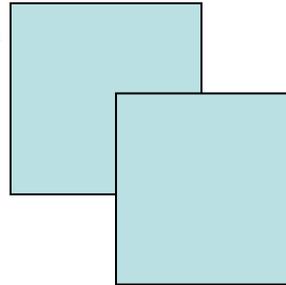


National Defense University
Partners of Choice? A Western Hemisphere Security Conundrum
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Mexico's Security Dilemma: Between Nation, North America and Latin America

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MEXICO: The Labyrinth of Solitude

Hypothesis 1

- **Mexico has a conflict over the National Identity with regard to:**
 - **Foreign Policy (between Principles and Reality)**
 - **The Relationship with US and Canada**
 - **The Relationship with Latin America**
 - **Civil-Military Relations**

Three Labyrinths

- ***National Identity***

“Lo Mexicano” Exists ?????

- ***Security***

Is it Possible to solve the problems unilaterally ??

(for example: Drug trafficking, or Migration)

- ***Defense***

Foreign cooperation: is it necessary, and to what ends ??????

Old and New Challenges

- After 9/11, the geopolitics of North America underwent dramatic change

From 1990s To 21st Century

- Priority No. 1: Trade (before 9/11) NAFTA Consolidation
- Priority No. 2: 21st Century: After 9/11:
Securing North America
- USA Demands:
 - 1) Cooperation Against Terrorism
 - 2) Support Homeland Security Concerns of the US

México's Existential Dilemma: Between globalization and nationalism.

- Fear of the North
- Competition with the South American Countries
- Opposition to the Walls from the North
- Mexican barriers to the South.

The Current Contradictions

- *National Culture:* Mexico is a Latin country.
- *Trade and Economics:* Mexico is a North American country
- *Politics Mexico:* is “Mexican”, or nobody truly knows how to define its location.
- *Result: Mexico has no coherent global or regional role.*

The Labyrinth of Security

- *Security*: Mexican Public Opinion is divided: 53% do not have confidence in the government or national institutions.
- The last COMEXI Poll (Nov-06) shows 53% of Mexicans agree with joint efforts with the US to secure borders, ports and airports to counter terrorist threats [1](#)
- [\[1\]](#) “Divide a mexicanos la cooperación con Estados Unidos”, *El Universal*, 7 de noviembre de 2006.

Nationalism inside the Elite

- Leaders do not accept the transnational nature of the new challenges.
- 68% of the leaders do not support joint efforts with the US to deal with new security challenges.

The Labyrinth of Defense

The Mexican Armed forces are divided over the role of domestic or international missions:

- 1) The Army refuses to participate in peace keeping missions
- 2) The Navy is willing to contribute to military missions abroad
- 3) The Air Force is under the Army's jurisdiction

Reasons:

- By Doctrine
- By Training
- By tradition
- By politics (past relationship with the PRI)

Two paradigms on Defense

1. Haiti: Mexico is outside the hemispheric security framework. Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, are a kind of Rivals to the Mexicans in their geopolitical neighborhood. Paralysis in foreign affairs and defense attitudes.
2. Katrina: Shows the potentials of the cooperation with the US.

Insecurity and weak democracy Effects on the defense system 1

1. There is not a civilian Defense Secretary; in other words: there are no civilians with expertise on defense.
2. There is not a Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces;
3. The Defense doctrine is subordinated to the Foreign Affairs Principles (Mexico does not have a real defense doctrine);

Insecurity and weak democracy Effects on the defense system 2

4. There is not a White Paper on Defense.
5. The Defense Doctrine is only for domestic enemies.
6. Military missions abroad are only for humanitarian crises, in countries near Mexico, or by request of the governments (the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, Central America and some South American countries)
7. Exception: Tsunami, Indonesia, involved participation of the Mexican Navy.

Insecurity and weak democracy

Effects on the defense system 3

8. Two different Armed Forces, without common doctrine, or training. Interoperability is only at the field-level,
9. The Armed Forces are the Pillar of the Domestic Security Forces
10. The Armed Forces have a lot of police and intelligence missions;
11. There is a big governance crisis, and the Armed Forces are frequently requested to address new challenges

Conclusions: Problems for the Binational cooperation

- The Central Problems are Nationalism and the *inward view* of the US Congress: the Border Wall is the greatest obstacle toward future cooperation with Mexico. It will be very difficult for the new Mexican government to justify new ways of cooperation if the US Government starts with the construction of the Wall. There will be a strong opposition from inside the media, political parties, government officials and inside the Armed Forces.
- The link between Migration and National Security in the US National Security Doctrine is the big problem.

Conclusions: Windows of Opportunity

- The Changes in the Mexican Government
- The Changes in the US Congress
- There will be more communication among the two federal governments about the security and defense concerns
- Binational groups can be created to investigate specific issues