary threat to democratic stability largely due to its historical interventionist orientation. In order to neutralise this threat, he tried to incorporate the military within the democratic process, first by reducing its excessive powers and then by introducing doctrinal reforms.

Secondly, in order to resolve the imbalances emerging due to the asymmetrical integrations of the domestic economy into the international capitalist system Alfonsín initiated steps to revive the sagging economy and deal with the massive external debts. However, the restructuring brought on due to the military's neoliberal free market policies proved to be irreversible and restricted Alfonsín's options. This was largely due to the fact that the national economy was far too devastated to facilitate an indigenous model of economy. Thus, the question of an autonomous indigenous economic programme had to be scuttled by Alfonsín and his associates, in favour of the neo-liberal model of economic development initiated under the Proceso although it meant severe compromise on other crucial sectors.

Thirdly, the escalation of hostilities with Brazil and Chile altered the security balance in the region and brought these nations into increasing conflict over trivial issues. With the collapse of the Proceso and the relative weakening of other military regimes, the situation was propitious for any kind of cooperative mechanism. This prevailing situation was utilised by Alfonsín in promoting regional peace and stability leading to greater cooperation. The reduced regional security threats would allow the government to concentrate its efforts in other more-crucial sectors.

Fourth, the resurgence of trade union activities after a seven-year hiatus posed considerable problems for Alfonsín. The historically powerful trade unions inspired by Peronist ideals began to reassert their claims on the government and successfully blocked many of Alfonsín's reforms. This was further accentuated by the fact that

Alfonso belonged to the Radical party that had fairly beaten the peronist candidate. This had restricted the peronists capabilities to launch campaigns against the government (because they were legally in the opposition) As a result; the peronists began to use the various trade unions as mediums to oppose government policies.

These structural imbalances prevailing in the Argentine society during the transition and later, during Alfonso's tenure, created many obstacles in the path of democratic consolidation. Once initial optimism gave way to existing realities, Alfonso realized the true potential of the impending crisis. He also understood that given the meager resources at his disposal, innumerable obstacles and constraints, and the breaking civilian unity would hinder any effective implementation of long term developmental strategies. Therefore, he opted for short term objectives and ad hoc policies with limited impact and that had a greater political orientation than economic.

In a given scenario, when the government capacity to act independently and free of damaging influences is affected fundamentally threatening its very survival; in such a case the government is unable to draw any long-term objectives and instead preoccupies itself with its regime's survival. This means that the government begins to adopt ad hoc policies and short-term objectives. The impact of the government's orientation on its national security orientation is profound, since in the absence of any long term objectives, the country's national security is determined by the short term goals of the government.

The Alfonsín government in Argentina and its national security orientation underwent similar transitional changes, in two distinct phases. The first phase (1983-85) witnessed the predominance of civil-military issues determining civilian focus towards policy formulation. The second phase (1986-89), on the other hand, was marked by a far greater emphasis on economic issues.

The preponderance of military issues among Alfonsín's priorities during the first phase was a natural extension of the recently concluded transition process due to the vestiges of the Proceso. Though the propensity of the armed forces to intervene frequently received a major setback due to its failure, its subordination to the civilian authority was far from complete. Moreover, in spite of the severe weakening of its institutional power, the armed forces, nevertheless, were still a force to reckon with. Bitter experiences of its infamous rule also propelled the civilian policy makers to adopt an entirely hostile attitude towards the military.

On the other hand, the preeminence of economic concerns over political ones which occurred during the second phase (1986-89) reflected the shift in government priorities. Emerging right after the collapse of the ambitious, heterodox economic recovery plan, known as the "Austral plan". The second phase was marked by the government's incapacity to resuscitate the stagnating economy. It also symbolized the end of Alfonsín's nationalist orientation towards the economy and the adoption of a neo-liberal approach that was more compatible with the demands of the external capitalist forces. However, Alfonsín's acceptance of the conditions imposed by the

international lending agencies not only ensured a regular supply of vital but it also exacerbated the disparities prevailing in the society through skewed income distribution and collapse of existing economic structures.

Alfonsin's capitulation to the international financial agencies arose out of his bitter predicament once whether the lower the country's debt servicing obligations or impose a unilateral moratorium. The refusal to agree on more humanitarian terms on part of the creditors further deepened the crisis. Declaring a moratorium could delay the outright collapse of the state supported economy but the resulting loss of investment, capital, import and export markets would anyhow plunge the economy to destreuve. On the other hand, if Alfonsin agreed to implement the conditions imposed, the tremendous costs that was likely to befall on the society would have the potential to derail the economy and subsequently throw the entire the country into chaos.

Therefore, from the very beginning Alfonsin began to realize the hopelessness of his position in a no-win situation, which on one hand, maximised its economic dependence, and on the other, intensified impoverishment, pauperization and the gradual alienation of the policy. In some senses this situation reflected the classical security dilemma of international relations.

Alfonsin's doomed Austral plans were a manifestation of his compromising approach that, nonetheless, displayed nationalist undertones. In economic terminology, the AP was a heterodox recovery plan, i.e. it was an amalgamation of orthodox monetary policies and liberal.

Opposing the prescribed orthodox strategies of the IMF and World Bank that threatened to exacerbate the country's economic dependence on industrially advanced countries, Alfonsín, instead pursued a programme that ensured greater indigenous countries. This concern for greater independence in formulating and conducting economic policies simplicity reflects his concerns about the country's economic security, by now the most prominent agenda on the government deliberations on national security.

The failure of the Austral Plan had a tremendous impact on the Alfonsín government. It was not just another setback. It led to the collapse of economy, bringing about one of the worst recessions, the chronic problems of inflation returned considerably impoverishing the masses, whose real wages plummeted at all time low. The government could not meet its debt service obligations and the subsequent halting of credits threatened to destabilize the economy. The trade unions began to vociferously oppose the neo-liberal strategies and holding the government to ransom through strikes and demonstrations. Understandably, Alfonsín's popularity fell to dangerously low levels, threatening the government very survival.

Under such hostile circumstances the government had to drop an important security issue of external dependence and whole-heartedly adopted the conditions imposed by the creditor nations. First and foremost, Alfonsín in unequivocal terms reaffirmed his intentions to service its debt obligations. Secondly, he had to implement a host of SAP that proved to be costly since they diverted the nation's limited resources

to external forces and denied the citizens from its benefits. Thirdly, the acceptance of this colossal burden on extremely detrimental terms represented a veritable chink in the armor for its national security, still in a process of transition and reassessment.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND THE DEMOCRATIC INCORPORATION OF THE MILITARY

Alfonsin's policies to professionalise the armed forces and bring it within the democratic process produced mixed results. Although, unlike other sectors where his policies met with disastrous consequences (trade union, economy), in the sphere of civil-military relations he managed to achieve most success.

Alfonsin's primary objective was to force the military to accept civilian authority and shed its interventionist image. For that purpose he utilised a varied set of tools and strategies to about the required change. These policies varied, to include monetary and fiscal control of the armed forces, institutional reforms, reassessment of missions, among others. However, for the purpose of our study, we have highlighted three basic objectives, each premised on the fundamental issue of ensuring military subordination. The first among these was the drastic reduction of the unmitigated powers of the Armed Forces, in terms of budgets, personnel, maternal and privileges.

The second objective of Alfonsin pertained to the question of reforming the military institution. The third goal was to punish those guilty of gross human rights violations and to make the armed forces accountable for its excesses.

REDUCING THE MILITARY'S POWER *

The Alfonsín government was extremely critical of the excessive influence of the military, and identified it as a determining factor in causing the military to intervene. Therefore, from the very outset, the government adopted a tough posture on the issue of military prerogatives and privileges, identifying those that pertained to non-military sectors, and sought its removal.

The reductionary policies adopted by the government included drastic reductions in military expenditure and personnel and restrictions on the procurement of expensive weapon systems etc. Under the Proceso, the armed forces had occupied a large share of resources that had allowed it large source of revenue, with which to look after its institutional and operational exigencies. Moreover, its profitable non-military centers had also ensured a steady supply of revenue. This extensive infrastructure support had provided it with the means to sponsor its extensive security missions.

The Alfonsín administration introduced drastic reductions in the military's annual budgets and simultaneously curtailed its non-military activities. Thus, from an all time high of 4.9% in 1981, (the year prior to the Falkland/Malvinas war) the military expenditure as a percentage of GDP came down to 8.5 of in 1983. From 1984 to 1987, it was further brought down and maintained at 2.3% of the GDP. The sharp decline in the expenditure levels is clearly visible when one compares the average military expenditure under the Proceso (1976-89) when it was brought down to 2.2%.

The government's austerity drives also affected the wage and salary levels of the armed forces traditionally the military institution had enjoyed. Substantially greater remuneration on account of their crucial role in recurring national defense. However the reductions in military budgets led to substantial decline in the real wages of military officers.

The government's austerity programmes also induced substantial reductions in the level of forces. The reduction in troops served two objectives of Alfonsin. First, a large standing military was incompatible with the new requirements of modern day warfare. Second, drastic reductions in personnel severely affected the military's prestige that was still influenced by traditional notions of size and firepower. One of the ways to achieve these reductions was through restrictions on the policy of conscription. From 1983 to 1986, the number of soldiers drafted for the compulsory one-year military service shrank from 64,640 to less than 25000.

Alfonsin also initiated substantial reductions in the procurement of advanced weapons systems and other important inputs necessary for sustaining a respectable level of national defense. Although the overall condition of the armed forces underwent considerable deterioration, it was hit the hardest in the sphere of operations and equipment with cuts amounting from 40 to 50 percent.

Between 1983 and 1986, the defense expenditure had plummeted by almost 40%. This was in spite of the limited build up on part of the armed forces, in order to replenish its depleted stocks due to the Falklands/Malvinas invasion. Therefore, in spite

of acquiring six submarines, ten escorts and ninety combat planes; the military remained deficient and absence of spare parts ammunition, aviation fuel among other critical components severely affected its operational capabilities.

Apart from pursuing policies that had a direct impact on the operational capabilities of armed forces, the government also linked several non-military roles. The most prominent among this was- restricting the military's control over the extensive military industrial complexes.

Under the Proceso, the armed forces through their economic role had emerged as the largest entrepreneurial group in the economy. The government transferred the control of these industries to civilians and initiated measures to privatise a few of them.

The loss of such valuable assets affected the armed forces in two ways. First, it signified a considerable loss of revenue, since these industries were generating high profits. Second, it also meant a loss of prestige and influence.

Apart from the policies that were affected by the overall economic condition of the country, the Alfonsín administration also implemented several other restructuring strategies. The government created the position of a defense minister to be headed by a civilian to liaison between the military and the government. By creating an extra tier of bureaucracy, he tried to reduce the military's access to the executive. Alfonsín also excluded the armed forces from participating in security planning and operations, limiting its role to that of an advisor.

Additionally, the government also began to relocate several military garrisons and bases from key centres towards the frontiers and hinterlands. This relocation enabled it to utilise the land occupied by the military for more productive use, and at the same time to distance the armed forces from important political reducing the logistics of the military intervention. Inspired by the above-mentioned logic, Alfonsín decided to sell eight military bases in greater Buenos Aires area. Another important decision of the government was to dispose some of the procured armaments due to lack of resources to maintain them.

REFORM OF THE MILITARY, PROFESSIONALISM AND NEW MISSIONS

Alfonsín pursued a strategy of gradual doctrinal change, eschewing politicization and whole scale restructuring of the Armed Forces. This restructuring also underlined the development of a new role for the military, based on non-political version of professionalism, corresponding to the traditional western concept of defense against conventional external threats.

Alfonsín's attempts to reform the military highlighted two fundamental objectives:

- 1) To ensure military's subordination to the constitutional order and prevent its future intervention through changes in its institutional doctrines and through severing its links with civilian support groups.

- 2) To reduce the excessive national security orientation and reassess the military objectives, making them more compatible with civilian needs.

Alfonsin's preference for gradual doctrinal reforms grew from the realization that, in order to purge the military of its interventionist character he would have to not only reduce its institutional powers but also bring about a transformation in its disposition. Therefore, in order to achieve long term military obedience and change its orientation from an active to a passive role.

The most direct attempt to initiate doctrinal modifications was his proposal to reorganize the armed forces and introduce changes in the curricula of superior war colleges and other technical schools. Alfonsin's reorganisation of the military included abolition of certain existing branches, restructuring of branches along more modern comes, creation of new branches such as rocketry and armour and inter-service merging to comply with technological upgradations. In order to forge closer relations between the services, Alfonsin also initiated unprecedented joint exercises that witnessed the conflicting groups participate under a unified command.

Alfonsin's reforms of the military training schools and its curricula emerged out of the need to incorporate the armed forces with democratic values and ideals, avoid ideological conformity, and recognize the civilian authority over its institution. Therefore he initiated measures for the insertion of greater civilian components in and the civilian control over, the military's course programmes. He also attempted to induct

greater civilian specialists in military schools in order to diffuse the over emphasis on militarised form of national security.

THE ARMED FORCES, CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE

Since the very beginning of his presidency Alfonsín doggedly pursued the controversial issue of human rights violations by the military under the Proceso while carrying out extensive counter-insurgency operations. His determination to indict the military grew not just out of his personal experiences but also due to a belief that by bringing the military to justice, he would succeed in bringing them under civilian control.

The human rights abuses carried out by the armed forces were a direct consequence of its excessive security perception, and culminated due to an extremely violent response to ambiguous threats. The military had evolved intrinsic NSD's that were concerned with the damaging influence of urban Communist guerrillas and their sympathizers, and prescribed an all out counter offensive with scant regard to civilian casualties. Moreover, the NSD's poorly defined the "threats" and "enemies" to national objectives, therefore leading to extensive casualties comprising lawyers, trade unionists, academicians, etc. 'Enemy' meant whoever opposed the Proceso.

The armed forces considered the casualties unfortunate but necessary in the fight against subversion and securing national security.

However, the civilians demanded those guilty of excesses must be punished, some even demanding the dismantling of the military institution.

The military had identified its counter-insurgency operations as one of its limited successes during the Proceso. However, Alfonsín policies deeply alienated the armed forces; that thought that the civilians were fishing for vengeance.

CHAPTER-III

RAPPROCHEMENT AND INTEGRATION: NEW REGIONALISM UNDER CIVILIAN RULE

Regional Cooperation and rapprochement emerged as prominent components of Argentina's national security paradigm during the mid-eighties. Corresponding to the larger integrationist trends in the global political system, this period witnessed unprecedented developments that brought forth new levels of convergence between Argentina and its archrivals. It exemplified the decline of the traditional confrontationist and competitive tendencies that had characterized its regional relations for the larger part of its history. At the same time it opened up new vistas towards collective security and development that were utilized by the civilian policy makers to consolidate their position domestically.

Regional cooperation as an effective tool to promote the country's national security imperatives was first conceived by Raul Alfonsín whose main objectives in initiating such measures were to reduce the prevailing high levels of animosity and distrust in the region and to coalesce it into a powerful regional bloc capable of resisting pressures from external hegemonic forces. His motivations were strictly political and were aimed at restoring peace and stability as well as molding the region into an effective bargaining force.

On the contrary, his successor Carlos Menem not only borrowed the concept but also fine tuned it into a much publicised foreign policy objective. Menem's pragmatic regional aspirations, unlike Alfonsín were inclined more towards economic issues, giving relatively little concern to political and strategic issues, apart from reflecting the country's revised national security orientation that amalgamated both regional and national security aspects. It also highlighted the pre-eminence of economic and developmental concerns over more traditional strategic imperatives.

The new regionalist orientation of the post-Proceso civilian governments also displayed characteristics of a more active state that intended to take a much more independent and autonomous stand on regional dynamics and was determined to shape issues rather than react against them. This emergence of the state as a credible and potent force making greater assertions within the region was due to a combination of international and domestic factors that worked concomitantly to provide the government with an unprecedented leeway to determine its position. Those prominent among these were, a more egalitarian distribution of power and resources in the global order; nationalist assertions of the government and its leaders, growing state resources, and a greater autonomy from domestic and external influences.

The emergence of the state as a credible force promoting greater rationalism represented the heightened concerns of the government regarding regional developments, and its implications on its national interests. Concurrently, it signified its intentions to define new roles and strategies that were more consistent with their

revised security needs. This new disposition also highlighted the waning of the traditional security paradigm and its substitution with a more liberal model that extended the conceptual frontiers of its security concerns to the regional level.

REGIONAL COOPERATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SECURITY.

The integrationist strategies adopted by the civilian governments displayed the ongoing transition in the country's national security perception. The civilian policy makers, who had only just recovered from the military rule, did not prescribe to the more traditional versions of the military. Their approach towards reversing the prevailing militarised model of security had two basic objectives.

- 1) To neutralize the existing provisions of the military's national security model and correct the imbalances that it produced in the society.
- 2) To discourage conditions that could in future lead the country back to military's vision of security.

The expansive regionalist strategies propagated by the civilians fulfilled the above two premises. A strong integrated regional order not only symbolized the very antithesis of the militarised model but also had the potential to discourage the revival of traditional patterns of relations by raising the cost of such endeavors. Thus, the attempts at fostering regionalism were aimed at reversing the older model of national

security based on 'realist' notions of inter-state relations and converting it to be more compatible with civilian needs.

The impact of these integrationist initiatives on the national security perception was considerable. These measures struck at the very roots of the militarised model that was founded on intra-regional rivalries and a strong realist tradition that emphasised on competition more than cooperation. They also tried to eliminate the influences of extreme geopolitical concerns and an isolationist model of development that had further consolidated the chasms prevailing between these countries.

Another sphere that was closely integrated with the country's national security perception, and underwent substantial transformation was concerning the issue of regional security. Regional security involves a concentrated effort on part of regional states to assess and define short-term interests and objectives and the potential threats to those interests. Regional defense represents a collective effort on part of member states to create and sustain a credible deterrent to eliminate those threats. In order to maintain an effective regional security mechanism, it is necessary that there be some level of consensus building and cooperation over issues that affect the entire region.

The primary objective of any regional security organisation is to ward off any threats, external aggression intraregional conflict etc. The efficiency and smooth functioning of such mechanisms necessitates a convergence of security perception of all actors involved in the process. In Argentina, just as in the entire Latin American region, the linkages between regional and national security had blurred and national

security began to be emphasised in terms of issues within the geographical perimeter of the nation. This internalisation of national security was initiated at the end of the Second World War and the emergence of bipolar politics of the Cold War. Despite its distance from the centre, Argentina along with the rest of the hemisphere had gotten entrenched into the vortex of the superpower rivalry that led to rigid compartmentalisation of the entire globe. The Cold War resulted in a unilateral imposition of the US national security perception on Latin America and the entire mobilisation of the region, barring Cuba as a distinct American 'sphere of influence'. This hegemony was later institutionalised with the creation of the Rio-Pact in 1947 and the OAS (Organisation of American States) and other strategic mechanisms such as the Inter-American Defense Board that sought to unify the entire region within the parameters of a larger global defense against global communism.

This over-arching emphasis on strategic security premised on the ideological confrontation of two power blocs, negated any form of consensus building among the Latin America States, who began to retract their attention towards domestic issues. Moreover the profound historical distortions between the countries of the region, although permitted them to unify as a US led anti-communist consortium, severely discouraged any improvement in their mutual relations. Certain other tendencies illustrated the contradictions in the region's security paradigm, such as the ability of the Latin American states to present a unified front in global multilateral institutions like the UN but at the same constantly perceive them to be rivals within the region.

There had been initial attempts at regional integration but they proved to be extremely rudimentary in nature and few survived the initial phases. The other form of mutual cooperation that eventually emerged in the course of the mid century could be typified as military or strategic alliances. These alliances were mostly bilateral and were aimed at countering the influence of its rivals. Argentina's attempt to form some kind of a defense pact with Peru was driven by its anxiety over an expansionist Brazil.

Therefore, a growing disenchantment with regional security issues, safe under the US umbrella, and the resulting decline in their ability to affect security oriented outcomes compelled the national governments to increasingly concentrate on domestic aspects of security.

FACTORS AFFECTING REGIONAL DISINTEGRATION

The disintegrationist tendencies that emerged in Latin America and had its impact on Argentina from the fifties to end seventies were caused due to a wide array of factors that can be broadly bifurcated into two separate categories,

- 1) Internal
- 2) External

INTERNAL ASPECTS OF REGIONAL DISINTEGRATION

The domestic imperatives that influenced Argentina policy makers to adopt a more isolationist stand within an increasingly fragmented region can be grouped into four distinct spheres.

- 1) The pervasive influence of geopolitical and geo-strategic factors, especially on the Armed Forces, that had institutionalised such conflicts into various state structures (socio-political, economic and cultural) of the nation.
- 2) The adoption of Import Substitution Industrialisation (ISI) strategy of economic development that promoted few linkages outside the national frontiers.
- 3) An unresponsive and skeptical elite class for whom such integrationist measures had little importance due to the fact that their disposition was largely American or Euro centric.
- 4) A conservative military who had a lot to gain from such conflicts, in terms of material benefits and institutional legitimacy

EXTERNAL FACTORS PERPETUATING REGIONAL DISCORD

The dis-integrationist tendencies that emerged in the region due to powerful internal imbalances within states were also complemented by several factors prevailing within the region and in the international political system. Those dominant over the many were,

- 1) The all-encompassing hegemony of the United States.
- 2) The prevailing bipolar rigidity of the international political system and its impact on global economic patterns.

These two factors were often interrelated although being different due to the powerful influence cast by the US not only within the region but also on the global scale.

THE ORDEAL OF U.S. HEGEMONY

The all-pervasive hegemony of the United States was prime motivating factor for the isolationist disposition of the Argentine governments before the redemocratisation of the country in the eighties. Although this hegemony had emerged after the first world war concomitant to the decline of the more traditional British influence over the country and in the region.

The US emerged as the undisputed leader of the hemisphere after the Second World War, and in the Cold War period it began to reassert its hegemony with a renewed vigor. Argentina was hit hard by this reshuffle of power due to its long-standing proximity to Britain, making its relations with the US vague, since the national leadership had difficulties in replacing its traditional reliance.

Post World War II saw the unfolding of the American security juggernaut with the entire Western Hemisphere being brought under the influence of a resurgent US aiming to control and subordinate all developments in the region under its extensive national security interests.

It was primarily under the guidance of US national interests that the region saw the establishment of two comprehensive regional security mechanisms increasingly

came to represent US national security concerns that were imposed upon the weaker Latin American nations in the garb of collective security. This overarching American influence united the entire region to rally behind the American cause and left little room for the regional nations to influence the unilateral agenda with their own security concerns.

With the diminishing threat of direct Soviet aggression and the emergence of communism in Cuba, the US began to force the Latin American States to adopt an internal orientation to security and carry out extensive strategies for purging the society of all forms of communist influences.

The emergence of authoritarian regimes with or without the tacit support of the US created a propitious environment for the establishment of a US security umbrella over the region. The convergence of Argentina's strategic security concerns with that of the US proved rewarding for both sides. For the US, it meant the emergence of a strategic partner in its fight against the left, and for the Argentine military it meant a continuous flow of weapons, enhanced military training, and above all a chance to be involved in a region wide defense programme.

IMPACT OF GLOBAL BIPOLAR RIGIDITY

The emergence of the cold war and the international bipolarity presented several obstacles to the formulation of effective regional integrationist initiatives. The prevailing ideological conflict had led to a rigid trifurcation of the international

political system (with attendant changes in the economic, cultural and social spheres as well), in two dominant power blocs and the Third World represented through the Non Aligned Movement (NAM)

In such a rigid statusquoist pattern of international and regional politics, the Latin American nations had no options but to either join the US bandwagon or the Third World (NAM). Allying with the Soviet Union could prove disadvantageous as Cuba so amply demonstrated, in the light of a possible American backlash. Most regional nations joined the NAM at some time or the other, but a powerful US dissent negated its impact on some measure of integration within the region.

CHANGES IN THE REGIONAL SECURITY SCENARIO

The regional cooperative attempts that were initiated and sustained in the eighties occurred in part due to the transformation in the regional security settings and the subsequent changes that made the traditional multilateral framework of security redundant. These changes were not immediate but a gradual transformation that was facilitated by strong regional and international factors.

In this regard, it becomes important to emphasize that Latin America's role in the international political system as a US 'sphere of influence' had helped in maintaining the international balance of power. Therefore, any change in the global power equilibrium would inevitably have an impact on the security dynamics

prevailing within the region. This was primarily because although the US could control issues in the region, it could never really isolate it from other global influences.

These changes that were manifested in the international and regional security systems profoundly affected the orientation of the national policymakers. Before the revival of democracy and especially under the Proceso, the regional setting offered little encouragement to the governments of the region to improve mutual ties. By the mid eighties, Latin America was a deeply divided region with considerable degree of political and armed conflicts and only weak intra-regional economic links.

However, in the mid eighties new tendencies emerged within the global sphere that fundamentally altered the pattern of relations that had previously characterized the region. The most prominent among them was the relative decline of US hegemony. With the decline of this hegemonic influence, that had succeeded in its objective of closely binding the region over a US defined security agenda, the regional states found new levels of autonomy in determining their security priorities. The pervading US influence over Latin America was complete, encompassing all spheres of policy formulation. Not only was it a military behemoth but also acquired economic pre-eminence, reinforcing its dominance either through outright aggression or technical and material incentives.

Scholars have remained divided over the nature of US hegemony and the extent to which it was capable of influencing domestic decisions within the Latin American countries. Although its military power was never questioned, manifested in the various

interventions that it had undertaken in the region during the course of last century, its power to influence the region economically and politically have increasingly come under doubt. Scholars have categorised this hegemony in three distinct phases,

- 1) 1948-1971, when the hegemony was complete
- 2) 1972-1981, relative decline in US power
- 3) 1982 to the present, resurgence of US hegemony, although it was more liberally manifested.

This tendency to challenge the notion of American hegemony grew by the seventies and early eighties, in the light of severe setbacks faced by the US on several crucial issues.

An important factor in diffusing the capability of the US to control regional and international developments was its diminishing economic power. A post-reconstruction, resurgent Europe and the emergence of Japanese economic influence increasingly began to challenge and compete with the US over important global developments. Although none of these regions developed the potential to challenge the US militarily, their emergence as powerful economic centres definitely undermined US supremacy. The increasing global trade and the resulting interdependence among nation states highlighted the need for rapprochement and cooperation rather than conflict. In such a scenario the rigid realist posture of US came to be increasingly criticized and condemned.

The second factor that resulted in the transformation of the regional security scenario was the dilution of rigid global bipolarity and the end of cold war. This process that had begun with the initiation of a more liberal Soviet approach finally culminated with the termination of the Cold War. The end of global bipolarity witnessed the initiation of multipolar dynamics when economically powerful regions began to assert themselves politically.

The emergence of multipolar politics was accompanied by a rising dependence on international trade and investment. This led to greater integrationist patterns of international relations where economic concerns supplanted military and strategic imperatives. With the end of cold war, the rigid division of the world based on military or strategic values ended and economic security replaced the traditional concepts of strategic security.

TRANSFORMATION OF REGIONAL SECURITY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ARGENTINA

The changes that affected the regional and international security settings had a significant impact on Argentina. For the newly emerged democracy, these changes not only offered an opportunity for its consolidation but also enhanced their chances to assert itself more independently within the region. It also facilitated their quest for growth since closer convergence would entail enhancing opportunities for mutual development.

The civilian policy makers benefited immensely from these changes. The decline in the US hegemony provided it with a greater leeway in pursuing an independent orientation. This was especially important for Argentina since it was one of the few Latin American nations worst affected by the US hegemony. Relations between Argentina and the US had never been cordial in spite of the absence of security problems between the two, except for a brief interlude when the military regimes emerged that were much more compatible to the US needs.

With the defeat in the Falklands/Malvinas War, this cordial nature of relations was replaced by extreme animosity and anger that had pervaded the entire nation. The American role in British victory was seen as crucial and the whole nation suffered a feeling of betrayal by a supposedly loyal ally. The decline of the US hegemony offered propitious opportunities to vent these sentiments and the nationalist backlash that emerged after the defeat.

The diminishing Cold War dynamics that had emerged during Alfonsín's tenure and the subsequent end to the Super power rivalry during Menem provided radically different settings to the civilians to conduct their regional relations. The end of Cold War not only rendered obsolete the entire militarized (regional and international) apparatus together with its pacts and alliances, but also made many of the geopolitical considerations redundant. With the growing emphasis of multipolar dynamics, collective security values and ideals, and heightened economic interdependence, there

emerged a revival of multilateral institutions that had been held hostage under the bipolar confrontation between two superpowers.

The dissipation of the Cold War facilitated the aspirations of the Latin American nations to integrate themselves by fostering an environment conducive for enhanced rapprochement and cooperation. Inspired by worldwide regionalist processes, the civilian governments began to envisage a similar development within the region. Although, the decline of the Cold War made the US the sole remaining superpower and brought about resurgence in its power, the fundamental character of international relations had altered drastically to demand the more anachronistic manifestations of its hegemony. The end of Cold War also signified the obsolescence of the Rio Treaty and the OAS that had been founded on the bipolar structure of international politics. These regional security mechanisms had lost much of its legitimacy due to its failures to address the security needs of the entire region, except the US for which it was created, as evident in the Falklands/Malvinas War.

The emergence of the debt crisis in the beginning of the eighties that affected almost all parts of the region signified the first threat to the region's collective security with the exception of the United States. The debt crisis and its incapacitating implications on the country's well being was a rallying point for bringing the region to closer convergence. The debt crisis highlighted the obsolescence of the existing multilateral security institutions that rigidly followed an East-West paradigm to security issues. However, for Argentina and other regional countries, issues such as

debt crisis, technology transfers formed a different contextual setting centered on North South dimension.

The prevailing rift between Argentina and the US was further exacerbated by the debt crisis, which was illustrative of how economics is used to calm a crisis. The Latin American states saw the debt crisis as a critical security issue. The US, however, refused to accept this version of the problem and insisted that it could be resolved through economic restructuring and an export oriented model of development.

Another factor that had a profound impact on the regional as well as the national security dynamics was the consolidation of free market economics that postulated a greater emphasis on trade and investment. An essential motive behind the promotion of regionalism was to address the economic imperative of larger markets that would be required to sustain the expanding industrial capabilities of the country. However, the recession in the international economic system and the restriction on imports by the US and Europe forced the Latin American nations to seek closer ties among each other.

Therefore, the massive debt burden, poor state of the economy and a recession in export markets highlighted the primacy of economic concerns in not just Argentina but the entire region, that had been kept aside due to Cold War.

The inability of the domestic economy to foster growth, and an isolationist orientation forced the civilian policy makers to realize the importance of courting its

neighbors concerning the debt crisis and the Falklands/Malvinas War, when they found themselves politically and economically vulnerable to resist the hegemonic orientation of the industrially advanced forces. Lack of collective regional bodies denied Argentina the stand on which to buttress its position while negotiating with creditor nations.

NEW REGIONALISM AND ITS MANIFESTATIONS

The end of Cold War, consolidation of democracy and free market economics and the diminishing of the region's strategic importance and its emergence as a promising market for trade and investment resulted in an unprecedented convergence of political and economic ideology and the revision of Pan Americanism. The manifestations of these integrationist strategies can be classified under two broad categories:

- 1) Rapprochement with traditional rivals, Brazil and Chile with unprecedented levels of political, strategic, and economic convergence, highlighted through the creation of MERCOSUR
- 2) Greater participation in regional issues through involvement in regional and hemispheric accords and parts

GREATER PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL ISSUES

As mentioned in the beginning, the new wave of regionalism that swept through the entire hemisphere in the eighties, with Argentina among those leading the initiative,

occurred in part due to a new tendency of the Latin American States to adopt an active posture on the regional front. Such an orientation was promoted primarily due to the more fluid and flexible patterns of multi-polar politics that had emerged in the international political system, combined with favorable domestic conditions.

The Argentine policy makers began to use such favorable internal and international climate to reassert their influence in the region that had witnessed the decline of the US hegemony over the last few years. At the heart of these initiatives was a deep-rooted conviction to oppose the uncontested American hegemony that had stifled the aspiration of the country. For example, under Raul Alfonsin, Argentina joined the support group for the Contadora Peace Process, whose basic intention was to circumscribe the prevailing US influence over the region. Raul Alfonsin's initial attempts to form some kind of a debtor's cartel can also be classified within this category.

ARGENTINE – BRAZILIAN RAPPROCHEMENT

Argentina's conflictual relations with its neighbor Brazil could be traced back to the Spanish-Portuguese rivalry that had prevailed in Europe from fifteenth century onwards that had been transplanted in Latin America by their respective colonization drives. This conflict between Spanish America and Portuguese dominated Brazil later got consolidated in their national psyche creating extreme distrust and skepticism that hindered any degree of cooperation between the two states.

In the twentieth century, both nations pursued independent paths to growth, suspicious of each other's achievements. Argentina's emergence as the dominant economic power within the subcontinent at the turn of the last century further strengthened this race for regional preeminence. Although attempts to enhance relations did emerge from time to time and the two nations did manage to converge on several issues, such as the Convention on the Law of the Seas, etc. However, extreme geo-political concerns constrained any effective outcome to such short-term agreements. Brazil's increasing friendship with the US was also a factor that soured relations between the two nations.

Under the Proceso regime, this longstanding rivalry had aggravated to alarming proportions over the issue of hydroelectric resources of the Rio de La Plata region with the construction of the Itaipu dam. The greater influence of geopolitical considerations on the military institutions, made the regime increasingly suspicious of the Brazilian intentions. With both countries emphasizing on national resources to sustain their internal growth strategies, the conflict between the two intensified with both nations forging alliances and tacit strategic understanding to keep the other at bay.

Although under the Proceso, some degrees of cooperation were achieved in important strategic spheres of nuclear technology, when both countries decided to pursue certain collective initiatives to enhance cooperation in this field.

The phase of rapprochement and cooperation was initiated with the ascendancy of Raul Alfonsin as Argentina's President. Under his initiative the two countries

decided to cooperate over a host of issues including a complete resolution of all outstanding disputes. This trend was initiated in 1985 with his visit to Brasilia and the Fort de Iguazu declaration that highlighted consensus between the two nations over the controversial nuclear weapons programme. It was an extension of this consensus that saw Argentina supporting the Brazilian initiative of declaring the entire region as a nuclear weapons free zone. Similarly, the two countries also achieved a commonality of interests on many other issues, such as Human Rights, joint-military exercises, etc.

ARGENTINE – CHILEAN RAPPROCHEMENT

The new phase in Argentine-Chilean bilateral relationship began in 1984, with the resolution of the longstanding Beagle Channel Islands dispute. With the end of a long and onerous conflict that had taken a heavy toll on both the nations, new opportunities arose that served to take the two nations towards close convergence.

Argentina's relations with its eastern rival were more complex and acrimonious than with Brazil. In case of Brazil, Argentina's concerns were largely speculative, exaggerated more due to the complex geopolitical thoughts influencing the national policymakers. On the other hand, its relations with Chile were markedly different. Not only did geopolitical considerations prevail but were consolidated by the presence of several territorial disputes regarding unmarked borders (ill-defined), disputes territories, and Chile's claim over Antarctica and over Chilean migration in the Patagonia.

The fundamental reason that denied any permanent settlement of the dispute was regarding the question of sovereignty. Conflicts over sovereignty prove extremely difficult to resolve since they affect the basic notion of statehood. Although, these conflicts did not turn into full-fledged aggression, they restricted the two nations from forging closer ties. Moreover, depending on the nature of their domestic upheavals, these hostilities went through periodic ups and downs. In 1978, the two nations were almost on the brink of a war with their respective Air Forces put on full alert. Another event that substantially affected the restoration of this estranged relationship was the Argentine conviction about the dubious role of Chile during the Falklands/Malvinas War. It would be worthwhile to emphasize that both Argentina and Chile under their respective military governments agreed with the security concerns of the US during the Cold War and were strongly influenced by the American internal security doctrines. However, the prevailing East-West rhetoric of the Cold War paid scant attention to these conflicts, thereby delaying its resolution.

The historic Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1984 that signified not just the end of the Beagle Channel Dispute, but also a new phase in their bilateral relations that was founded on greater cooperation and friendship. However, the presence of an authoritarian regime in Chile obstructed the consolidation of such initial successes. Besides, the prevailing economic asymmetry (heavily indebted Argentina and an economically resurgent Chile) has further served to undermine these initiatives.

With the end of military rule in 1991 and the emergence of democracy, prospects have improved for closer convergence between the two nations. Since the beginning of the nineties, Argentina and Chilean forces have participated in joint military exercises and other confidence building mechanisms to resolve old disputes, apart from renewing strained political and economic ties. Argentine-Chilean trade has increased considerably, especially after Chile's closer integration with the MERCOSUR States. Chilean-Argentine bilateral relations have also undergone drastic transformation with an overarching stress on economic issues. Chilean investment has begun to play a vital role in the domestic economy and Argentina has included Chile in its long-term security objectives by constructing a gas pipeline to transfer natural gas.

However, it is not the intention to state that Argentine-Chilean relations have been permanently stabilized and periodic fissures do appear from time to time, putting considerable strain on this nascent relationship. The most influential among these are the economic differences that arise due to the existing economical asymmetry between the two nations. Moreover, geopolitical concerns have receded but not disappeared, occasionally making their impact felt over the region. Chile's close alliances with Britain, Argentina's traditional foe has further aroused Argentine suspicions.

CHAPTER IV

PRAGMATISM OR DEPENDENCE: A NEW FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTATION IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

Argentina at the threshold of the nineties witnessed two events of significant proportions that fundamentally altered the country's internal and external settings. The first of these two pertained to the 1989 presidential elections and the appointment of the Peronist, Carlos Menem as the new president. The second occurred within the international political system, related to the waning of the global bipolarity in 1990 with the collapse and eventual disintegration of the erstwhile Soviet Union.

These two developments that took place in near succession, although remaining mutually exclusive acted in collusion to present a radically different orientation to the new regime. This was due to the fact that the implications churned out by these changes completely altered the conditions that had influenced and determined the preceding leaderships. This enabled Menem to acquire a whole new perspective on nation building and sever the historical patterns of State behaviour, especially in the field of external relations, within the region and without.

The changeover of the national leadership at a time when the country was going through one of its most turbulent phases, had far reaching repercussions on the country's socio-political and economic structures. Firstly, it signified the first

successful transfer of power amongst the civilians in nearly fifty years¹. This proved to be an extremely encouraging phenomenon for the civilians considering that the prevailing critical imbalances had permeated in virtually every sector of the society. Secondly, this electoral outcome highlighted the formal end to the transition process that had achieved little success in its goal of strengthening the democratic order. Thirdly, Menem's election signalled the resurgence of the Peronists at the helm of state power after a long hiatus.

CRISIS OF THE STATE AND THE MENEM ELECTION

Argentina during the 1989 elections represented a stark picture of chaos and anarchy, Raul Alfonsín who was mandated with the task of exorcising the legacies of the PRN and ensuring a stable democratic future, had achieved little any real value, leading the country to a severe crisis of the state². His inability to address effectively the critical distortions existing in the society not only led to his downfall but also created an unstable future for his successor.

As explained in the preceding chapters, the crisis of the state that had been precipitated during Alfonsín's tenure, occurred primarily due to his mishandling of three critical issues:

- 1) The democratic incorporation and de-politicisation of the armed forces.

¹ After the military coup in 1940, no civilian government was able to ensure a smooth transfer of power due to successive military interventions.

² Last elected Peronist President was Juan Peron in 1973.

2) The 'de-peronizacion' of the trade unions.

3) The revival of the economy.

At the time of Menem's inauguration, the country was experiencing its worst economic crisis after the great depression of the 1930's Alfonsin's failure to manage the colossal external debt burden, coupled with his inability to evoke confidence in the national currency led to a severe bout of hyperinflation touching almost 4000 percent. It also led to a massive capital flight that left the state with dangerously low levels of foreign exchange reserves to meet its debt servicing obligations. The crisis was further exacerbated when the international lending agencies refused to supply new lines of credit due to the governments default on its debt servicing.

Alfonsin fared no better in his dealings with the armed forces. His decision to extend his austerity drives to included the military institution led to a drastic reduction in the defense outlays not only hampered the military's operational capabilities but also resulted in a severe decline in their salaries and wages. Additionally his handling of the controversial human rights issues further augmented the military's resentment towards the government³. The three military rebellions reflected the profound antagonism that had gripped the military institution, although they did not threaten the democratic rule. This was evident more among the middle ranking officers, who

³ Alfonsin became a hostage to his own judiciary that initiated, with a renewed vigour, the trials of those military officers suspected of brutal human rights violations. Although, "Punto Final" was meant as a concession to the armed forces by limiting the time frame for filing of cases, the judiciary worked overtime, including during its Christmas and New Year vacations to register approximately 400 cases. This figure proved to be much beyond Alfonsin's expectations and of the armed forces and forced some sections to launch the rebellions.

unlike their superiors had retained their nationalist affirmations inspired by the setbacks received; Alfonsín's policies not only had the unintended effect of "repoliticisation" of the military but also forced him to grant several concessions, many secretly to the armed forces, which included among others, a four fold hike in salaries and a US\$ 4 billion modernisation package, in spite of the prevailing austerity⁴.

Alfonsín met with the same fate while addressing the issue of the labour force and the trade unions. Being a natural political enemy of the trade unions, he had little success in selling his heterodox and subsequently, the neo-liberal economic programmes. His inability to disintegrate the highly organised trade unions and incorporate them within the state bureaucracy led the labour class to successfully block his new labour reforms. Moreover the rise in the costs of public utilities and reduction in welfare activities, that had been extensively state supported, led to a severe argumentation of the popular discontentment. By the end of Alfonsín's term, Argentina had emerged amongst the world's leading countries in terms of skewed income distribution.

THE BEGINNING OF THE MENEM PRESIDENCY

At the start of his term, Argentina was passing through an extremely volatile situation. The economy was on the verge of collapse. The country had defaulted on its

⁴ IISS, "The Military Balance: 1989-1990", International Institute for Strategic Studies, Pp.181.

debt obligations the trade unions were up in arms against the government and rumours were rife about an imminent military intervention⁵.

Upon his arrival, Menem understood the root cause of all these criticalities lay in the poor state of the economy. He realised that without an immediate economic revival the nation would disintegrate due to the prevailing contradictions. He also understood that given the meagre resources available to him, it would be hard to engage all critical issues together. This particular disposition of his that accounts for the pre-eminence of economic objectives has become the hallmark of his policies.

Therefore, at the very start of his term Menem directed all his energies toward reviving the economy and ensuring that all obstacles towards future growth could be eliminated. Menem was fortunate on two accounts. First, although Alfonsín had failed to achieve his desired objectives, he succeeded in creating a basis on which future administration could build. Alfonsín had restricted the military's power and they had to rely on the government for the survival. Though towards the end, certain sectors of the armed forces had become politicised the very fact that it did not precipitate into a coup reflected the absence of any desire to regain the historical political disposition on part of the military as a whole.

The very fact that Menem was a Peronist helped him to no end. The labour class that had borne the brunt of the impact of Alfonsín's neo-liberal policies were desperate to regain their foothold in the government. The emergence of a "Peronista"

⁵ Peter Calvert, "Argentina: Goodbye to Peronism", *The World Today*, August/September, 1990, Pp.174.

was met with a lot of enthusiasm leading to a decline in the aggressive positive towards the state. Therefore, Menem was able to manipulate the trade unions and include many of its leaders with the bureaucracy in order to diffuse the opposition. By incorporating them with the decision making process, he ensured their subservience to him.

Menem's success in handling the economic crisis was not so complete at least in the first term. However, he managed to convince the international lending agencies and country's creditors of his intentions to continue and strengthen the neo-liberal, free market economic reforms that had been initiated under the military. Menem's decision to approve as his economic minister a technocrat from one of the country's leading industrial conglomerate highlighted his support for the economic restructuring. However, the first year of his term was marked by persistent bouts of hyperinflation low levels of economic productivity and rising social costs.

MENEM'S FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTATION

It was in the sphere of foreign policy that Menem made his most dramatic transformation. Although his policies regarding the military and trade unions were in tremendous path breaking and unlike any of the peronist models or concepts his external orientation stands out amongst the rest.

As stated before, the hallmark of Menem's foreign policy orientation was the overwhelming importance attached to economic concerns. In the light of the poor state of the economy, Menem channelled all his resources towards improving the state of the economy. However, to do so, he had to face two difficult challenges:

- 1) The relatively little influence that Argentina wielded in the international political system.
- 2) It's dependence on foreign investment and aid, in order to overcome the severe crisis of the domestic economy.

Menem understood that in order to revive the economy, he would have to improve the country's relations with important centres of finance and investment. However, his biggest challenge was to overcome the international isolation that had been imposed upon the country after the infamous military rule and the Falklands/Malvinas war. Additionally, the nationalist disposition of Alfonsín had alienated the regional superpower, the U.S., who was disgruntled on the issue of the external debt and differences over Argentina's nuclear programme. Moreover, the decline of the communist threat that had occurred due to a transformation in the Soviet foreign policy had diminished the importance of the continent for U.S. security interests.

Thus, Menem upon his arrival found that the country was virtually excluded of any international role, provoked primarily due to the poor human rights track record, the unprovoked aggression on the British and poor economic performance.

These factors played a critical role in denying much needed investment and financial aid to revive the economy out of its slump. In his attempts to improve Argentina's international standing and to reopen vital channels of credit, he was aided

by a radical transformation of the international political structures, due to the disintegration of the Soviet Union in August 1991.

THE END OF COLDWAR, IMPLICATIONS FOR ARGENTINA

The disintegration of the Soviet Union had a profound impact on the entire international political system, engulfing the entire Latin American continent in the vortex of a complex and comprehensive restructuring that accompanied the end of the Cold War. The entire global order that had been structured around the prevailing ideological conflict between the two superpowers plunged into a state of anarchy and chaos. The strategic umbrella that had been erected over the globe representing the two divisions lost its significance.

Two Clear trends emerged from the otherwise chaotic process:

- 1) The pre-eminence of the U.S., in the face of the collapse of its sole competitor.
- 2) The revitalisation of the various multilateral, Intergovernmental institutions that had been unable to operate under the rigid dynamics of the Cold War.

There were other spin-offs as well. Firstly, the dissipation of the Cold War was not just a political event; it had implications on other sectors too. The end of Cold War reiterated not just the strategic superiority of the U.S., but also highlighted the pre-eminence of its economic power. Although, its economic clout had been increasingly challenged by powerful economic powers, such as the EU and Japan, they had all relied upon it to ensure their strategic security against the much-hyped communist expansion.

Moreover, these economic forces (EU, Japan, and the U.S.) came to be the exponents of the free market, neoliberal economic order.

Secondly, these economic and financial centres began to increasingly stress on a greater role for themselves in the larger scheme of international politics, thereby presenting new challenges to the American hegemony. Such an orientation on part of these powerful economic centres led to resurgence of multipolar dynamics and heightened regionalism in order to coalesce their regions into a stronger position vis-à-vis, the U.S. Once these countries consolidated themselves through various integrationist measures, they began to assert an independent position while determining their external relations. This was an improvement for the better, since the earlier rigid division of power inevitably led to an overlapping of security concerns with those of the two power blocs.

ASSERTION OF U.S. HEGEMONY

The end of Cold War fundamentally transformed the international position of the U.S., by removing its sole competitor from the scene. The subsequent changes that took place reaffirmed its position at the helm of international politics. The U.S. emerged much more powerful and aggressive out of this experience.

Latin America and especially the Southern Cone had far reaching repercussions due to this global restructuring of power. The elimination of its only competitor

removed the communist threat thereby removing Latin America from its list of priorities.

With the decline of the strategic value of Latin America, the entire region suffered relative marginalization for the U.S. policy makers. The entire continent, including Argentina under the military, had taken advantage of the super power hegemony to further their own security concerns. The arms and weapons, as well as, the various military training programmes, received from the U.S. in the name of counter insurgency had served other institutional objectives as well, such as the capacity to increase its level of professionalism. More importantly, it had given the Latin American militaries a chance to participate in a region wide defense programme, something they could have never done alone.

The decline of Latin America as a strategic region for the U.S. had catastrophic results for the entire continent, and especially for Argentina. Although U.S. – Argentine relations were never cordial both nations had managed to be in consensus over many issues. In spite of Alfonsín's guarded attitude towards the northern giant, that saw differences emerge over certain crucial issues, such as the debt crisis, Argentine nuclear research and its strategic Condor II ballistic missile programme. America still remained its most important source of financial aid and investment, as well as, its largest market. Moreover, the American support was crucial if the government wanted to impress the international creditors, led by IMF, World Bank and a consortium of private banks, for larger investment programmes.

REVIVAL OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS AND NEW REGIONALISTIC ORGANIZATIONS

Apart from ensuring American pre-eminence had another important implication the international political system. This pertained to the revival of the decayed multilateral institutions that had been sidelined under the global contention for supremacy. During the time under the Cold War was at its zenith, there was no concept of either a neutral party or 'a third way'. A state had no option but to choose sides and get engulfed in the ongoing competition.

However, with the end of Cold War removed the very premise upon which such a rigid structure had been imposed. Moreover, the emergence of the EU and Japan, as economic competitors to the U.S. signalled a new phase of global relations based upon economic objectives rather than the strategic ones (witnessed during the Cold War). The growing multipolarity in world politics led to a revival of multilateral institutions such as the UN and its affiliates. With new industrial powers also threatening a share in the American pie, there was an effective resurgence of these intergovernmental organisations that highlighted a revised interdependence in the international political system. Also, the end of the super power rivalry provided the impetus to a widespread trend of regionalism.

MENEM'S RESPONSE TO THE NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Argentina had not remained isolated to the new developments taking place within the region and outside in the international political system. The re-emergence of the U.S. as the regional hegemon and its neglect of the region put the new governments in a difficult position. With the closure of European markets for Argentine goods, the country had no option but to rely on American markets and capital. However, its relative marginalisation among the U.S. priorities denied the country much needed loans.

A NEW FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTATION

In the light of the above-mentioned changes, Menem decided to radically alter the country's external orientation. The new foreign policy disposition had three crucial features:

- 1) A unilateral acceptance of U.S. supremacy in the region and greater convergence of interests between the two nations.
- 2) Greater regional co-operation and integration with its neighbours that stressed on economic goals more than political ones.
- 3) Greater participation in multilateral institutions and participation in U.N. led peacekeeping operations.

The new shift foreign policy was initiated with the Argentine decision to send two warships to enforce the U.S. led naval blockade of Iraq during the Persian Gulf Crisis.

In the words of Domingo Cavallo, Foreign Minister of Argentina coats "The challenge to world peace issued by the Republic of Iraq is of direct concern to ever Argentine. Anyone who thinks that the remoteness of the Gulf or the lack of an Argentine presence in the region can save us from suffering the consequences of these events is mistaken. Such people do not understand that our country is already an active partner in the management of the new world of peace, progress and detente that is trying to establish itself. ...If Argentina wishes to share in the benefits of this unstoppable process, it must of necessity also take on the responsibilities of those who wish to shape the common destiny of all mankind."⁶

GREATER ARGENTINE – U.S. RAPPROCHEMENT

Menem's decision to unilaterally accept the U.S. dominance was undoubtedly the hallmark of his new external disposition and arguably his most controversial one. Argentines since the very beginning had been suspicious of the intentions of the regional hegemon and had used every opportunity available, to oppose it's interventionist orientation within the hemisphere. Although at their disposal, such a stance had largely been the creation of Peron, the U.S. role in the Falklands/Malvinas war and its tacit support for the repressory PRN had further augmented the anti-U.S. sentiment among the Argentines. Any attempt to unilaterally reverse such a stand would undoubtedly lead to widespread antagonism of the popular sector. More important, such an approach went against the very tenets of Peronism that Menem subscribed to.

⁶ Julio C. Carasales, National Security Concepts of States: Argentina; Pp. 22

Meanwhile, Menem was facilitated in his efforts due to a favourably disposed U.S. President, George Bush, who did not share the interventionist approach that had been the hallmark of his predecessor, Ronald Reagan. Menem's decision to court the U.S. was apparent from the very beginning, when he sent his high profile Foreign Minister, Domingo Cavallo to the U.S. soon after taking oath.

THE PRIMACY OF ECONOMICS

In order to develop a long term sustained relationship with the U.S., Menem had no option but to relegate all other security concerns to his economic priorities. As mentioned before, the U.S. and Argentina had been strained due to the latter's insistence on pursuing an active nuclear weaponisation programme and its refusal to adhere to regional and international non-proliferation instruments. These differences had also magnified due to its insistence to pursue a ballistic missile programme and the unconfirmed reports regarding the collaboration of many technicians from countries that were considered a threat for U.S. strategic interest. Alfonsin's refusal to ratify the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the NPT had antagonised many U.S. policy makers.

However, under Menem all these issues were kept on the backburner and he rigorously pursued his pro-U.S. policies to further his economic concerns. For him, his most important goal was to tap the vast U.S. markets for investment and for its exports. In this regard, he made his first trip to the U.S. in September 1989, along with his ministers for economy and foreign affairs, where he stressed upon his commitment to continue with the ongoing privatisation programme.

Menem described his new foreign policy disposition as one founded on “Pragmatism” and “Coherency”. He realized that in order to revive the country from the severe crisis, he would have to align with the U.S. scholars have described this new disposition to be one based on “peripheric realism”, that carries as its fundamental premise the notion that Argentina being on the periphery can realise its material interests (technology transfer, trade and investment) to the maximum by aligning with the centre, in this case the U.S., and that Argentina should take a principal and moralistic stand only on those issues that do not lead to a confrontation with U.S. interests.

In this regard the government moved unilaterally to diffuse many of the prevailing issues of difference between the two countries. Menem vehemently supported the U.S. intervention in Panama (1989) and in Haiti (1994). Moreover, he agreed to disassemble the country’s Condor II missile programme and unilaterally accepted and ratified the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the NPT, in 1993 and 1995 respectively.

In return for these concessions, and the country’s acceptance and implementation of the SAPs, Argentina was made a beneficiary of the Brady Plan that allowed it to restructure its debts on more favourable terms. Moreover, Argentina once again began to receive the vital foreign investment, necessary to keep the economy from faltering. Another significant step that was utilised by Menem to revive the economy was when his Economic Minister, Domingo Cavallo succeeded in pegging

the rate of the national currency with that of the U.S. dollar. This not only helped to stabilise the monetary situation but also boosted the country's exports and attracted greater investment.

NEW REGIONALISM AND GREATER CO-OPERATION WITH THE E.U.

Menem's attempts to improve the country's relations were in continuation of the initiative launched by Alfonsín, and have been discussed in Chapter III of this study. However, it is important to emphasise that while Alfonsín had been concerned with political objectives in his efforts to enhance the country's strained ties with its neighbour. Menem, on the other hand, was solely guided by his economic priorities. Due to the difficulty in accessing the developed markets of the North, greater intra-regional trade was seen as an effective recourse to alleviate demand for its exports.

ARGENTINE-E.U. RAPPROCHEMENT

Another highpoint of Menem's foreign policy was to improve the country's relations with the European Union. Due to the dissipation of the Cold War, the E.U. had emerged as a powerful economic bloc, often competing with the U.S. on crucial economic issues. Traditionally, Argentine exports, that basically consisted of agricultural commodities (primary) had been discouraged from gaining access to the vast markets of Europe due to heavy protectionist barriers. Moreover, Menem also wanted to tap the European financial centres for investment and aid.

The primary obstacle in reviving its strained relationship with the E.U. was the issue of the Falklands/Malvinas dispute without improving its relations with Britain;

Argentina had no real chance of garnering the E.U. support. Therefore, Menem agreed to negotiate with Britain over the issue of joint exploration of the islands resources without including the question of sovereignty in the negotiations. This was a historic first for any President, military or civilian, since the issue had deep rooted nationalist sentiments attached to it. Although, in public he reiterated the country's sovereignty over the islands, but insisted that the right way to resolve the issue was through dialogue and confidence building measures, and not armed interventions. In the successive years, Argentina and Britain managed to agree on many issues concerning the islands, but the dispute over its sovereignty still persists.

GREATER PARTICIPATION IN U.N PEACE MAKING OPERATIONS

The third aspect of the new foreign policy perspective was Menem's decision to send the Argentine military for peacekeeping operations, under the aegis of the United Nations (U.N). There were two imminent from such a step.

It facilitated the country to enhance its prestige in the international community, which was affected due to the Falklands/Malvinas war. It also helped the changing patterns of military missions that had emerged after the end of the Cold War.

Another advantage of Menem's strategy of involving the military into peacekeeping missions was to discourage them from acquiring an internal orientation. The end of Cold War and elimination of the Guerrilla threat had denied the military of its fundamental mission, i.e. defence of national interests and sovereignty. The

heightened regionalism pursued by Alfonsín and later, Menem had anyway reduced the risk of an armed invasion from its rivals, highly unlikely.

CONCLUSION

National security in Argentina has evoked considerable attention among the military, as well as, the civilian governments that spawned across the country from the mid-sixties onwards. Although, as we have seen in the preceding chapters, the manner in which these governments have defined the concept has varied due to the different contexts and priorities that influenced their formulation. Depending on their prevailing disposition, ideological leanings, political compulsions and socio-economic imperatives, these regimes have tried to identify national interests, the threats that they perceive to these interests and the resources that they have used to eliminate these vulnerabilities while pursuing their objectives.

The military upon assuming power tried to give the concept a broad yet integrated approach that combined all relevant aspects of national security under a militaristic orientation. The threats that these regimes perceived either came from potential aggression of its neighbouring rivals or from internal sources in the form of leftist belligerents. In order to deal with these threats the military not only formulated intricate NSD's that incorporated their geo-political and professional concerns regarding the abysmal state of the country, but also borrowed elaborate counter insurgency doctrines from their French and American counterparts.

However, the implementation of these policies resulted in large-scale repression of individual rights, under the pretext of national security. Another important aspect of

the military's security perception was its developmentalist aspirations that intricately linked the country's security with its level of development. It also pertained to the military's obsession of reviving the nation's to its historic position of glory and pre-eminence.

Whether the military was able to achieve its objectives, is however, another issue. The physical and psychological terror campaigns, and its mismanagement of the economy left the country severely bankrupt and dependent on international capitalist forces. Moreover, the humiliation caused due to its defeat at the hands of the British deeply divided its institution.

Under such circumstances, it becomes exceedingly difficult to evaluate the success. Although it did succeed in eliminating the guerrilla threat, the eventual human rights trials contradict such a victory. Moreover, such a security paradigm inevitably props the question about the validity of such a perception if it demands substantial sacrifices from the polity and marginalizes its wishes demands as being anti-national.

On the other hand, with the initiation of the redemocratisation process and the election of Raul Alfonsin, the factors that determined the government's national security perception altered dramatically. The old imperatives of the military gave rise to newer exigencies that demanded radically different solutions. However, Alfonsin's inability to cope with the vestiges of the military rule, especially the debt crisis that precipitated distortions in other spheres as well.

Due to the transitional nature of his government and the relative prematurity of its political-economic structures, it is hard to determine what his security considerations were. His primary objective was to consolidate the democratic order by eliminating the potential threats such as the politicised armed forces, rampaging trade unions, and economic collapse. However, his ad hoc and short-term orientation left little scope for any concrete outcome, forcing him to resign on the face of growing public opposition and regime illegitimacy.

Alfonsin's successor, Carlos Menem has been more successful in providing the country with a distinct national security orientation. He was able to incorporate the dissenting trade unions within the state structures, his proximity to the armed forces enabled him to gain their trust and his rightist leaning struck the right cord with the international investors.

This leaves the important issues regarding Argentina's newfound proximity to the US and its efforts to integrate the entire hemisphere into a Pan-American Alliance stretching from Canada to the Tierra del Fuego.

Argentina's relations with the regional hegemon and its place in the American national security concerns has been underplayed throughout this study, but, nevertheless, is an extremely critical issue that has influenced Argentina's security concerns profoundly. It occupied a prime position during the Cold War and the counter insurgency missions initiated by the military.

Under Alfonsín, this relationship turned sour due to his nationalist disposition and his efforts to limit the American influence within the continent. However, under Menem, this strained relationship was mended and Argentina became a loyal ally of the US.

However, this existing equilibrium between the two nations raised some pertinent questions. First, is Argentina as important for the US, as the U.S is for Argentina? And second, has Argentina benefitted from its unconditional dependence on the U.S?

The answers to these two questions are difficult considering the complexities that surround U.S – Latin America relations on the whole. First, the national security of U.S is very different from those Latin America. U.S interests in Latin America are global and strategic, whereas those of Latin America are regional and if they are global, then they are usually economic.

Secondly, although Latin America seeks security through economic development and believes that security evolves over long - term and should be more equitable, the U.S disposition towards the region tends to be more coercive.

Thirdly, while Latin America seeks greater autonomy and independence in charting its own course, the U.S pursues security through hegemony.¹

¹ Guy Poitras, "The Ordeal of Hegemony", Pp.102.

Regarding the question of the benefits that have accrued for Argentina due to a closer integration with U.S security interests also remains ambivalent. Although, Argentina has not faced a problem with regards to rescue packages and various other aid programmes, it has had to undertake severe economic restructuring programmes that have resulted in wide spread exclusion of the masses.

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