

## *Asymmetrical Interdependence and Democratization in Central America\**

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Despite the enormous attention devoted to the topic of democratization, relatively little work has focused on the impact of external pressures on the process of liberalization in authoritarian systems. Borrowing the concepts of asymmetrical interdependence and interest hierarchies from the international relations literature, this article develops a model designed to predict outcomes in reform pressure situations. The model utilizes factors such as strategic threat levels, target-regime type, and military aid dependence to predict how much reform pressure the United States will exert, how far the target regime will go to accommodate this pressure, and what level of reform likely will result from the interaction. An examination of three central American cases provides general support for the model, with some modification. More generally, it suggests that an exogenously oriented model might usefully supplement the endogenously-oriented models which currently dominate this area of inquiry.

The wave of democratization and political reform which has swept through developing and developed countries alike has provided both the impetus and the empirical base for a renewed examination of the processes of regime change. The trend toward democratization, or more broadly, political liberalization, has nowhere been more pronounced in terms of sheer numbers of cases than in Latin America.<sup>1</sup> Concomitantly, an enormous amount of attention has been paid to the topic of democratization among those who study Latin American politics.<sup>2</sup> The bulk of this literature to date has focused primarily on the internal political processes of regime transition, with much less attention being paid to external factors.<sup>3</sup> Such treatments have contributed greatly to our understanding of the transition process, and have provided compelling arguments that the most important explanatory variables are indeed located within rather than without the country undergoing the transformation. Nonetheless, it will be suggested here that a more complete picture of the transition process would incorporate exogenous factors in addition to the (probably) more powerful endogenous factors.

As a preliminary step in this direction, I will attempt to sketch a rough model of the dynamics of interaction between internal and external variables as they impinge on the process of liberalization.<sup>4</sup> More specifically, I will look at differences in the responses of Central American authoritarian regimes to U.S. pressures for political reform. In constructing the model, I will draw on a variety of concepts from the literature on interdependence, foreign policy, and democratization. Ultimately, I hope to generate a model that will enable us to predict outcomes in reform pressure situations under varying conditions.

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## Conceptual Background

### *Asymmetrical Interdependence*

The literature on interdependence has yielded a number of useful propositions concerning the capacity of various actors, governmental and nongovernmental, to exert influence on one another. To greatly simplify, the literature suggests that the relationship between power and influence is complex and variable, and consequently that a number of factors must be taken into account when predicting outcomes of interactions between actors. In particular, I am interested here in the notion of “asymmetrical interdependence” which posits that measures of “power” in the abstract are generally poor indicators of influence potential. In other words, in an influence situation involving a state with a great deal of “power” (in terms of available resources) and a state with little “power,” the assumption that the “objectively” more powerful state automatically will prevail is unjustified. As Keohane and Nye point out, “There is rarely a one-to-one relationship between power measured by any type of resources and power measured by effects on outcomes. Political bargaining is the usual means of translating potential into effects, and a lot is often lost in the translation” (1977, 11).

For the purposes of this paper, I also will incorporate the characterization of interdependence as comprising two components: sensitivity and vulnerability. Sensitivity refers to the extent to which an actor is affected by policy changes initiated by another actor. Thus, for example, a country which received a substantial amount of foreign military assistance would be sensitive to changes in the provision of that assistance (i.e., threatened or actual cuts in assistance levels). Vulnerability refers to the extent to which an actor has a capacity to respond to changes initiated by another actor, or in other words, the alternatives available to the target actor. For example, consider two countries which receive an amount of foreign military aid that comprises an equal percentage of their overall defense expenditures, say 20%. In such a situation, both countries can be considered equally sensitive to changes by the aid provider. Differences in vulnerability arise from differences in the capacity of the countries either to replace or absorb a cut in that aid. Thus, if Country A is facing a serious security threat and has no alternative source of external military assistance, and the costs of simply foregoing the 20% of defense expenditures in such a situation would be very high, Country A can be said to be very vulnerable. Alternatively, if Country B is relatively free from security threats, or has access to an alternative aid supplier, the costs of responding to an aid cut (either through replacement or absorption) are fairly low, and Country B would be considered much less vulnerable.

The utility of incorporating the concepts of sensitivity and vulnerability arises from their capacity to enable us to predict outcomes more accurately than a framework based simply on resource power. These concepts become even more powerful when combined with the concept of interest hierarchy, which enables us



to assign variable costs to alternative policy choices.

### *Hierarchy of Interests*

From the literature on foreign policy, I have incorporated the notion that the interests of actors in the international and domestic arenas can be ranked. The concept of a hierarchy within the interest structure of an actor suggests that it is possible to predict, in a probabilistic sense, what choices that actor will make under certain conditions where various interests conflict. Although there are occasional differences among researchers concerning the specifics of interest hierarchies, there is virtually unanimous agreement that national security or strategic interests occupy the top rung on the interest ladder (Deutsch 1978; Russett & Hanson 1975; Schoultz 1987). There is less agreement as to which interests occupy the remaining rungs and what their positions are relative to one another. This disagreement is not terribly important for us here as I only consider one other interest, and since we can be assured that strategic concerns will always dominate the hierarchy, we can safely assume that whatever other single interest we examine will be in a subordinate position. Specifically, I will look at the balance between *strategic* and *ideological* interests in the case of the United States, and the balance between *strategic* and *class* (or corporate) interests in the case of the Central American regimes. These will be discussed in more detail when the model is outlined.

### *Democratization and Liberalization*

As noted earlier, the literature on democratization and regime change is as plentiful as it is rich with insight. It is far beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the complex middle-level theory building that has taken place in this field in recent years. At the significant risk of oversimplification, I would like to extract one small conceptual nugget from the thick vein of theory, namely the notion of *constrained contingent choice*.<sup>5</sup> At root, this concept characterizes outcomes during regime change situations as the result of a combination of elite choices and structural conditions. Such an approach has the advantage of avoiding reliance on either excessively *voluntarist* (outcomes result strictly from the choices made by elites) or *determinist* (outcomes flow directly from structural conditions without regard to human intervention) perspectives.

Essentially, constrained contingent choice gives us a relative or probabilistic predictive capability when examining the process of democratization. It allows us to identify certain constraints which operate to limit the menu of political alternatives available to those in power in the pretransition period, but does not restrict the remaining alternatives to a set of one. In other words, we can specify what the options for elite decisionmakers are, but we can not say with any certainty which will be chosen.

I will examine only a very small part of the overall "choice environment,"

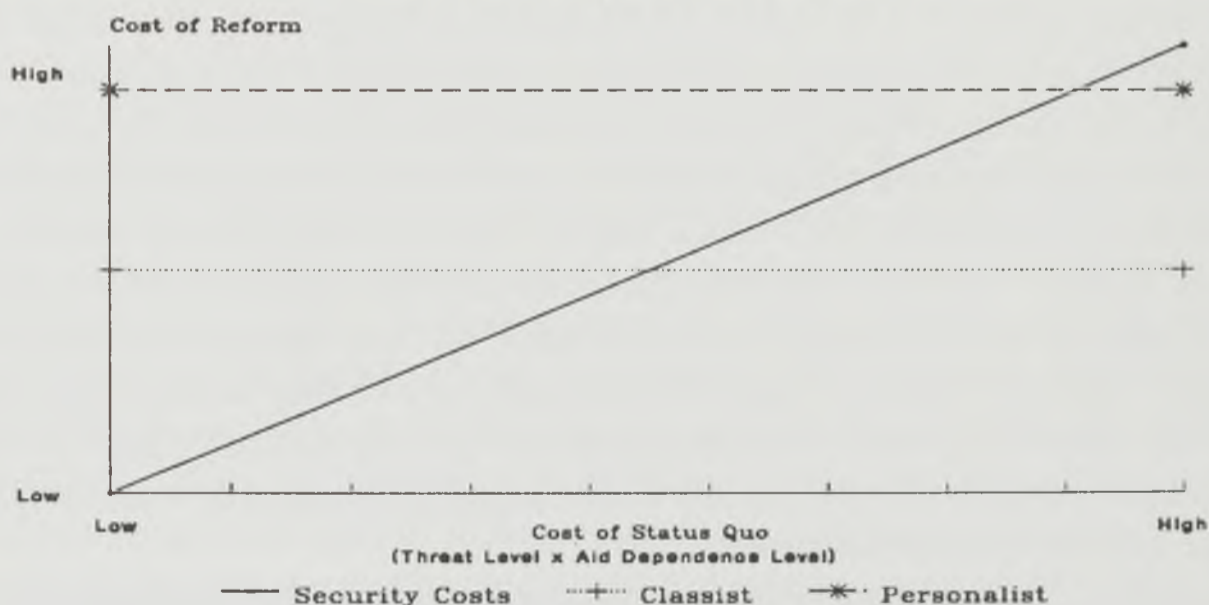
inasmuch as the model is restricted to a single (domestic) actor and a limited number of factors feeding into the decision calculi. Nonetheless, it is hoped that we will gain in parsimony what we lose in detail.

### Model

In brief, the model entails three steps. First, it seeks to establish the level of the target country's vulnerability to U.S. reform pressures. Second, it seeks to establish the level of pressure likely to be exerted on the target by the United States. Finally, it seeks to identify an interaction point between these levels which is equated with an outcome.

The first step involves an evaluation of the costs and benefits calculus facing the target regime (see Figure 1). In establishing a target vulnerability level, three factors will be taken into account: regime type, level of security threat, and level of dependence on U.S. military assistance. When I speak of costs and benefits, I refer to the choice facing a target regime as to whether to reform (liberalize), or maintain the *status quo*. I will classify regimes into two types, *personalist* and *classist*. Both types can be considered subsets of a broader category of regimes, namely authoritarian, yet are distinguishable by differences in the sociopolitical alliances which underpin them. Regime-type serves as a rough indicator of the structural constraints operative in the choice environment: it provides the "constrained" element of a constrained contingent choice framework.

Figure 1. Costs of Reform vs. Status Quo  
Personalist vs. Classist Regimes



Classist regimes are founded on an alliance between the state (generally, though not always, embodied by the military) and the dominant class or classes. Personalist regimes, in contrast, have no such class-based underpinnings. Rather, they bear more resemblance to highly efficient protection rackets than they do to most governments, leading one author to coin the term, "mafiaocracy" to describe



them (Wickham-Crowley 1988).

The differences between these two regime types in terms of sociopolitical alliances translate into different costs associated with reform. Since personalist regimes lack any institutionalized link with the society they rule, any reform, regardless of how limited, will prove extremely costly. A move in this direction would serve as a *de facto* admission of the illegitimacy of the existing regime, and would consequently be extremely difficult if not impossible to manage.

For classist regimes, the costs of liberalization are quite high, but not so high as for personalist regimes. Liberalization in classist systems essentially entails broadening the social base of the ruling alliance, which results in a weakening of the level of control by the incumbent elites. This stands in sharp contrast to liberalization in personalist systems, wherein such a process would sharply undermine incumbent control. In a sense, the situation in personalist regimes resembles a zero-sum game (total control vs. no control), whereas in classist regimes it resembles a variable-sum game (high control vs. less control). Thus, the regime type variable enables us to establish a baseline for the maximum amount of reform possible given "optimum" reform pressure conditions.

In addition to regime type, we must also consider the scope of the existing threat to the national security interests of the target regime. Here I refer to the presence or absence of a clear revolutionary alternative to the existing system of governance. In concrete terms, I am talking here about armed revolutionary movements. I have divided threat levels into two types, based on the size and composition of the revolutionary movement. The threat level is considered high if the regime is facing a large, broad-based movement, and considered low if there is either no movement or the movement is small and narrowly-based.

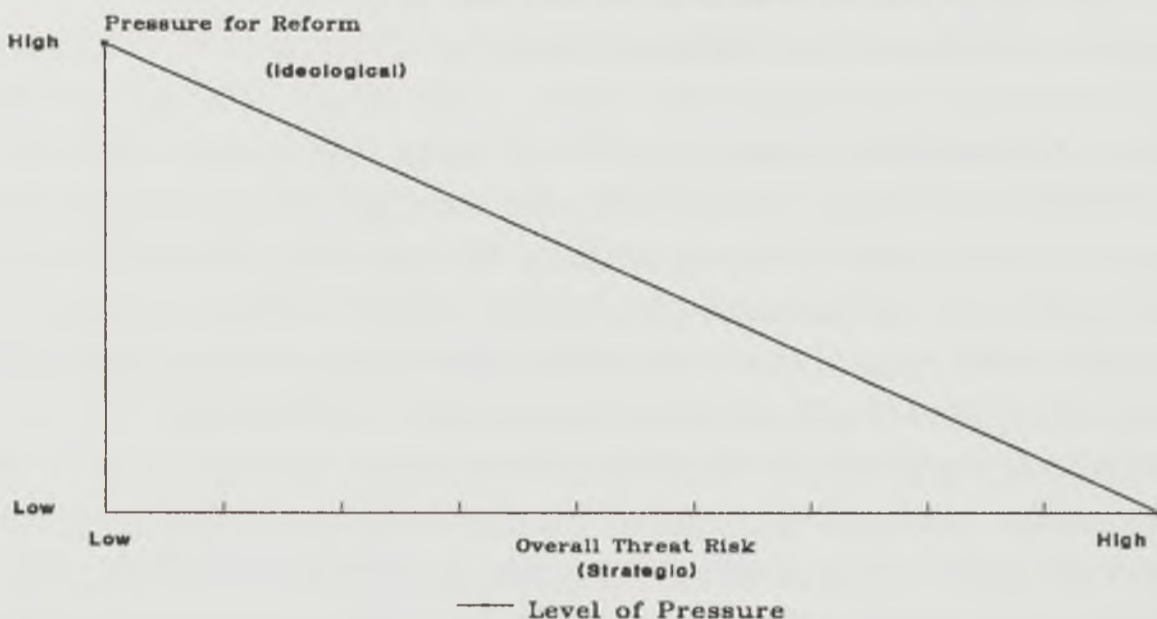
Finally, the model considers the target country's level of dependence on U.S. military assistance. This level is characterized by the ratio of U.S. military assistance to the overall level of defense spending by the target. Recalling our earlier discussion of vulnerability, we can see that this level will, if considered in conjunction with the threat level, determine the probable receptivity of the target to U.S. pressures. We would expect the highest degree of receptivity in situations where both the threat level and dependence level are high, since the regime has very little in the way of alternatives (i.e., the costs of liberalization are lower than the costs of potential overthrow).

We would expect the least receptiveness to U.S. pressure in situations where both threat and dependence levels were low. In such cases, the costs of liberalization would be higher than the strategic costs of either absorbing or replacing an aid cut.

The second step in the model involves a determination of the probable level of reform pressure by the United States. Here, the cost/benefit calculus is based on the balance of U.S. strategic and ideological interests, respectively. By strategic interests, I refer to the desire of the U.S. to see stability maintained in the target country, and to prevent the accession to power of a revolutionary government

likely to be hostile to the United States. By ideological interests, I refer to the desire of the United States to promote the development of democracy overseas. The level of pressure predicted by the model is a function of this strategic/ideological balance. Recalling our earlier discussion of interest hierarchies, we assume here that ideological interests will be pursued only when strategic interests are either assured or irrelevant (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Level of U.S. Reform Pressure  
Strategic vs. Ideological Considerations



In concrete terms, this means that as the level of the perceived threat to U.S. strategic interests (as indicated by the size/composition of an armed revolutionary movement) declines, reform pressure (i.e., efforts to realize ideological objectives) will increase, and as the strategic threat level rises, reform pressure will decrease. In other words, the U.S. will only press for reform in situations where there is no perceived significant strategic risk.

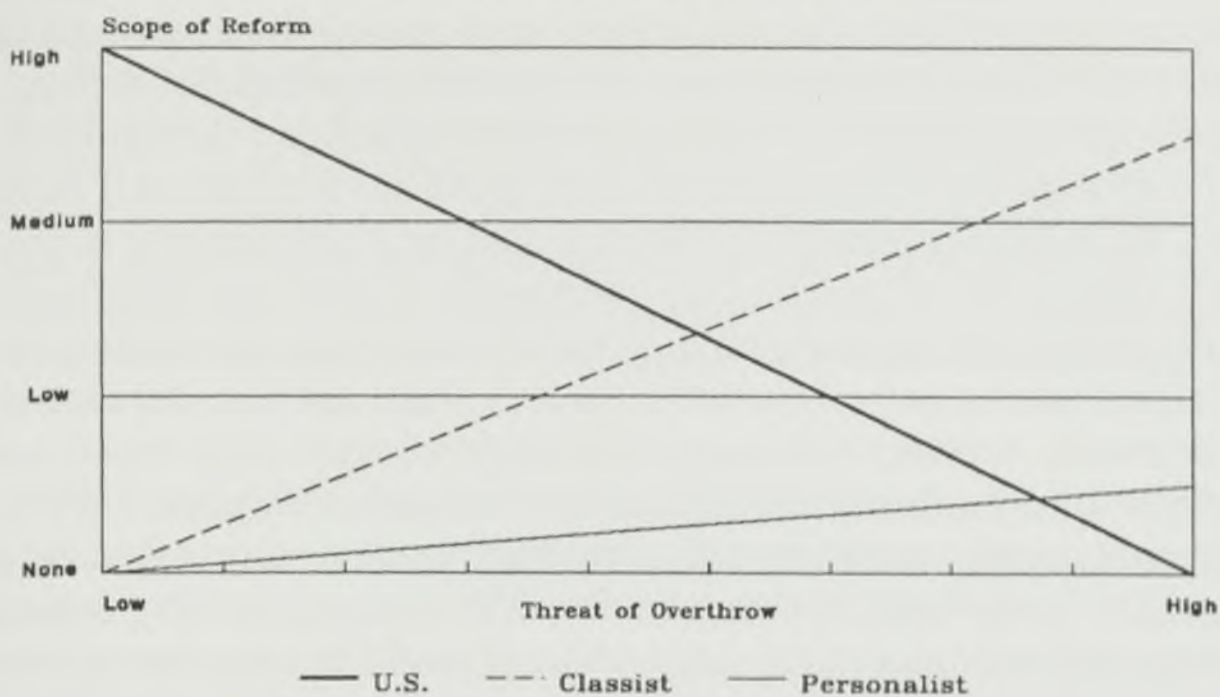
The final step in the model involves identifying the point at which the predicted level of vulnerability/responsiveness of the target intersects the predicted level of U.S. pressure for reform (see Figure 3). These intersection points will be linked with specific outcomes, ranging from no reform to high reform. The outcome scale is derived from an assumed set of political costs associated with particular types of reforms for the target regime. I will argue that regimes will “satisfice,” that is, implement the minimum level of reform necessary to ameliorate U.S. pressure and restore or maintain access to military aid.

Our outcome scales are based on the assumption that the least costly reforms are those dealing with procedural features (i.e., rules) of the political system, while the most costly type of reforms are those dealing with substantive aspects (i.e., outcomes).<sup>6</sup> Within these two categories of reform as well, we can assume a range of choices from less costly to more costly. The costs associated with each specific type of reform are a function of both the loss of political control on the part of the incumbents and the extent to which they threaten the interests of members of the



## Asymmetrical Interdependence and Democratization

Figure 3. Predicted Outcomes  
U.S.-Target Country Interaction



ruling coalition. Thus, for example, a heavily “managed” election, in which a strictly proscribed number of “acceptable” parties or groups were allowed to participate, would represent a fairly low-cost procedural reform.<sup>7</sup> Such an election would be unlikely either to threaten the interests of the ruling elite or to result in an outcome undesirable (i.e., uncontrollable) to the incumbents. On the other hand, a series of substantive reforms designed to promote resource redistribution (of land or wealth, etc.) clearly would be extremely costly, threatening not only a loss of political control on the part of the incumbents, but a loss of economic control on the part of their allies, the elites. Indeed, at higher levels the costs of such substantive reforms would approach those associated with a revolutionary overthrow.

In essence, the model quite simply attempts to identify that point at which the target regime and the United States can reach some sort of accommodation. For the U.S., this means achieving as much liberalization as possible without incurring strategic risks. For the target, it means avoiding liberalization if possible, but introducing the minimum level of reform necessary to reduce strategic risks (through access to military aid) if such risks rise to a point where the *status quo* becomes too costly.

I turn now to an application of the model to three cases in Central America. In order to evaluate the utility of the model, I will attempt for each case to establish, first, the type of regime in the target country, which, as outlined above, operates as a baseline for determining how much reform is possible; second, the level of threat in the target country as perceived by the United States, and the extent of the reform pressure applied, given that threat level; and, third, the level of vulnerability of the target country, as a function of both its dependence on military aid and the seriousness of the threat of overthrow from within. Finally, I will try to

evaluate the extent to which the actual outcomes in these cases accord with the expectations generated by the model.

Before moving on to the cases, a short word on why these particular cases were selected is in order. The three countries chosen, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala, share several important characteristics from the standpoint of the model I have outlined. They are all relatively small and economically underdeveloped. Each has experienced, at various times and with varying degrees of intensity, either direct or indirect U.S. intervention in their internal affairs, and, during the periods under investigation, all faced more or less serious threats in the form of armed revolutionary movements. As such, these cases serve as a minimum test of the model. In other words, support for the predictions of the model in these cases, where the capacity of the U.S. to exert reform pressure successfully would seem greatest, would constitute only a preliminary evaluation of the model's overall utility. Conversely, if we were to find little or no support for the model in these cases, we could reasonably assume that it would be even less accurate in predicting outcomes in situations where, for example, the U.S. was interacting with a larger, more developed, more distant, and less historically dependent country. With this in mind, we can now turn our attention to the case studies.

## Cases

### *Nicaragua*

The case of Nicaragua seems a textbook example of the skewed cost/benefit equation that prevails in personalist regimes as far as the balancing of strategic and corporate interests is concerned. Since the costs associated with liberalization (calculated in terms of threats to corporate interests) are very nearly equal to the costs associated with maintaining the *status quo* (calculated in terms of threats to strategic interests), the likelihood that U.S. reform pressure will be able to generate an accommodative outcome is slim. In practical terms, this means that by the time the cost of the *status quo* surpasses the cost of liberalization, the strategic threat level has reached a point where the revolutionary process is very likely irreversible. Any reforms introduced at this stage will almost certainly be, "too little, too late."

There is nearly universal agreement among academic observers that the successive Somoza regimes in Nicaragua are most accurately characterized as personalist systems (Booth 1982; Booth & Walker 1989; Millet 1977; Wickham-Crowley 1988). From the ascension to power of Anastasio Somoza Garcia in the 1930's until the collapse of the regime headed by his son, Anastasio Somoza Debayle, in 1979, "the Somozas [ran] Nicaragua as virtually a private estate" (Walker 1982, 15). The family's enduring control over the political and economic life of the country rested primarily on two pillars. The first was the National Guard, which operated as a more or less praetorian defender of the dynasty and whose fortunes (both figuratively and literally) were deliberately tied by successive



Somozas to family interests. As Walker notes, maintaining this relationship entailed two tactics:

First, [the Somozas] made sure that the top command of the Guard remained at all times in the hands of a family member. Equally important, they consciously worked to isolate the military psychologically from the Nicaraguan people by allowing it to become a sort of Mafia in uniform which controlled the rackets and took kickbacks and bribes for a variety of activities -- legal and illegal. Since Nicaraguans of all classes hated the Guard, the Somozas could always remind them that if the family were ever overthrown, the Guard would be in grave trouble (Walker 1982, 16).

The second pillar of control was the Liberal Nationalist Party (PLN), which operated largely as a vehicle for legitimizing personalist rule by the Somozas and for coopting certain sectors of the Nicaraguan political elite. The first two Somozas, Anastasio, Sr. and his eldest son Luis, used the PLN artfully to manipulate internal political forces in order to keep potential opposition from cohering into an anti-regime coalition. This delicate balancing act began to unravel, though, with the ascension to power of Anastasio Somoza Debayle in 1967, and more or less disintegrated altogether following 1972.<sup>8</sup> Thus, although one conceivably might argue that the first two Somoza regimes were not exclusively personalist, since important nonfamily elements had been incorporated (through cooptation), such an argument becomes increasingly difficult to sustain after 1967, and falls apart after 1972.<sup>9</sup>

It seems justifiable to assert, then, that the Somoza regime is most accurately labeled a personalist regime, and may indeed qualify as a quintessential example of that system type. Given this, what would we expect on the part of the United States in the form of pressures to liberalize?

Recall that our model suggests that U.S. "toleration" of authoritarian regimes (of either the personalist or classist type) is related to the perceived strategic threat level. This means that where strategic threats are seen to be high, the U.S. will be more tolerant of (i.e., less willing to exert reform pressure on) nondemocratic regimes. Conversely, the U.S. would be expected to be less tolerant (i.e., more willing to exert reform pressure) in cases where the perceived threat level is low.

Prior to late 1977 or early 1978, the U.S. generally had viewed Nicaragua as one of the countries where American interests were least likely to face serious challenge. Aside from occasional acts of individual violence, such as the assassination by a lone gunman of the elder Somoza in 1956, there were only sporadic and largely ineffective efforts to topple the dynastic regime. The most significant organized effort came in the form of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). Repeated efforts by the FSLN to launch rural and urban guerrilla campaigns during the 1960s and early 1970s met with little success, however. Even one of the FSLN's more spectacular operations, a 1974 raid on a Christmas

party in which a number of Somoza intimates were taken hostage and the ruler was forced to meet a number of rebel demands in order to secure their release, was followed by a wave of repression which severely damaged the group's urban networks (Booth 1982, 138-145).

Prior to mid-1977, both the U.S. and the Somoza regime viewed the FSLN, despite their occasional dramatics, as at most a very low-level threat. As Robert Pastor, of President Carter's National Security Council, puts it,

As Jimmy Carter was taking the oath of office, Anastasio Somoza had more reason to be concerned with his weight than with the Sandinistas. At 267 pounds, Somoza was considerably heavier than his brother Luis was when he died of a heart attack in 1967. Moreover, as Somoza's girth was expanding, the Sandinista threat was shrinking. . . . In June 1977, the [U.S.] Department of State estimated total Sandinista guerrilla strength at 50 fighting men (Pastor 1987, 49).

By early 1978, however, the strategic picture had shifted significantly. In terms of both sheer size and class alliances, the Sandinistas began at this time to represent a very clear threat to the continued existence of the pro-U.S. Somoza regime. Walter LaFeber suggests that the period between late-1977 to mid-1978 saw a ten-fold increase in the size of the FSLN military apparatus, from under 700 to more than 7,000 active members (LaFeber 1984, 232; also, Dunkerley 1988; Loveman & Davies 1985; Booth 1982).

By this time, then, the strategic-ideological balance had shifted for the United States, with the threat of revolution becoming a very real possibility. My model would suggest that under such circumstances, where threat perception goes from quite low to very high in fairly short order, we would expect to see equally significant changes in U.S. reform pressure levels. Specifically, the model would predict a reasonably high level of pressure prior to roughly late 1977, followed by a substantial dropoff mirroring the rising threat perception, a relatively straightforward process. The pattern which emerges in the Nicaraguan case, however, is a good deal less clearcut, and to a certain degree doesn't conform to the model.

Efforts by the U.S. to pressure the Somoza regime to liberalize are generally dated as coinciding with the appearance of the Carter administration.<sup>10</sup> By and large, this administration pursued a carrot-and-stick strategy designed to induce political reform in Nicaragua. The stick came in the form of a variety of sanctions, particularly aid cutoffs, while the carrot was represented by the implicit understanding that both aid and political support would be forthcoming in the event that desired reforms were implemented.

Shortly after taking office, in June, 1977, Carter announced that U.S. military assistance to Nicaragua would be suspended due to human rights violations by the regime. Several months later, in September, 1977, Somoza lifted a state of siege, allowed the reopening of some opposition newspapers, and announced plans to broaden representation in his cabinet. The U.S. responded by authorizing \$2.5 million in military aid and \$12 million in economic aid, but



suspending delivery of the aid pending improvement in the regime's human rights practices.

In January, 1978, however, the assassination of the most prominent leader of the moderate opposition, Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, sparked a dramatic upsurge in popular unrest. Riots, spontaneous uprisings, and organized attacks by FSLN forces in the wake of Chamorro's murder were met with a harsh crackdown by the regime, including the reimposition of martial law in some parts of the country.

Over the next eight months, the situation ebbed and flowed, with Somoza fluctuating between tentative, largely cosmetic reform and outright repression. The United States, in turn, alternately employed the encouragement carrot and the stick of sanctions. In response to the Chamorro assassination, the U.S. announced in January that a 1979 military assistance loan to Nicaragua had been canceled. Between April and June, Somoza attempted to ameliorate U.S. pressure by consenting to a number of specific American demands. He agreed to allow a group of prominent opposition exiles ("The Twelve") to return, and to permit an inspection visit by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). He also floated the possibility of enacting an amnesty for political prisoners and discussed other political reforms.

Faced with an apparent willingness by Somoza to comply with some, if not all, of the reform demands being placed on him, the Carter administration evidently felt compelled to encourage further movement in this direction (Pastor 1987, 63-71). In May, 1978, the U.S. released \$10.5 million in economic and humanitarian aid for Nicaragua, and quietly disbursed roughly \$300,000 in military hospital and training funds (Moreno 1990, 53). In June, Carter wrote a letter to Somoza which was subsequently misinterpreted by many as "congratulatory" and supportive of the Nicaraguan leader, but which in fact simply acknowledged with "appreciation" Somoza's recent moves and encouraged him to pursue further reforms.<sup>11</sup>

Several months later, in September, 1978, the Sandinistas overran the National Palace and took the 1,500 legislators inside hostage. As in the 1974 Christmas raid, Somoza was forced to meet FSLN demands, including safe passage to Venezuela for the kidnappers, in order to secure the release of the hostages. Thousands of Nicaraguans turned out to cheer the guerrillas as they made their way from the Palace to the airport. "Operation Pigsty," as the raid was called, signalled the beginning of a new escalation in the civil war. Prior to this point, according to Pastor, the Carter administration felt its pressures on Somoza had yielded positive, if limited, results. Pastor points out, however, that following the upswing in violence after the Palace raid, U.S. hopes of further success in pressuring Somoza dimmed:

The Carter policy succeeded in opening Nicaragua to genuine debate through the lifting of martial law, the end of censorship, the restraints on the National Guard, the invitation to the Inter-American Commission, and the return

of political exiles. Somoza was constrained, and the opposition had more space . . . . By September 1978, the frontier of U.S. human rights policy had been reached. As the war worsened in Nicaragua, this policy proved to be less of a constraint on Somoza's behavior and less useful as a tool for pursuing U.S. interests (Pastor 1987, 74-75).

Convinced by this point that significant reform was largely impossible as long as Somoza remained in office, the U.S. began seeking ways to remove him from the scene, while retaining the two principal structures of "Somocismo:" the National Guard and the PLN. From October, 1978, until February, 1979, the U.S. pushed Somoza to hold a plebiscite on the question of whether or not he should remain in office until his term ended in 1981. When negotiations on the plebiscite broke down in February, largely as a result of Somoza's intransigence, the U.S. essentially abandoned efforts to ease him from office and in an attempt to force the issue, implemented a full set of sanctions, a signal that "the United States had in effect given up on trying to influence Somoza" (Pastor 1987, 119-122).<sup>12</sup>

From the imposition of sanctions until the final victory of the FSLN in July, 1979, the U.S. continued to seek a solution to the civil war that would replace Somoza with a moderate (non-Sandinista) transitional regime while keeping the Guard and the PLN intact. Somoza, recognizing U.S. fears of an outright Sandinista military victory, sought to undercut the moderate opposition and thus force the U.S. to choose between supporting him or the FSLN. By continuing to engage in negotiations with Somoza after it had become clear that he would only accept an outcome which left in place the universally hated National Guard, the moderates discredited themselves in the eyes of most Nicaraguans and delivered the mantle of opposition leadership to the Sandinistas.

For two basic reasons, Somoza was relatively invulnerable to U.S. reform pressure. First, because of the nature of his regime, the vulnerability generated by internal threat levels was largely mitigated. The leader knew full well that once concessions were made on the future role of the Guard and the PLN, the pillars which had held up his family's personalist regime would be removed and it would quickly crumble. Thus, for him the difference between being overthrown and being forced to initiate significant reform was minimal: in either case, the outcome would entail the collapse of the system as he knew it. Consequently, the U.S. could not count on Somoza's fear of overthrow to make him more willing to respond to reform pressure.

Second, Somoza's vulnerability to cuts in U.S. military assistance was extremely low (see Table 1). Between 1973 and 1976, the ratio of U.S. aid to Nicaraguan defense spending had dropped from more than 17 percent to less than 3 percent. Furthermore, the regime had clearly opted to replace the reductions in U.S. assistance rather than simply absorb them. The degree to which the regime was successful in doing this is indicated by the Nicaraguan defense spending figures.



## Asymmetrical Interdependence and Democratization

**Table 1. Military Spending,\* U.S. Military Aid,\* Dependence Ratio (U.S. Aid/Spending), and Military Expenditures/Central Government Expenditures: Nicaragua\***

Year	Spending	Aid	Ratio	ME/CGE
1973	\$17	\$2.95	17.33%	9.0%
1974	22	1.99	9.03	7.4
1975	30	1.21	4.02	8.9
1976	39	1.06	2.71	11.5
1977	51	0.71	1.40	11.9
1978	68	0.40	0.59	16.8
1979	53	0.01	0.02	14.6

\*Sources: United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (1985), United States Defense Security Assistance Agency (1982, 1984).

\*In Millions: U.S. Military Aid figures include Military Assistance Program (MAP), MAP Merger Funds, Military Assistance Service Funded, International Military Education and Training Program, and Excess Defense Articles Program funds.

Despite the more than doubling of military spending between 1973 and 1976, the percentage of total central government expenditures that went to defense only changed by 2.5 percent. Had the regime been unsuccessful in replacing lost U.S. aid, we would expect to see defense spending take a substantially bigger "bite" out of overall government spending. In replacing the lost aid, Somoza turned primarily to Israel, which is estimated to have provided up to 98 percent of Nicaraguan arms imports between 1975 and 1979 (SIPRI 1980, 97; Jamail and Gutierrez 1987a). By the time the U.S. opted to play the last card in its pressure deck by persuading Israel to halt arms shipments to Nicaragua in June, 1979, the revolutionary process was all but irreversible.

What, then, does this case say about our model? For one thing, it illustrates rather neatly the underlying relationship of asymmetrical interdependence that obtains between the U.S. and target countries. In particular, it demonstrates the significant vulnerability (in terms of reduced options) of the U.S. when dealing with a personalist regime. Because of the skewed cost structures which prevail in such regimes (i.e., little difference to regime in costs of reform vs. overthrow), the capacity of the U.S. to induce liberalization through some form of pressure is limited. Since the distance between the level of reform sufficient to satisfy U.S. ideological preferences and the level of reform the regime is willing to undertake is almost certain to remain wide, even under increasing threat levels, the realization of a mutually acceptable outcome is very unlikely.

In one important way, the Nicaraguan case suggests a possible need to revise one aspect of the model. Rather than assuming a simple, direct linear relationship between the strategic threat level and the willingness of the U.S. to exert reform pressure, this case indicates the need to incorporate a threshold below which the linear relationship no longer holds. In other words, the U.S. will not simply continue to decrease its reform pressure in direct proportion to a rise in the threat

level until the point of either overthrow or complete acceptance of the status quo. Instead, once the U.S. comes to the conclusion that the threat level will continue to rise in the absence of change and that no “acceptable” level of reform is likely to be forthcoming from the regime, it will reverse gears and begin escalating the pressure to reform in an effort to manage a transition which at this point will have become inevitable.

Such a process may be unique, however, to personalist regimes for two reasons. First, the level of target-regime intransigence necessary to reach this threshold is more likely in personalist rather than classist regimes, because of the differences associated with reform costs noted above. Second, a decision by the U.S. to abandon a personalist regime, though risky, is not nearly so dangerous as a decision to abandon a classist regime. Using Nicaragua as an example, removing Somoza and his cohorts from power was certainly less frightening in terms of ultimate consequences to U.S. strategic interests than any plan to remove the entire Nicaraguan upper class would have been. One would anticipate, then, that the model may apply more clearly in our next two cases, to which we now turn.

### *Guatemala & El Salvador*

The cases of Guatemala and El Salvador provide interesting contrasts not only to Nicaragua, but to each other as well. Both could be characterized with reason as classist regimes, both faced revolutionary challenges, and both were the object of U.S. pressure for reform. Their somewhat different responses to this pressure provide an interesting application of our model.

In terms of the nature of the regimes, El Salvador and Guatemala are roughly, though not completely, similar. Despite certain variations, both of these countries share considerably more in common with each other than either would with the Somoza regime in Nicaragua. In both, the political and economic systems had been controlled for decades by a dominant elite exercising power in alliance with the armed forces.<sup>13</sup>

In El Salvador, this alliance had its roots in a 1932 peasant uprising during which the landed elite called on the military to put down the revolt and restore the socioeconomic order. Although important changes in the nature of the partnership between the state (as embodied by the military) and the upper classes took place over time, the essentials of the system remained largely intact from the 1932 revolt until at least 1979. Enrique Baloyra (1982, 102) has described that system as one of “reactionary despotism.” In such arrangements, “. . . governments are monopolized by reactionary coalitions that maintain exclusionary political regimes in which actual or potential opponents are denied basic citizens’ rights. The power of the state is utilized arbitrarily to contain or disarticulate organized opposition, and co-optation and passive obedience replace the active consent of the society.” Though Baloyra points out that this arrangement was never as secure or stable as it appeared to outside observers, the basic elements of the ruling



formula, namely the commitment to protection of elite interests through exclusionary authoritarian rule, were not seriously threatened until the late 1970's.

In Guatemala, as well, a coalition between the state and economic elites was cemented in response to the perceived threat of popular mobilization and concomitant encroachment on the traditional dominance of upper class interests. A serious crisis within the ruling bloc during the 1940's produced an opportunity for reformist elements to come to the fore, and during the consecutive regimes of Juan Jose Arevalo and Jacobo Arbenz, the Guatemalan political system witnessed a virtual explosion of peasant and worker mobilization. The rapid increase in lower class organization and activism, combined with sweeping agrarian and labor reform programs, ultimately brought the regime into conflict not only with economic elites and conservative military elements within Guatemala, but with a United States government deeply suspicious of the "Communist" leanings of Arbenz. In 1954, a U.S.-backed faction of the Guatemalan military overthrew Arbenz and instituted a regime that corresponds quite closely to the "reactionary despotism" model outlined above (Booth & Walker 1989, 37-42). If anything, this experience left the Guatemalan elites even more traumatized than their Salvadoran counterparts, with the result that any advocacy of popular mobilization or socioeconomic reform, no matter how limited, has been met with harsh and unrelenting repression.

Though both the Salvadoran and Guatemalan regimes of the late 1970's and early 1980's shared characteristics common to what I have termed classist regimes, they differed significantly in terms of the other variables that the model suggests are important determinants of outcomes in reform pressure situations. Specifically, the regime in El Salvador faced a substantially more serious strategic threat and was significantly more dependent on U.S. military assistance than the regime in Guatemala.

Both countries witnessed sporadic guerrilla activity throughout the 1960's and early 1970's, but in neither did the incipient insurgents represent a very serious threat to the incumbent regimes. The various guerrilla factions in each country lacked substantial mass followings, and they often seemed to harbor more suspicion and hostility toward one another than they did toward the incumbent regimes.<sup>14</sup> This eventually changed in both cases, the significant across-case difference being the timing of the changes.

In El Salvador, several guerrilla groups of varying strength and size were formed and went into action during the 1970's (Arnson 1982; Manwaring & Prisk 1988). Yet no one group, nor indeed, the revolutionary movement as a whole, was widely considered to represent a significant threat to the existing Salvadoran political system until about 1979. In the latter half of that year, and into the next, the revolutionary movement gathered steam rapidly.

A process of consolidation among the major armed factions resulted in the formation in 1980 of a single guerrilla coalition, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation front (FMLN). By the end of the following year, clashes between the

guerrillas and the Salvadoran military were taking place almost daily and the FMLN was reported to be largely in control of up to a third of the territory of the country (Russell 1984, 142). This period also saw a substantial expansion in the base of guerrilla support, probably the most significant indicator of which was the tacit alliance between the FMLN and a large grouping of leftist and center-left opposition parties and popular organizations known as the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR).<sup>15</sup>

A similar process of guerrilla consolidation took place in Guatemala, but not until two years after the formation of the FMLN in El Salvador (Dunkerley 1988, 475-504). In 1982, the principal guerrilla groups in Guatemala came together to form the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG). Though this was a significant step in the direction of constructing a unified revolutionary movement, the formation of the URNG was accompanied by a considerably less substantial broadening of the support base than was the case in El Salvador. To date, the Guatemalan guerrillas have been unsuccessful in forging an alliance with a "moderate" civilian grouping of a scope equivalent to that of the FDR in El Salvador. Consequently, the strategic threat posed by the unification of the armed resistance not only came later in Guatemala than it had in El Salvador, but also had less of a "generalizing" effect on the conflict. In essence, the slope of the strategic threat line rose at a steeper angle in El Salvador than in Guatemala.

A second factor of importance which distinguishes these two cases is the relative level of dependence on U.S. military aid in each. Recall that such dependence, in conjunction with the internal threat level, is what determines the slope of the regime's "accommodation" line, or its willingness to initiate a level of reform sufficient to ensure continued access to U.S. assistance.

Both countries experienced a cutoff of U.S. military assistance in 1977, when threat levels were relatively low. The rapid escalation of the threat level in El Salvador in 1980 was matched with an equally rapid and dramatic increase in U.S. military aid (see Table 2). Within two years, this aid rose from \$252,000 to over \$65 million and the ratio of U.S. aid to Salvadoran defense spending shot up from less than 1 percent in 1980 to more than 45 percent in 1982. Furthermore, in this same period, Salvadoran defense expenditures rose from 15.5 percent to 20.2 percent of overall government spending.

Thus, despite the massive influx of foreign aid, the Salvadoran regime found it necessary to raise by 5 percent the amount of central government spending devoted to defense. The vulnerability of the regime becomes quickly apparent when one considers that an absorption of a cut in U.S. aid at this point in time would have entailed the devotion of an additional 10 percent of the national budget to defense. Given the mounting strategic threat and concomitant need to maintain the foreign support necessary to meet that threat, resistance to U.S. reform pressure clearly was potentially more costly than was succumbing to that pressure.



Table 2. Military Spending,\* U.S. Military Aid,\* Dependence Ratio (Aid/Spending), and Military Expenditures/Central Government Expenditures: El Salvador \*

Year	Spending	Aid	Ratio	ME/CGE
1973	\$21	\$0.51	2.41%	9.4%
1974	25	0.77	3.06	9.4
1975	28	2.32	8.29	8.2
1976	31	1.07	3.45	8.0
1977	34	0.57	1.69	7.7
1978	54	0.01	0.01	11.0
1979	78	0.01	0.01	14.5
1980	96	0.25	0.26	15.5
1981	123	25.60	20.81	17.3
1982	144	65.07	45.19	20.2
1983	173	57.80	33.41	22.8
1984	272	189.95	69.83	30.6

\*Sources: United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (1985), United States Defense Security Assistance Agency (1982, 1984).

\*In millions. U.S. Military Aid figures include Military Assistance Program (MAP), MAP Merger Funds, Military Assistance Service Funded, International Military Education and Training Program, and Excess Defense Articles Program funds.

In contrast, the Guatemalan regime exhibited very little, if any, dependence on the United States in terms of meeting its security needs (see Table 3). The reduced vulnerability stems from two factors. First, as noted earlier, the Guatemalan regime faced a substantially weaker, more fragmented, and less broadbased revolutionary movement than did the Salvadoran regime. Second, the Guatemalans succeeded in replacing the U.S. assistance lost in 1977 with supplies from alternative sources, principally Israel (Jamil and Gutierrez 1987b). Of course, the loss of U.S. military aid meant that Guatemala now had to pay for equipment it previously had received *gratis*. Yet, the cost of purchasing such replacements does not appear to have overburdened the Guatemalan regime, as the defense spending figures point out.

In 1976, the year before the U.S. aid cutoff, 8.6% of the Guatemalan national budget went to defense. Six years later, in 1982, this figure had only risen by 2.7%, to a total of 11.3%. Again, the contrast with El Salvador, where military expenditures rose from 8% to over 20% of the government budget during the same period, is striking. Recalling our earlier distinction between sensitivity and vulnerability, it seems clear that though both countries were sensitive to U.S. aid cuts, the higher strategic threat level in El Salvador made it substantially more vulnerable to such cuts than was Guatemala.

Yet the asymmetrically interdependent nature of the relationship between these countries and the United States, as illustrated in our model, suggests a seemingly paradoxical outcome in these two cases. If the relationship were purely

Table 3. Military Spending,<sup>a</sup> U.S. Military Aid,<sup>a</sup> Dependence Ratio (U.S. Aid/ Spending), and Military Expenditures/Central Government Expenditures: Guatemala\*

Year	Spending	Aid	Ratio	ME/CGE
1973	\$26	\$1.13	4.33%	8.6%
1974	31	2.49	8.02	8.3
1975	49	0.57	1.15	12.3
1976	48	0.62	1.29	8.6
1977	66	0.50	0.75	10.6
1978	72	0.00	0.00	10.0
1979	81	0.00	0.00	10.1
1980	99	0.00	0.00	8.5
1981	112	0.00	0.00	8.0
1982	147	0.00	0.00	11.3
1983	185	0.00	0.00	15.5
1984	180	0.00	0.00	14.9

\*Sources: United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (1985), United States Defense Security Assistance Agency (1982, 1984).

<sup>a</sup>In millions. U.S. Military Aid figures include Military Assistance Program (MAP), MAP Merger Funds, Military Assistance Service Funded, International Military Education and Training Program, and Excess Defense Articles Program funds.

dependent, we generally would expect to see a roughly equal amount of pressure applied by the U.S. to both countries, with the more vulnerable El Salvador being less able to resist such pressure. In an interdependent relationship, however, we must take into account the fact that as strategic threat levels in the target country rise, so do the costs to the U.S. of exercising reform pressure. The paradox? Given the assumptions of the model, we would expect the U.S. to apply less pressure, yet witness more reform in vulnerable, threatened El Salvador, than in Guatemala, where relatively more pressure should beget less reform.

Thus, according to our model, the differences between these two cases, in the aspects of (1) differential threat and dependence levels and (2) anticipated level of U.S. reform pressure, should produce alternative outcomes. Specifically, the combination of greater aid dependence and higher threat level would suggest an outcome entailing more substantial reform in El Salvador. If we look at outcomes as the result of convergence in the positions of the target country and the U.S., we would expect a more substantially reformist outcome in those cases where the "accommodation" lines of both actors have steeper slopes. This seems to capture fairly accurately the Salvadoran situation.

Constituent assembly elections were held in that country in 1982, followed by a series of presidential, municipal, and legislative national elections in 1984, 1985, 1988, 1989, and 1990. Procedurally, there have been few complaints about these contests, which generally have been characterized as relatively clean and



accurately counted.<sup>16</sup>

Prior to 1988, however, a prevailing climate of official and semi-official political violence effectively excluded parties anywhere to the left of center ideologically. Despite being procedurally correct, then, the first few contests cannot be called "free and fair," since parties and candidates representing positions presumably supported by a substantial number of Salvadoran voters were effectively precluded from participating. Subsequently, however, the scope of electoral participation began to broaden, with a coalition of left and center-left parties known as the Democratic Convergence (including leaders in the FDR) competing in each of the contests since 1988. In the 1989 and 1990 elections, this coalition received 4 percent and 12 percent of the vote, respectively (Christian 1991).

In terms of substantive reforms, considerably less (if any) progress has been made. Probably the clearest indicator of the limits to which the regime and dominant elites are willing to tolerate substantive change is evinced in the debate over agrarian reform. A fairly comprehensive program of agrarian reform, entailing substantial redistribution of land to peasants in the rural areas, was initially drafted in the early 1980's. In relatively short order, however, the program was gutted and since then has been more or less abandoned (Baloyra 1982; Blachman, LeoGrande & Sharpe 1986; Booth & Walker 1989). Nonetheless, few would argue that El Salvador has made progress on the procedural reform front, particularly in the institutionalization of electoral competition and the broadening of the scope of participation. At this writing, there are also encouraging signs that UN-sponsored negotiations between the FMLN and the Salvadoran government might yield an end to the conflict and result in the reincorporation of guerrilla combatants and supporters into "legal" political life (Christian 1991).

The situation in Guatemala is somewhat different, with the process of liberalization beginning later and ultimately entailing less change than in El Salvador. Constituent assembly elections, similar to those held in El Salvador, were not held in Guatemala until 1984, followed by presidential elections in 1985. As in El Salvador, these elections were largely regarded as relatively clean in a procedural sense, but the breadth of party participation was significantly circumscribed due to continuing official and quasi-official violence (Booth & Walker 1982; Jonas 1988). Yet, whereas the Salvadoran political system has been steadily, if slowly, broadening in terms of ideological representation in electoral contests, the Guatemalan system has maintained a *de facto* exclusion of any political grouping left of Center-Right in Guatemala -- a proscription that has carried over even until the most recent presidential election in 1990.<sup>17</sup>

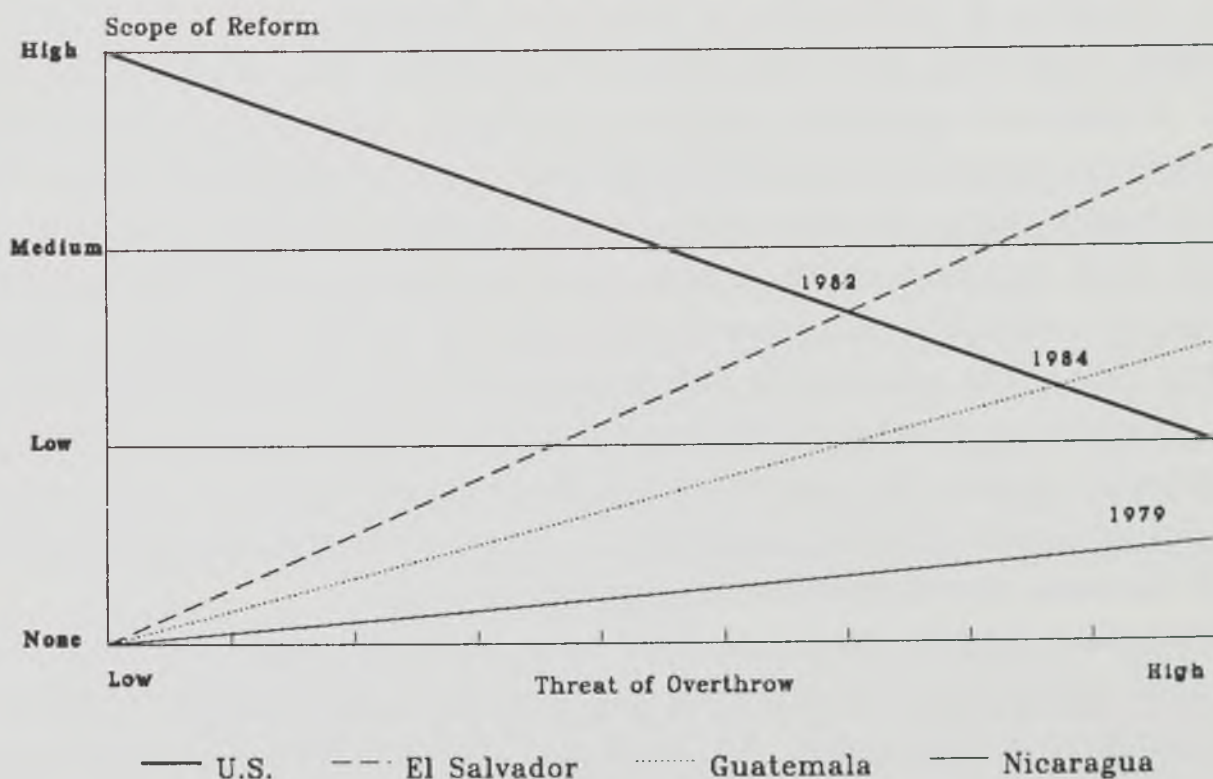
Substantive reforms have not even been seriously proposed, much less implemented, and as topics in their own right have been all but removed from the political discourse in Guatemala. As Booth and Walker (1989, 42) point out, the campaign for the 1985 election was principally distinguished by "the candidates' universal fear of advocating -- indeed, even of mentioning publicly -- socioeco-

conomic reforms or human rights improvements.” In short, the regime took certain small steps in the direction of liberalization beginning in 1984, and a certain limited degree of procedural reform has been realized in Guatemala, but the liberalization process in that country has neither been as extensive nor as deep as in El Salvador.

An examination of the developments in both countries would seem, then, to bear out the expectations generated by our model. In El Salvador, where the regime faced a substantial strategic threat, the liberalization process began earlier, and seems to have gone further, than in Guatemala, which faced a considerably less substantial strategic threat. Further, in El Salvador, the scope of the strategic threat combined with a high degree of aid dependence produced a rapid convergence in the positions of the regime and the United States concerning the level of reform necessary under the prevailing conditions. In contrast, the lower level of strategic threat and aid dependence in Guatemala meant that both the regime and the U.S. could more steadfastly resist such convergence initially, ultimately producing an outcome entailing more limited liberalization in that country.

I would stress that the examination of these three cases is largely preliminary. Nonetheless, this application of the model to empirical cases seems to suggest some support for its basic assumptions. Figure 4 depicts schematically the outcomes resulting from U.S.-target regime interactions in each of the cases. While the model seems to mesh fairly well with the Guatemalan and Salvadoran cases, the evidence from the Nicaraguan case suggests a need for revision of the slope of the U.S. pressure line, as discussed above.

Figure 4: Actual Outcomes  
U.S.-Target Country Interaction





## Conclusions

I have set out in this article to undertake a tentative step in the direction of contributing to the literature on democratization and regime change. It was suggested that the incorporation of existing concepts in international relations and comparative politics theory might enable us to construct a model that would represent the external factors impinging on the largely internally-driven process of regime change. In addition, our model suggests, somewhat counterintuitively, that there are very real limits to the capacity of the United States to achieve certain types of foreign policy goals -- specifically, those that fall outside the strategic realm. It seems clear that even in those countries where we intuitively would expect the U.S. to have the greatest capacity to exert influence (i.e., in small, underdeveloped, proximate neighbors), there appear to be significant obstacles to the effective exercise of that influence -- obstacles that stem from the interdependent nature of the relationship which obtains between the U.S. and such countries.

It is important to note that the three cases under examination here are examples of exclusionary authoritarian regimes. It is difficult to know in advance how well the model specified herein would fare when applied to alternative authoritarian constructions. Two variants of inclusionary authoritarian models, *corporatism* (as in Mexico and in the Peruvian military regime of 1968-1980) and *totalitarianism* (as in Cuba), have been identified in the region, and would provide an interesting test of the generalizability of the model. Such a test is obviously beyond the scope of this article, but I would speculate that, where an asymmetrically interdependent relationship exists between the U.S. and a target country, the model might be usefully applied. The principal adjustment that would need to be made would be a specification of the cost-benefit structure of these alternative regime-types regarding reform vs. status quo options.

Two additional areas in which the model could benefit from more sophistication are a broadened definition of the threat dimension and a less monolithic portrayal of U.S. policymaking. As to the first, an extension of the threat dimension to include economic as well as strategic threats would seem likely to provide a richer and more broadly applicable framework for analysis. As to the second, our monolithic portrayal of the United States in terms of foreign policy clearly oversimplifies a complex process. Such factors as the interaction between different branches of government in the construction of policy and changes across different administrations are largely ignored in the model as it stands. Yet I would argue that the variations that would arise, were such factors incorporated, would revolve largely around specific perceptions of threat rather than the fundamental calculus of goals and decision making. In other words, the basic forces that the model sees as driving U.S. policy (i.e., interest hierarchy) remain more or less constant, despite changes of perception of threat across different administrations or different branches of government. Ultimately, then, I would argue that the basic assumptions and mechanisms of the model, though perhaps less sophisticated than

they could be, are not fundamentally flawed.

There remains much to be done, both within the field of regime change theory, and within this specific attempt to contribute to that field. It is hoped, however, that the model outlined herein will demonstrate the utility of bringing conceptual and analytical tools from a variety of sources to bear on the questions facing researchers of democratization.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>In the ten years between 1980 and 1990, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay all made significant movement in the direction of democratization or liberalization. In 1980, there were only roughly four civilian elected regimes in all of Central and South America. By 1990, there were seventeen (Karl 1991).

<sup>2</sup>The literature on democratization in Latin America is much too voluminous to cite here. For the seminal treatment of the topic, see O'Donnell, Schmitter, & Whitehead (1986); other general works that should be consulted are Diamond, Linz, and Lipset (1988), and Booth and Seligson (1989).

<sup>3</sup>The exception is Whitehead (1986).

<sup>4</sup>Throughout this paper, I will utilize the term "liberalization" to refer to the process of movement away from an authoritarian form of governance and toward a democratic form. I feel this is a more accurate description of the processes under examination here than would be afforded by the term "democratization," which implies the actual realization of at least a minimal level of "democracy" within the system. This distinction is most clearly articulated in O'Donnell, Schmitter, & Whitehead (1986).

<sup>5</sup>See Karl (1991, 169-72), for a particularly useful and concise explanation of this concept. The following discussion draws heavily from Karl's argument.

<sup>6</sup>See Karl (1991) for a discussion of the distinctions between procedural and substantive issues in the creation of democratic "pacts."

<sup>7</sup>Herman and Brodhead (1984) have labelled such contests "demonstration elections."

<sup>8</sup>The reason 1972 is seen as a pivotal year in terms of the nature of the regime has to do with the massive earthquake which struck Nicaragua in that year, or perhaps more specifically, with the aftermath of that event. In the chaotic atmosphere that followed the quake, Somoza seized on the "revolution of opportunity" for self-aggrandizement presented by relief and reconstruction needs. In seeking to monopolize these opportunities, Somoza added the business sectors and middle classes to the already long list of alienated Nicaraguans. See Dunkerley (1988, 234-236); LaFeber (1984, 227-228); and Booth (1982, 110).

<sup>9</sup>I would argue that the differences that obtain between the rule of the first two Somozas and that of Anastasio, Jr. relate more to the style of rule, particularly to the relative balance of cooptation versus coercion, rather than to any fundamental difference in the nature of the regime. On the persistent thread of "personalismo" running through each of the Somoza regimes, see Booth (1982, 51-96).



<sup>10</sup>See Pastor (1987) for an insider's description of the Carter administration's view of and policies toward Nicaragua. Somoza himself claimed the change in U.S. policy began even earlier, when Nixon's ambassador to Nicaragua, Turner Shelton, was replaced in the early days of Gerald Ford's administration. He noted with dismay that the departure of Shelton, who by all accounts was quite amenable to Somoza, signalled that "my country and I were in for trouble" (Somoza 1980, 58).

<sup>11</sup>The text of the letter is reprinted in full in Somoza (1980, 276).

<sup>12</sup>See Pastor (1987, 119-122). The sanctions included full termination of the already suspended military assistance program and a removal of the U.S. military group from Nicaragua, a ban on any future consideration of economic aid programs, the withdrawal of Peace Corps personnel, and a drastic reduction in the size of the U.S. Embassy staff in Nicaragua.

<sup>13</sup>The following discussion draws on a variety of sources, including Blachman, LeoGrande, & Sharpe (1986); Dunkerley (1988); Booth & Seligson (1989); Karl (1989); Jonas (1988); and Booth & Walker (1989).

<sup>14</sup>For a firsthand account of the enormous difficulties faced by the revolutionaries during this period, see Payeras (1983), who was a leader of one of the Guatemalan guerrilla groups.

<sup>15</sup>The FDR itself was a consolidation of a number of other "peak" opposition organizations, and was significant not only in terms of sheer number of memberships (some estimates run as high as one million), but also due to its broad scope, which incorporated rural peasants, urban workers and slum dwellers, secondary and university teachers and students, professionals, and several political parties. See Arnson (1982, 92-95); Leiken (1984); and University of El Salvador Dept. of Social Sciences (1987).

<sup>16</sup>There have been reports of inflated vote counts, particularly in the 1982 election, but these were not felt to have affected the outcomes (i.e., the distribution of votes among parties) but rather to have exaggerated the total number of votes cast in an effort to make turnout appear more substantial. For a discussion of the fraud charges, see Bonner (1984, 302-306).

<sup>17</sup>For the 1990 elections, see *Latin American Weekly Report* (1990, 1991), and *Central American Report* (1989). For previous elections, see Dunkerley (1988).

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