

**The End of Hegemony?
Panama, the United States and Latin American Security After the Year 2000.**

by

**Peter M. Sanchez
Department of Political Science
Loyola University Chicago
6525 N. Sheridan Road
Chicago, IL 60645**

**773-508-8658
psanche@luc.edu**

Prepared for delivery at the 1998 Meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, The Palmer House Hilton Hotel, Chicago, Illinois, September 24-26, 1998.

The End of Hegemony?

Panama, the United States and Latin American Security After the Year 2000.

I. Introduction.

When the United States invaded Panama on December 20, 1989, many observers deemed the abrupt use of force as a sign that US policy toward Panama had failed. Several serious events had occurred during the mid-to-late 1980s suggesting that Washington had lost control of Panama, the Latin American nation with the largest US military presence: democracy had been trounced upon by the Panamanian armed forces; the military government had brutally murdered an opposition figure and had become extensively involved in the drug trade; and General Manuel Noriega, Panama's *de facto* leader and long-time Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) "asset", had repeatedly resisted US efforts to control his actions and had used his military to harass US military and civilian personnel residing on the Isthmus.

Consequently, analysts perceived these events as a clear cut case of David slaying Goliath. When we look at US - Panama relations historically, however, we find that US policy toward Panama shows remarkable continuity and logic, and that the US government has always been able to greatly influence events in that country.¹ Even during the Noriega crisis, seemingly a case study in US foreign policy run amuck, US policymakers were not asleep at the wheel. We will see that, for nearly one century, US policy makers have carried out policies that have greatly enhanced and protected vital US interests in the Panamanian Isthmus and maintained US hegemony in Latin America. The Noriega years were no exception.

II. US Hegemony in Latin America.

The concept of hegemony has often been associated with analysts who promote a Marxist or world systems paradigm. Those who employ this concept tend to see international relations from an exploitative, economic perspective, viewing underdevelopment as a result of the economic policies of the industrialized nations of the world. The concept of hegemony is also used by those who are simply critical of US foreign policy, interpreting that policy as self-serving rather than *pro mundi beneficio*. On the other hand, those who are supportive of US foreign policy, and capitalism in general, use concepts such as interdependence, or sphere's of influence to describe power relations in the international arena (See Berger 1995). When analyzing world politics, then, the analyst almost always must implicitly or explicitly decide which paradigm to adopt. S/he must either see power relations as inherently unequal, and perhaps even exploitative, or as fluid and interdependent, where no nation can dominate relations at all times.

¹ Much of the evidence for this article comes from many formal interviews and informal discussions with Panamanians from all walks of life, including high level government officials, political leaders, academicians, US government officials, members of the media, businesspeople, and average Panamanians. Additionally, much information has been gleaned from newspaper articles in *El Panama America*, *El Siglo* and *La Prensa*. The author spent one year in Panama on a lecturing/research Fulbright Senior Scholar grant during July 1997 to July 1998.

Because of its class analysis origins, hegemony has often been assigned principally an economic character, linked to the work of Gramsci in his conceptions of bourgeoisie dominance in a society. Using this perspective some international relations theorists have adopted the concept to describe the international system as being dominated by the national bourgeoisie in the industrialized west. But while it can be interpreted principally as economic in character, there is no reason why hegemony cannot be operationalized more broadly to include political, military, and even cultural dimensions. Since many of its proponents have been partial to a class analysis approach, the concept has become pigeon-holed into a neo-Marxist framework. Hegemony, however, should also be used by analysts who neither accept the world systems, nor the interdependence approach to international relations.

The concept of hegemony has indeed been used by some scholars to simply identify an international system where "... one state is able and willing to determine and maintain the essential rules by which relations among states are governed" (Bergsten, Keohane, and Nye, 1975, 14). Or more crudely, in terms of power relations, hegemony implies "... an international position of leadership and dominance, which rests on a mixture of consent and coercion ..." (Berger 1995, 7). Thus, here we shall view hegemony as an international system or subsystem where one state is able to exercise a preponderance of power *vis a vis* other states to an extent where the powerful state determines most of the rules of the game in the system, and thus leads principally through compliance or as a last resort coercion. This more general conception of hegemony allows us to use the concept to explain unequal power relations in the international system without being economic determinists. But, at the same time, using the concept of hegemony allows us to explore the relations among nations where one state clearly has a near-monopoly on military, economic and political power.

While for some hegemony suggests exploitation and dominance, for others hegemony has important beneficial characteristics. A hegemon, according to Kindleberger, provides much needed stability, leadership and codes of conduct that would ordinarily be lacking in the anarchical international system (1974). Here we will not attempt to determine whether hegemony is good or bad, but simply attempt to demonstrate that US policy toward Panama has been consistent and logical, fitting the expected policy patterns of a hegemonic power.

How do we know when hegemony has been achieved by one state over other states? According to Gill, "... hegemony would be fully achieved when the major institutions and forms of organization -- economic, social and political -- as well as the key values of the dominant state become models for emulation in other subordinate states" (1990: 46). Thus, to better understand hegemony, we must be able to determine when a particular powerful state has reached a point where it leads, determines the rules of the system, gains compliance most of the time, is at times able and willing to use coercion, and, finally, has reached a level of influence where the subordinate states emulate the hegemon's political and economic system. To fully understand the concept of hegemony, we must also learn how states reach hegemonic control, how they maintain hegemony, how they react to challenges to their hegemony, and how they react to the loss of hegemony. For hegemony to emerge, flourish and persist, we must assume that the hegemonic power carries out its foreign policy in a logical, consistent, and self-serving manner, if not it would be nearly impossible for that nation-state to reach a position of leadership and dominance in an international system. The hegemon over the years will develop its economic, military,

political and cultural power to a point where it prevails over other nations in the system by sheer preponderance of power in all of these areas. Subsequently, other states in the system will attempt to adopt the political, economic system of the hegemon, and even to emulate its culture.

The concept of hegemony is of particular importance in the study of international relations in an era where colonialism has been replaced by a nation-state international system. With decolonization came the realization that an end to colonialism did not result in a end to power and influence in the international system. Hegemony is clearly different from classic colonialism since it does not depend upon territorial occupation or direct control of decision-making institutions in the subordinate nation. Hegemony may be seen as a more sophisticated form of imperialism (or neocolonialism), relying as much on consent as force, but not relying upon direct political or economic control.

Hegemony, then, is an important concept for the study of international relations and must be given more serious consideration. Explaining the interactions between the United States and Japan may necessitate an understanding of interdependence and spheres of influence. However, understanding the relations between Panama and the United States will require a different concept. A concept such as interdependence minimizes the power imbalances that exist, between the United States and the small, weak nations of the Caribbean basin, such as Panama. Those who adopt an interdependence approach often point out that small, weak nations can at times force large, strong nations to do things they would not ordinarily do. A case in point is the Panama Canal treaties of 1977, where Panama was able to marshal world opinion against the United States, and according to some “force” the American superpower to give up the Canal Zone and control of the Panama canal in the year 2000. Likewise, the US government’s difficulty with the Noriega regime has been described by some analysts as a case where a weak state has toyed with the United States (See, for example, Dinges 1990). Despite Panama’s ability to exercise some influence over the United States during the mid-to-late 1970s and in the 1980s, however, we shall see that US-Panama relations have been characterized in this century by nearly complete dominance of Panama by the United States.

The case of Panama is particularly interesting and informative owing to the fact that Panama not fell under US hegemony, but has also been instrumental to the United States in its rise to hegemony in the Caribbean basin and even globally. Panama is also of particular interest since it represents a transition from neocolonialism to hegemony, in that US dominance relied upon a near-colonial presence from 1903 until 1979. While Panama was not in a strict sense an American colony, the Canal Zone represented a state within a state in the isthmus of Panama. That zone finally came to an end with the implementation of the Panama Canal Treaties in 1977.

Oddly enough, the recent literature on Panama, generated by the crisis between the US government and the Noriega regime, has seemingly adopted an interdependence rather than a hegemonic approach. That is, most US analysts have interpreted the relationship between the United States and Panama as one where US policy has not been consistent and has at times sacrificed vital national interests. More specifically several authors have characterized the crisis in the 1980s as one where General Noriega was able to manipulate the United States. For example, most analysts interpret the US-Panama crisis as a result of bungling, owing to US interagency

conflicts, domestic politics considerations, and personal mistakes by policy-makers. Kempe writes:

... to understand what led up to this [US invasion], one can make the mistake of looking purely at US interests and how they have shifted in Panama. But US foreign policy is more messy -- and certainly not as deliberate (1992: 1).

The perspective that US policy is haphazard, because of bureaucratic squabbles and the pressures of democratic politics, may seem a-paradigmatic, or devoid of bias. However, this interpretation of US policy tends to assume that US policy is *not* deliberate, consistent, or self-serving, which are necessary qualities of a hegemon's foreign policy. Rather than making a "mistake," an analysis that focuses on US interests historically avoids the error of explaining the 1989 US invasion simply as the result of US problems with the Noriega regime, and gets to the underlying motivations of US policy toward Panama. Certainly, as many analysts have pointed out, for a variety of reasons US foreign policy is often inflicted with inconsistencies at particular moments in time, especially during a crisis (See for example Scranton 1991: 33-48). Nevertheless, we must take a longitudinal look at US foreign policy to discover that, despite its periodic inconsistencies, US policy often demonstrates remarkable continuity and logic. Only with the short and long look at US foreign policy can we capture its true characteristics and motives.

One study of the Noriega years for example, recognized by many as the best academic work on the crisis, does emphasize US strategic interests, pointing out that US military bases have been and continue to be an "enduring" US security interest in Panama (Scranton 1991: 9). But while Scranton mentions US strategic interests as a motivating force for US policy, her study is eclectic and, as a result, does not focus solely on this important aspect of US-Panama relations. Here we will look at the Panama crisis of the 1980s and attempt to examine it with an eye on long-term US national interests. A long-term analysis uncovers that US interests in Panama have been of long duration, that US policy toward Panama has been clear and consistent over nearly one century, and that during the Panama crisis of the 1980s the US took progressive, calculated steps to undermine the Noriega regime. Eventually, Washington succeeded in securing its interests in Panama, despite Noriega's hesitation to cooperate.

III. The Importance of Panama.

The United States has had its eyes and interests focused on Panama since the middle of the 1800s. In that century Great Britain was extremely influential in the Caribbean basin owing to its powerful navy. The United States, with its Monroe Doctrine of 1823, attempted to assert itself in the region, but at the time did not have the military or economic potency to challenge British power. In 1850, the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, between the United States and Great Britain, was important in that the latter nation recognized American interests in the region. Under this accord, each nation agreed not to build a waterway without the participation of the other nation. The US interest in the construction of a passage between the seas was greater, however, owing to its need to expand westward and its belief in manifest destiny. In that same year, the United States signed a contract with New Granada (present-day Panama and Colombia) that allowed Washington to

construct the first transoceanic railway, and gave US citizens and cargo the right to free passage through the isthmus. The Panama railroad became vitally important for US westward expansion and for the transference of gold from the west coast to the center of economic and political power in the northeastern seaboard (See Boersner 1996). This new and vital transportation link helped the United States to expand geographically and grow economically.

US policy-makers understood the importance of a transisthmian canal for the expansion of US commerce and naval power. As a result, in 1903, after the Colombian senate rejected a treaty with the United States that would allow the latter to build a canal on the isthmus, the United States decided to assist a small but persistent independence movement with a naval intervention that allowed for the independence of Panama on 4 November 1903. Up until that point, the US government had helped New Granada secure its sovereignty over the isthmus as part of the deal that allowed the US government to build the transisthmian railway. Once the central government in Bogota hesitated in allowing the United States to build the canal, an impatient Washington changed friends and assisted Panama's independence movement (See Major 1993: 33-63).

The French had initiated an attempt to build a sea-level canal in 1881, but failed owing to corruption, mismanagement and tropical diseases. As a result, the New French Canal Company had a strong interest in the US government buying them out. Conspiratorially, a long-time representative and investor in the French company, Philippe Bunau Varilla, became Panama's plenipotentiary in Washington and quickly signed a treaty with US Secretary of State, John Hay, that gave unprecedented rights for the building and defense of a canal through the Panamanian isthmus. By the time Panamanian negotiators arrived in Washington, the Hay-Bunau Varilla Treaty had been signed and their efforts to challenge the hasty accord became futile, since they depended on US power for their continued independence from Colombia (See Conniff 1992). The beginnings of a long, difficult relation with the United States had been sealed. By any standard the canal zone represented an affront to Panama's newly gained status as a nation-state.

The treaty turned Panama into a near-colony, giving the United States a ten-mile strip of land that cut the new nation in two. It also allowed the United States to build fortifications to defend the canal, and to intervene in Panama as it saw fit. And, these rights were given to the US government in perpetuity (for the text of the treaty, see Arosemena 1997: 31-46). This was one of the most generous treaties in modern times and has been described by some as giving more to the United States than even it had wanted or expected. The "taking" of Panama represents the dawning of US hegemony in the Caribbean basin: the US took over the French effort to build the canal, and effectively challenged British efforts to have a part in a transisthmian waterway.

More importantly a canal through the Panamanian Isthmus would greatly enhance US military and economic power in the future, allowing it to achieve a hegemonic position in the Caribbean basin if not the entire Western Hemisphere. With the inauguration of the canal in 1914, the United States was able to move its war vessels from ocean to ocean much more quickly, saving resources and enhancing naval power. The canal also greatly assisted with domestic westward expansion and the expansion of US commerce and trade. By the time the canal was in operation in 1914, the United States had already become the principal power in the Caribbean basin, if not the entire Western Hemisphere, and the canal with its military "fortifications" gave the United States the spring-board to become progressively more active in the region. For

example, many of the long-term US military occupations in the Caribbean Basin took place shortly after the completion of the canal, in Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti (See Fernandez 1994).

Although the canal represented an important addition to US regional power and a monument to US engineering, not all was well in paradise. The 1903 Hay-Bunau Varilla treaty, the manner in which it was acquired and its generous provisions, created strong resentment among all classes of Panamanians toward the United States. This treaty became the principal barrier to good US-Panama relations, becoming the basis for anti-US sentiments and demonstrations for many years.

At first the US military presence in Panama was solely for the protection of the canal: to ensure defense against an external attack and to ensure that stability reigned on the isthmus. However, as the United States rose to globalism the canal became important for power projection during World War II. Additionally, during the cold war, the US government inaugurated a number of military institutions and schools under the direction of US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), established in 1963, in order to carry out its anti-Communist, counterinsurgency policies in Latin America. Consequently, the US military presence in Panama increased dramatically during the latter half of this century. US military bases expanded their missions to include regional defense, training, and intelligence collection. What resulted was a complex of bases and defense sites that carried out US strategic policy in all of Central America, Panama, and South America (See Leis 1985 and Gurdian Guerra 1998). These military installations were of vital importance to US military planners for strategic denial of access to the Axis powers during WW II and the Eastern Bloc during the Cold War. Panamanians saw this expanded military role correctly as a violation of the 1903 treaty which limited the US fortifications in Panama to Canal defense. As the importance of Panama for military and intelligence purposes increased dramatically, the role of the DoD and CIA increased dramatically in US-Panama relations, which later would prove problematic for US policy. This expanded military presence and role in Panama also magnified anti-Americanism in the isthmus, particularly in the 1960s when nationalist sentiments erupted in the region.

IV. The Origins of the Panama Crisis: Anti-Americanism and Challenges to US Hegemony.

The Panama crisis thus began well before the coming to power of General Manuel Noriega. While it originated with the 1903 treaty, that placed the thorn in US-Panama relations, the current crisis began with the 1964 anti-US riots, that led to the death of 21 individuals, most Panamanian, now universally hailed as martyrs in that country. The 1964 crisis had two handmaidens. First, Washington had not resolved its underlying diplomatic problems with Panama, since it stubbornly stuck to the 1903 treaty provisions. Second, the Cuban revolution had awakened nationalist sentiments in Latin America, especially among students. The Eisenhower administration, understanding that there was strong resentment in Panama toward the United States, had agreed to allow the Panamanian flag to be flown in public buildings in the Canal Zone as a symbolic gesture of compromise. However, the Panamanian flag was not flown at Balboa

High School, its colonial-minded administrators arguing that there was no flagpole. Panamanian students received permission to enter the Zone to discuss the issue, and brought with them a Panamanian flag that they hoped to hoist. The students were insulted and forced to exit the zone and the Panamanian flag was defaced. News of what transpired at Balboa High spread like wildfire, generating massive demonstrations the next day just outside the Zone. The street where most of the violence occurred, 4th of July avenue, was renamed Avenue of the Martyrs. For the first time in its relatively short history as an independent nation under US tutelage, Panama's president broke diplomatic relations with the United States. Panamanians have not forgotten this incident, while US policymakers seldom discuss it, or dismiss it as ancient history and as ultra-nationalism (For a description and analysis of these events, see Tareas, No. 97, 1997)

Stability in Panama was finally achieved by two young National Guard officers. Mayor Omar Torrijos Herrera and Lieutenant Manuel Antonio Noriega flew from Chiriqui, a western province, to the capitol and repressed the demonstrators and looters. This decisive action, which safeguarded US interests, helped these two men to become Washington's favorites within the National Guard, and also helped them to become closely associated with the CIA (see Janson Perez 1997: 63-64).

The 1964 crisis convinced some US policymakers that, to protect the Canal and US bases, the 1903 needed to be re-negotiated. Since the 1850s, Washington had used US troops to maintain order on the isthmus; however, in 1964 the United States was faced with growing nationalism throughout Latin America and the threat that the Cuban model would be adopted by nations in the hemisphere. Thus, new, more amicable relations with Panama seemed to be the best manner in which to solve the Panama crisis and to improve the image of the United States in the region. But the crisis also convinced most US officials that the Panamanian National Guard had to be strengthened immediately so that it could maintain order, and to avoid future embarrassment and repercussions of US troops firing upon Panamanians. US military aid to the Guard increased twofold in 1965 and 1966, and increased again in 1967, one year before a military government took control of the country (See Guevara Mann 1994: 71-72).

By 1967 the United States and Panama had come to an agreement that would have dramatically changed the two countries' relationship, eliminating the Canal Zone, giving Panama some control over Canal operations, and committing the US government to building a sea-level canal. But so much anti-American sentiment existed that opposition to the treaty in Panama was extensive. President Chiari was impeached by the legislature partly for negotiating the treaty, yet remained in power owing to National Guard support. Since 1968 was election year and the treaty did not make for good domestic politics, it was in both nations' interest to continue to sideline the treaty. In Panama these political considerations became irrelevant when, soon after the inauguration of the newly elected government, a military *golpe* ended electoral and party politics in that country.

The October 11, 1968 *golpe*, led by Major Boris Martinez, along with Col. Omar Torrijos, nullified controversial election results that had eventually led to Arnulfo Arias being sworn in as president of Panama. The US government had had problems with Arias in the past, since he was perceived in Washington as pro-Axis during WW II, and as a controversial, populist political figure who seemed to generate political turmoil. Arias seemed inimical to the protection of the

Canal and thus to US interests in Panama. Therefore, when the National Guard took power, the US government recognized the military regime relatively quickly since the new, military regime would, in Washington's eyes, guarantee political stability, even if by force, and would safeguard US interests.

Owing to the military *golpe*, the accord reached by the two countries in 1967 was put aside. For the newly-elected Nixon administration, shelving the treaty meant not having to deal with a controversial issue at a time of national unrest over Vietnam and civil rights. For the military regime in Panama, setting aside the accord gave the generals the opportunity to reach a new treaty themselves, thus acquiring much-needed political and moral legitimacy. The Panama crisis of 1964 was therefore resolved, but more precisely delayed, by a military government that received Washington's blessing.

After a few years on hold, negotiations began again in 1971, this time with a military regime led by General Omar Torrijos, who had consolidated his power as the "maximum leader." These initial discussions failed, however. On the US side, there was little support for sticking to what was agreed to in 1967, since the situation in Panama was more stable, the Nixon administration faced important problems at home, and the US government had decided that building a sea-level canal was too daunting of a commitment. Torrijos, on the other hand, was taking on an increasingly nationalist banner and wanted more for Panama than what was agreed to in 1967. By the end of 1972 the talks had died, both sides unwilling to accept what had been agreed to previously.

General Torrijos then began an international campaign to muster world opinion against the United States. In the early 1970s, the non-aligned movement, and militancy against the economic and military powers of the world, was growing in force. Torrijos used this forum and the United Nations Security Council to press the US government into a new agreement that would finally abrogate the hated 1903 treaty, would eliminate the Canal Zone, and would transfer the Canal to Panamanian control, even if it did not commit the US to building a new canal.

The general believed that his military government had provided Washington the stability it needed in Panama and therefore the United States should reciprocate in kind. Panama was of vital interest to the United States and the Torrijos regime had in fact turned the heat down in the pressure cooker that was ready to explode in the 1960s with anti-Americanism. This eruption could have been catastrophic for US regional interests, since it potentially could have meant a "second Cuba" in a nation that was extremely important for US commerce and for US military interests. The Torrijos regime, which developed good relations with Castro, carried out populist policies that satisfied the masses and leftists, and used extensive nationalistic rhetoric, effectively eliminated the possibility that an anti-US government would come to power in Panama (On the Torrijos regime, see Ropp 1982, and Velasquez 1993). He certainly felt that a debt was owed.

Torrijos was able to convince the UN Security Council to hold a special meeting in Panama in March 1973, despite US maneuvering to prevent the meeting. The results of the meeting were very embarrassing for the United States as a great power and an important victory for Omar Torrijos. The council proposed a resolution that supported Panama's position in its conflict with the United States. The US representative as expected vetoed the resolution. No

other member in the council voted with the United States, but England hedged its bets by abstaining. Panama had thus become an important issue in US-Latin American relations, and even as a weathervane in US relations with the developing world, at a time when both superpowers were competing for client states. The results of the Security Council meeting convinced the Nixon administration that new treaties had to be negotiated in order to preserve US prestige, influence and interests, both in Panama and in Latin America (See Jorden 1984: 197-198).

By mid-1974 talks had resumed again. While many foreign policy experts had decided that a new agreement with Panama was necessary to preserve US interests, there was strong opposition in Congress to “giving away” the Panama Canal. The intense “hyper-nationalism” that US officials often attributed to the Torrijos regime was alive and well in the United States. Thus, while a new treaty seemed an imperative, domestic US politics for many years delayed any kind of US compromise, especially since the military regime in Panama was providing the needed stability for canal security. What turned the tide in US thinking was that the same Torrijos regime that had pacified Panama was becoming more obstinate about re-negotiating the 1903 treaty, and could eventually become the dreaded regime that threatened the Canal and US bases.

Torrijos took several steps to demonstrate to the United States that US-Panama relations would deteriorate if no new treaty emerged. First, of course, was his successful attempt at turning Panama into a global issue, culminating with the US-vetoed UN Security Council resolution. Second, he established diplomatic relations with Cuba. Finally, mysterious bombings in the Canal zone began to take place, clearly a sign that unless an agreement was reached anti-US violence could erupt once again in Panama. Chief US negotiator Ellsworth Bunker finally made some headway when he acquired Pentagon acceptance for a new treaty, but with the proviso that a new accord await the November 1976 presidential elections (Conniff 1992: 132). Thus, a treaty with Panama became the chief responsibility of president Jimmy Carter.

President Carter, then, did not invent a Panama Canal treaty. Carter, however, was willing to spend a great deal of political capital to push a Canal treaty through Congress, a gamble that helped cost him his reelection. Momentum toward such an accord as we have seen had been building since after the 1964 anti-US riots in Panama. An accord had not been reached sooner because a military regime had pacified Panama, and internal US opposition to a new treaty was intense and thus dangerous as a domestic political issue. However, by 1976 it had become clear to veteran policymakers and analysts that stability in Panama required a treaty that would end the semi-colonial relationship established by the infamous 1903 accord.

The Carter administration made a new treaty with Panama its principal goal immediately upon taking office (Pastor 1995). Negotiations were fast-paced because both governments were politically ready for an agreement and were willing to put a new treaty on the top of their foreign policy agenda. The new treaties were signed on September 7, 1977, after only seven months of talks. The new relationship with Panama was now to be determined by two separate treaties: the Panama Canal Treaty and the Treaty Concerning the Permanent Neutrality and Operation of the Panama Canal (For the full text of the treaties, see LaFeber 1989). The Canal Treaty abrogated the hated 1903 accord, eliminating the Canal Zone, transferring the operation of the Canal to Panama on 31 December 1999, and giving Panama a much larger remuneration from Canal revenues. The Neutrality Treaty constituted a commitment on the part of both nations to the

permanent neutrality and security of the Canal, binding each side to keep the canal open to all nations during times of peace or war. This treaty of course meant that Washington could still ensure its strategic interests in the Panama Canal past the year 2000, essentially as long as the Canal was in operation. The neutrality treaty also stated the following: “After the termination of the Panama Canal Treaty [31 December 1999], only the Republic of Panama shall operate the Canal and maintain military forces, defense sites and military installations within its national territory.” (LaFeber 1989: 242). The Canal Treaties also served the important role of legitimating US military bases in Panama, for years a source of conflict, that were vital to US strategic interests in the Hemisphere (See Gurdian Guerra 1998: 105). The new treaties, nevertheless, eliminated most of the irritants of the 1903 accord and opened a new, more amicable chapter in US-Panama relations, as well as in US-Latin American relations. Each government now had the difficult task of selling the product to its domestic constituencies and opponents.

In the United States, the Carter administration had before it a Herculean task in getting ratification of the treaties, since influential members of Congress, both Republican and Democrat, opposed the new relationship with Panama. Eventually, the Carter administration achieved ratification in the Senate by the narrowest of margins, 64 votes in favor and 36 votes against, a two-thirds vote required for ratification. Public opinion ran solidly against the treaty (Smith and Hogan 1987), but the Carter administration, expending a lot of political capital, was able to convince enough members of the senate to vote against the public sentiment (See Skidmore 1993).

In Panama, a public referendum would determine the fate of the accords, the military regime needing a public vote of confidence. General Torrijos had the advantage of running a military government, and thus was able to mount a massive pro-treaty campaign. Nevertheless, there was strong opposition to the new treaties and there is good evidence suggesting that the treaties either lost in the referendum or won by a much narrower margin than the military government suggested (Velasquez 1993: 41-44). In the end, the Torrijos regime announced that the referendum results were 65% in support of the treaties and 35% against, a seemingly solid victory.

The ratification process was also difficult in that it indirectly continued the negotiating process. Some US senators believed that the Carter administration had conceded too much to Panama. For example Senators Nunn and DeConcini added changes or clarifications in exchange for their votes of support. Two important alterations to the treaties were thus added that generated deep resentment on the part of the Torrijos regime. First, in the event that Canal operations were threatened, the United States reserved the “... right to take such steps as [it] deems necessary ... including the use of military force in the Republic of Panama, to reopen the Canal or restore the operations of the Canal, as the case may be” (LaFeber 1989: 244). In order sell this change to the Panamanians, the senate also included a clarification that states:

This does not mean, nor shall it be interpreted as, a right of intervention of the United States in the internal affairs of Panama. Any United States action will be directed at insuring that the Canal will remain open, secure, and accessible, and *it shall never be directed against the territorial integrity or political independence of Panama ...* (LaFeber 1989: 244).

Second, the United States included a clarification to the treaties that opened the door for a possible US military presence after the year 2000. Some senators did not want to terminate that presence, and would not have supported the treaties had the US government not allowed itself the possibility of retaining military bases in Panama after the year 2000. The Senate included the following words in the instrument of ratification, which carries the same legal weight as the treaties themselves:

Nothing in the treaty shall preclude the Republic of Panama and the United States of America from making ... agreements or arrangements for the stationing of any United States military forces or the maintenance of defense sites ... in the Republic of Panama ... that the Republic of Panama and the United States of America may deem necessary or appropriate” (LaFeber 1989: 244-245).

Finally, there was an unwritten agreement between the Carter administration and General Omar Torrijos that committed the general to carrying out political changes in Panama after the treaties were signed. The Carter administration, some senators, and high-level US policymakers were concerned about the fact that the US government had negotiated a new treaty with a military regime. Therefore, General Torrijos was persuaded to agree to a restoration of democracy once the treaties were signed, ratified and implemented. General Torrijos knew that his popularity would increase both at home and abroad if he presided over a democratizing process in Panama. He, therefore, bowed to US pressure knowing that he would run for president and have a good chance of winning the election.

In summation, the United States dramatically changed its relations with Panama for very pragmatic reasons, in an effort to preserve its interests both in Panama and in Latin America in general. As one analyst points out:

Knowledgeable Panamanians and North Americans agreed that if the treaty did not pass, large-scale, anti-United States rioting could erupt in Panama, causing more deaths, leading to a sabotaging and closing of the Canal, and poisoning relations between Washington and Latin America” (LaFeber 1989: x).

In fact, Torrijos had already developed a secret plan to sabotage the Canal if the US Congress did not ratify the treaties. Operation *Huele Quemado* (Smells Burning) called for 2,000 National Guard personnel to carry out small-scale attacks in literally hundreds of locations along the waterway. This extensive sabotage operation would have been essentially impossible to stop. We can only assume that the US government was aware that this operation was in the works and that US decision-makers and key members of Congress were informed. The danger to US interests was clear and present.

The canal treaties defused a potential anti-US social explosion in Panama and at the same time preserved vital US interests. First, the United States maintained control of Canal operations until 31 December 1999, a full twenty years after treaty implementation. The United States knew that the Panama Canal, while an engineering marvel in the early 1900s, was becoming obsolete and was progressively becoming more costly to maintain and operate (Department of Defense 1976, and Falcoff 1998: 50-55). US experts knew that by 1999 the Canal would have outlived its

efficiency and a new canal or major modifications to the existing canal would be needed. In fact, under the initial negotiations, after the 1964 crisis, the US government would have committed itself to constructing a sea-level canal. Second, the US government preserved its right to ensure that the canal would remain open to US commerce and war vessels past the year 2000, through the Neutrality Treaty. And, with the treaties Washington legitimated its military complex in Panama and also assured that an agreement to keep US military bases could be negotiated even after the treaty expired on 31 December 1999. The US government also negotiated these treaties at a period of coexistence, or *détente*, with the Eastern Bloc, when US-USSR relations had thawed a bit and a second Cuba in the hemisphere seemed improbable. In short, the treaties resolved US problems in Panama and Latin America, and at the same time ensured that vital US interests in Panama were preserved and even enhanced. What made the treaties very controversial was the fact that they were interpreted by many US citizens as a sign of weakness on the part of the US government and as a giving away of US rights and property at a time in history when developing nations were asserting themselves. Most informed policymakers, however, knew that the new relationship with Panama was needed and that the treaties did not jeopardize vital US interests. In the end, the US political elite set public opinion aside to preserve vital US interests.

The Canal Treaties, ironically, did not achieve their principal goals, but not because the agreements were in some way sacrificed American interests. Only a few years after treaty implementation, US-Panama relations became strained, eventually threatening canal operations, threatening US security interests in the region, and resulting in a US invasion of Panama. In 1979, the US government signed a treaty stating that its military actions in Panama would be limited to keeping the canal open and that they would "... never be directed against the territorial integrity or political independence of Panama," yet 10 years later the United States invaded Panama in order to change the political regime there, kidnap its *de facto* ruler, and eliminate the Panamanian armed forces, which the US government had helped to create just a few decades earlier. Some observers would rightly wonder if the US government had botched its relations with Panama.

At first everything seemed to be going as expected. The Canal Zone was eliminated, generating great joy among Panamanians of all races and classes. Panama received property, thousands of buildings, and larger revenues from Canal operations. And, the Torrijos regime began a process of democratization, that would culminate in general elections in 1984. But events outside of Panama had taken a change for the worse in that US security interests appeared to revert back to the cold war concerns of the early 1960s. The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the Nicaraguan revolution, both occurring in 1979, intensified US security interests globally and in Latin America. Those who saw Panama as an important strategic location now had a stronger argument for defending a US military presence in Panama. These events, along with the Iran hostage crisis, helped to bring a more conservative administration into the White House, led by Ronald Reagan, who had been one of the chief opponents of the Panama Canal treaties.

In Panama, the situation turned for the worse as well. Omar Torrijos died in a suspicious helicopter crash in 1981. The chief engineer of Panama's re-democratization was gone, and the Panamanian National Guard was now under less pressure to democratize the country. The principal goals in the region for the Reagan administration were to undermine the leftist Sandinista

regime in Nicaragua, and to destroy leftist insurgencies in El Salvador and Guatemala. US bases in Panama were deemed essential for the accomplishment of these goals, since from these bases a variety of US agencies could support the “contra” rebels who were trying to bring down the Sandinista government, support the Salvadorean and Guatemalan governments that were fighting leftist insurgents, and carry out a panoply of intelligence and clandestine US missions. The politico-military environment in the region had changed dramatically in just a few years. In the late 1970s, the principal US concern had been to restore good relations with Panama and with the region; while in the early 1980s, Washington saw communist expansion as its paramount regional concern.

V. The Noriega Crisis: From Good Cop to Bad Cop.

As a result of this new regional context, US policy became less concerned with democratization in Panama and the implementation of the canal treaties, and more concerned with its strategic policy in the region. When General Manuel Noriega took control of Panama’s armed forces in 1983, after cunningly working his way through three other higher ranking officers (See Martinez H. 1990 :58-70), Washington was not worried. The general, although involved in narcotics and weapons trafficking, cooperated with US efforts to bring down the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua and with other strategic US missions in the region, including a multitude CIA and National Security Agency (NSA) intelligence operations. The fact that Noriega had been a CIA asset for many years seemed a plus, since it meant that he was deemed pro-US by the foreign policy establishment. And, Washington was confident that the coming national elections in 1984 would bring to power a civilian government that would legitimate the Panamanian government, as elections had done in El Salvador. In the eyes of decisionmakers in Washington, Noriega was like a Trujillo reincarnate: he was an SOB, but he was “our” SOB.

Noriega, however, turned out to be less controllable than the US government hoped. In 1984, the general played ball by forcing Torrijos’ political party, the *Partido Revolucionario Democrático* (PRD, Democratic Revolutionary Party), to nominate Nicholas Barletta, a pro-US economist, as its presidential candidate. This nomination was an affront to the PRD’s ideology and its leadership. The party was created to ensure that the revolutionary process, *el proceso*, begun by Omar Torrijos would be continued, but Noriega’s action revealed that what would be continued was the predominance of the armed forces in the Panamanian political process. Washington did not seem to notice, in fact was delighted, since Noriega was cooperating with US strategic policy and had put forth a more than acceptable candidate. Barletta did not win the election, but became president owing to vote fraud and campaign manipulation by the newly created Panamanian Defense Forces, PDF (See Arias de Para 1984). Although aware of the fraud, Washington did not protest, since Noriega, the PDF, and Panama’s new president were all in step with US policy.

What happened in the next few years, however, turned the balance sheet against General Noriega in Washington’s eyes. Noriega relatively quickly went from being a tainted friend to being public enemy number one. Little of this change, however, had to do with drug trafficking or with the lack of democracy in Panama. The US government had known of his involvement in

drug trafficking, as well as his other illicit operations, for many years (See, for example, Koster and Sanchez 1990), and, as we have seen, had supported a repressive military government and vote fraud in the past. As long as the generals, Torrijos and Noriega, served Washington's interests, their peccadillos were ignored and even dismissed; however, once Noriega began playing from his own sheet of music, Washington began to experience a change of heart, even if slowly at first. The chief concerns of the US government were, as they had been for this entire century, US prestige, US security interests in the region, and the efficient and safe operation of the Panama Canal, for both economic and military reasons. These interests began to be threatened once Noriega started to sway from the principles of the Panama Canal treaties, as understood by Washington.

Noriega violated the unwritten principles of the accords in a variety of ways. First, he violated the understanding that the Panamanian armed forces would carry out a democratization process, as agreed to by the Carter administration and the Torrijos regime. Washington was not concerned when vote fraud brought President Barletta to power both because he was pro-US and because he represented civilian rule in Panama. With Barletta in power the democratization process could be sold as complete. However, Noriega was more concerned with staying in power and maintaining PDF dominance than with being faithful to the understandings established by the treaty negotiation process. Manuel Noriega forced Barletta to resign once the president called for an independent investigation into the brutal murder of a very popular opposition figure, Dr. Hugo Spadafora, that was widely recognized as being ordered by the general himself. After Barletta's ouster, Noriega installed and replaced presidents at will, to a point where in Panama they earned the title of Kleenex presidents, disposed of easily.

Second, Noriega began to establish the PDF as the institution principally responsible for treaty implementation. The PDF began to acquire all reverted properties and was reorganized and strengthened in order to take over prime responsibility for canal defense after the year 2000. The US government had expected the PDF to professionalize in order to take over the task of canal defense, in fact combined US-Panama defense exercises were increased and intensified for this purpose (Leis 1985: 95). However, Washington did not expect the PDF to have prime responsibility for the entire treaty implementation process, especially since the US government was committed by the Panama Canal Treaty to help prepare Panama for taking over canal operations in the year 2000. Nor was the PDF supposed to retain control of all civilian institutions that needed to be strengthened in order to effectively take over Canal operations after the year 2000. As a result, the US government began to worry about the Canal treaty implementation process soon after the death of Torrijos, particularly since the reverted properties were being parceled out arbitrarily by the PDF to its officers and hangers-on.

Another sensitive aspect of treaty implementation was the issue of US bases after the year 2000. The US government had kept the door open for a possible presence with the Nunn proviso, included in the ratification instrument. But, although he was cooperating with US military efforts in the region and assured the DoD that its bases would be secure, General Noriega rebuffed US efforts to initiate discussions on the status of a US military presence in Panama after the year 2000. As early as summer of 1983, the DoD was prodding the general to establish a combined organization to begin discussing the issue, since the US did not want to wait until the last moment to preserve its bases in the region. The general, however, was not in a hurry to begin

these negotiations and in fact made friends within the PRD by selling the idea that US forces would leave after the year 2000. An important test of Noriega's cooperation came when the notorious School of the Americas, where the US government has trained thousands of Latin American military officers, was scheduled to be moved out of Panama. The US wanted to keep the School in Panama but Noriega insisted that it be moved to the United States.

Once US policymakers began to view General Noriega as a potential liability, steps were taken to persuade him to give up some political power and restore civilian politics. However, these steps were very tentative at first owing to the fact that Noriega's cooperation with US anti-Communist policies in the region was perceived as paramount. Even before Hugo Spadafora's death in late 1985, the US government began putting some light pressure on Noriega by leaking negative information on the general to the press and to the US Congress. Washington expected that the general would get the message, modify his behavior, and that US-Panama relations would get back on the right track.

Unfortunately for US officials, General Manuel Noriega had through the years acquired a great deal of autonomy from Panamanian society as well as from US tutelage (See Ropp 1992). Noriega had become increasingly involved in a variety of illegal operations that netted him a huge fortune. Also, his PDF had received a good deal of US military assistance over the years, making it the most powerful organization in Panama. And finally, the military regime beginning with the Torrijos years had been able to acquire large amounts of capital from international financial institutions. All of these factors gave Noriega and the PDF in general a great deal of leeway, much greater leeway than any other military regime in Latin America. Thus, when the US began to put even slight pressure on the general, rather than playing ball, the general resisted. His resistance encouraged US officials to begin to turn up the heat, and what followed was a series of tit-for-tat events that led to a crisis and finally a US invasion. The PDF had become so autonomous and belligerently anti-US that Washington eventually decided that the institution had to be eliminated. Thus when the invasion came not only was Noriega captured and brought to the United States, but the PDF was abolished and re-instituted as a national police force.

Prior to using force, however, the US government carried out a series of escalating actions against the Noriega regime, designed to pressure the general into stepping down from power. First, information was leaked to the press and to the US Congress (See, for example, Hersh 1986). Second, US officials negotiated with Noriega for his exit from power, offering him safety and money. Next, the general was indicted, hoping that playing hard ball would encourage him to concede. Then, the US once again attempted to broker a deal with Noriega. Once he refused, economic sanctions at ever increasing magnitude were levied against the Noriega regime. Military exercises were undertaken, without notifying the Panamanian government, as a demonstration that Washington was willing to use force. At this point, the US government also encouraged a military coup from within the PDF. Finally, once US officials ran out of options and an October 1989 coup attempt against Noriega failed, the decision to use force was seriously considered. Force was eventually used only 12 days before the Panama Canal Commission would get a new administrator, selected by General Noriega himself. Even though the US government had the right under the 1979 treaties to reject the general's choice, such a conflict could have threatened the operation of the Canal and generated a controversy over US treaty commitments that would certainly have been exploited by the Noriega regime. Rather than reach this point in the crisis, US

forces were ordered to take Panama, apprehend the general, dissolve the PDF and put in power the pro-US government that was elected in the May 1989 elections, but that was never allowed to take office. (For detailed chronological recountings of these events, see Buckley 1991, Scranton 1991, Dinges 1990, Kempe 1990, and Koster and Sanchez 1990). The historical record is clear in that, even though there were missteps owing to individual mistakes, bureaucratic politics, Congressional “meddling,” US policy toward Panama during the Noriega crisis consisted of a series of escalating steps that put increasing pressure on the Noriega regime. If these steps failed to force Noriega from power without the use of force, it was more the result of Noriega’s autonomy and stubbornness than the result of bungling on the part of US policymakers.

VI. A Continued US Military Presence? The CMA, *Centro Multinacional Anti-drogas*.

After the US invasion, Panama was left with a civilian government devoid of legitimacy, without a military, and in economic tatters. Whether intended or not, this seemed to be a recipe to generate support for a continued US military presence, since many analysts and Panamanians in general assumed that such a presence was key for Panama’s economic and political stability, and since without a military Panama would be hard pressed to meet its treaty obligations to defend the canal. However, the new Endara regime did not want to discuss military bases, believing rightly that the nation would see such talks as naked lackeyism. The US government was thus forced to wait until after the 1994 elections brought another government to power that did not owe its existence to a US invasion.

The 1994 balloting played a dirty trick on US interests though. Even though the Noriega military regime had been pulled out by the roots, the party of Omar Torrijos, the PRD, won a plurality of the vote, bringing Ernesto Perez Balladares to the presidency, the man Nicolas Barletta had usurped as the PRD candidate in 1984. The vote in 1994 ran heavily against the pro-US opposition, since the vast majority of the voters cast their luck with the PRD (33%); the Panameñista Party, Arias’ populist political machine (29%); and the newly formed populist and left of center, Papa Egoro, founded by salsa singer and actor, Ruben Blades (18%). It is difficult to determine whether such a backlash against the opposition parties of the 1980s was in fact a strong rejection of the US invasion, simply a rejection of the Endara government, or a widespread desire to return to a populist past *a la* Arias and Torrijos. Nevertheless, the election left US officials the difficult task of negotiating a continued US military presence with the party and protégés of Omar Torrijos, a classic case of historic irony.

Perez Balladares chose as his chief negotiators Eduardo Ritter and Adolfo Ahumada, well known Torrijistas with a long history of support for the military regime. Ahumada had been a key player in the Canal Treaty negotiations, and has been described as a “radical” and “Marxist” (Jordan 1984: 270-271). Ritter, the younger of the two, had been foreign minister and ambassador to the United Nations in the Noriega regime, and was thus classified by US analysts as anti-American. Certainly, the US government would have wanted more amenable negotiators.

In September 1995, the two governments began discussing the continuation of US military bases, but owing to US insistence on not paying for those installations, the Panamanian government eventually ended the talks in December 1996, and announced that a US presence would occur only via a *Centro Multinacional Antidrogas*, or CMA (Multinational Antidrug Center), that Perez Balladares had recently proposed at a Rio Group Conference.

Formal talks on a possible CMA finally began in July 1997, with Ritter leading the Panamanian team and Cold War warrior John Negroponte as the chief US negotiator. Initially, for both sides the CMA appeared to have certain benefits over traditional military bases. Perez Balladares as a professed Torrijista could not negotiate the preservation of a US military presence without financial remuneration and hope to retain PRD support. Therefore, Perez Balladares presented the CMA as a *multinational, civilian institution, with a military component*. The US government accepted such a proposal since it would be able to preserve its military presence in Panama past the year 2000, and at the same time avoid the potentially controversial issue of military bases that had elicited such hostility among Panamanians in the past.

After some initial problems and delays, both sides reached an agreement in late December 1997. According to Panamanian law, the agreement simply had to be approved after debate by two legislative sessions, and then taken up by a public referendum three months after such approval. On the US side, the accord would be considered an executive agreement and thus would not require Senate ratification. But the initial euphoria quickly subsided when President Perez Balladares resisted signing the final accord literally days after he had announced that an agreement had been reached. After initially stating that some clarifications were needed, Perez Balladares eventually publicly stated that the CMA was a “mamotreto” (loosely an albatross) and that he had made a mistake because what the US government was really trying to obtain was a military base in disguise. His declarations caused great concern and disappointment in Washington and raised the ire of the US Congress, especially that of Jesse Helms, a long-time opponent of the Canal Treaties and proponent of retaining US military bases in Panama.

Perez Balladares backed away from the December agreement after he learned that his own party, as well as some prominent individuals, deemed the proposed CMA to be damaging to Panamanian sovereignty and giving too much to the DoD. Since the Panamanian president was attempting to change the constitution so that he could be reelected, he badly needed PRD support and he could not take up an issue that made him appear to be betraying the legacy of Torrijos. So, Perez Balladares made additional demands concerning the CMA, shortening its initial duration and limiting its scope of operations, that he knew the US government would not accept.

Although Washington was frustrated by Perez Balladares' abrupt about face and repeatedly stated that an agreement had to be reached soon, US decisionmakers opted to wait until after the 30 August 1998 referendum on reelection before closing the door to a continued US military presence after the year 2000. This willingness to wait out the referendum suggests that some high-level US officials and members of Congress are still very interested in keeping a US military presence in Panama. There are several reasons why some US decisionmakers and US agencies are pushing for a CMA in Panama. The Center, as envisioned by US negotiators, would greatly assist in “drug war” missions, would provide for a US military presence past the year 2000, would assist in maintaining a close association with Latin American militaries, and would

check Colombian and Chinese influence in the Isthmus. Although the Cold War has passed into history, US strategic planners are still preoccupied with maintaining US military and economic power in the Western Hemisphere. Hegemony is still a prime consideration in US policy toward Latin America, even if the communist threat has become irrelevant.

The results of the referendum on reelection were disappointing for those who wanted a CMA. Those who voted “No” to presidential reelection outnumbered, by 2 to 1, those who supported Perez Balladares’ bid for another term in the Palace of the Herons, Panama’s presidential palace. With President Perez Balladares a lame duck, and general elections scheduled for May 1999, it is very unlikely that there will be an agreement between the Panamanian and US governments on a continued US military presence under the auspices of a CMA. When 31 December 1999 rolls around, as of now, all US military forces will have to evacuate Panamanian soil as stipulated by the 1977 Carter-Torrijos treaties.

VII. After the Year 2000: Hegemony and Regional Security Preserved.

By analyzing US-Panama relations with a long-term perspective we can learn more about US foreign policy than by simply looking at the crisis of the 1980s, the so-called Noriega years. First, we can conclude that US policy toward Panama has been neither erratic, inconsistent, nor confused, as most analysts of the Noriega crisis contend. On the contrary, US policy toward Panama demonstrates that officials in Washington have for one century carried out policies that have greatly assisted in expanding and maintaining US economic and strategic interests in the region. When the US government finally agreed to change its relations with Panama significantly, with the 1977 Canal Treaties, it did so only after it was certain that such a treaty was imperative for the preservation of US interests in the region, and even globally. The “loss” of the Panama Canal was agreed to, yet only barely, after US decision-makers became convinced that the waterway, an engineering marvel at the dawn of the 20th century, had out-lived its utility. This is not to say that the Panama canal is no longer important, but to recognize that the current canal is in need of extensive, and costly improvements. While US foreign policy certainly has characteristics of confusion, since many institutions, domestic politics, and individuals all leave their particular marks, in the final, historical analysis, US policy toward Panama shows remarkable continuity, logic and purpose.

Second, we can see that the Noriega crisis was not the result of bungled US foreign policy but rather the confluence of a variety of factors that soured US-Panama relations and forced the US government to eliminate a military regime it had helped to create. While the military government under the control of General Torrijos guaranteed order and US interests in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, that praetorian government became a loose cannon in the 1980s when US policy desired a return to civilian rule and needed a cooperative regime. The Noriega regime was able to achieve a great deal of autonomy, greatly reducing US influence, because the PDF had grown strong with US backing, had acquired a great deal of capital from international lending institutions, and had acquired a great deal of wealth from illegal ventures, such as drug trafficking and arms sales. Led by Noriega, a man who had learned to resent US power and influence, this government decided to resist US influence, leading it toward an inevitable collision

course with Washington. US government officials decided to invade Panama only after it became clear that the Noriega regime could threaten the operation of the Panama Canal and once Noriega became less useful in Washington's Central American strategic policy, after the 1986 Iran-Contra hearings.

On December 31, 1999, many critics of the 1977 Panama Canal Treaties will lament the "loss" of Panama. They will point to the loss of bases, the loss of the Canal, and the loss of a US presence in the region as a failure by policymakers to preserve vital US interests. However, policy experts will know that Panama is inheriting an antiquated waterway, and that a forward presence is no longer vital for US military force projection. Additionally, US economic interests do not require control of the Canal as it did at the dawning of this century, and US military interests do not require bases in Panama to for strategic denial in the Western Hemisphere. Certainly, for some US agencies, like the NSA, CIA, Drug Enforcement Administration, and some segments of the DoD, a CMA in Panama would be a good thing to have. However, a CMA is not vital for the preservation of US interests in the Western Hemisphere. US hegemony in Latin America is now secure. The nations of the region have adopted the US model of democracy and capitalism, and the likelihood that an alternative model will emerge even in several decades is virtually nil.

References

- Arias de Prada, Raul. Asi Fue el Fraude: Las Elecciones Presidenciales de Panama 1984, segunda edicion. Panama: Edilito, S.A., 1984.
- Arosemena, Diogenes A. Historia Documental del Canal de Panama, segunda edicion, volumen II. Panama: Editorial Mariano Arosemena, 1997.
- Berger, Mark T. Under Northern Eyes: Latin American Studies and US Hegemony in the Americas 1898-1990. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995.
- C. Fred Bergsten, Robert Keohane, and Joseph Nye, "International Economics and International Politics: A Framework for Analysis," International Organization 29 (1975).
- Boersner, Demetrio. Relaciones Internacionales de America Latina: Breve Historia, quinta edicion. Caracas: Editorial Nueva Sociedad, 1996.
- Buckley, Kevin. Panama: The Whole Story. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991.
- Conniff, Michael L. Panama and the United States: The Forced Alliance. Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 1992.
- Department of Defense. "The Military Value of the Panama Canal." Commander's Digest 19 (March 25, 1976).
- Dinges, John. Our Man in Panama. New York: Random House, 1990.
- Falcoff, Mark. Panama's Canal: What Happens When the United States Gives a Small Country What It Wants. Washington DC: AEI Press, 1998.
- Fernandez, Ronald. Cruising the Caribbean: US Influence and Intervention in the Twentieth Century. Monroe: Common Courage Press, 1995.
- Gill, Stephen. American Hegemony and the Trilateral Commission. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Guevara Mann, Carlos. Ilegitimidad y Hegemonia: Una Interpretacion Historica del Militarismo Panameño. Panama: Editorial La Prensa, 1994.
- Gurdian Guerra, Reymundo. La Presencia Militar de los Estados Unidos en Panama: Antecedentes, Evolucion y Perspectivas. Panama: Universidad de Panama, 1998.
- Hersh, Seymour. "Panamanian Strongman Said to Trade in Drugs, Arms and Illicit Money." The New York Times, June 12, 1986.
- Janson Perez, Brittmarie. Golpes y Tratados: Piezas Para el Rompecabezas de Nuestra Historia. Panama: Litho Editorial Chen, S.A., 1997.

- Jorden, William J. Panama Odyssey. Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1984.
- Kempe, Frederick. Divorcing the Dictator: America's Bungled Affair With Noriega. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1990.
- Kempe, Frederick. "The Panama Debacle," in Conflict Resolution and Democratization in Panama: Implications for US Policy, edited by Eva Loser. Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1992.
- Kindleberger, Charles. The World in Depression, 1929-1939. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.
- Koster, R.M., and Sánchez, Guillermo. In the Time of the Tyrants: Panama, 1968-1990. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990.
- LaFeber, Walter. The Panama Canal: The Crisis in Historical Perspective, updated edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Leis, Raul. Comando Sur: Poder Hostil, 2da edicion. Panama: Centro de Estudios y Accion Social Panameño, 1985.
- Major, John. Prize Possession: The United States and the Panama Canal, 1903-1979. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Martinez H., Milton. Una Crisis Sin Fin: Panama 1978-1990. Panama: Impresora Pacifico, 1990.
- Pastor, Robert A. El Remolino: Politica Exterior de Estados Unidos Hacia America Latina y el Caribe, traduccion de Martin Mur Ubasart. Mexico D.F.: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, S.A., 1995.
- Ropp, Steve C. "Explaining the Long-Term Maintenance of a Military Regime: Panama Before the U.S. Invasion." World Politics 44 (January 1992): 210-234.
- Ropp, Steve C. Panamanian Politics: From Guarded Nation to National Guard. New York: Paeger, 1982.
- Scranton, Margaret E. The Noriega Years: US-Panamanian Relations, 1981-1990. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991.
- Skidmore, David. "Foreign Policy Interest Groups and Presidential Power: Jimmy Carter and the Battle over Ratification of the Panama Canal Treaties." Presidential Studies Quarterly 23 (Summer 1993): 477-497.
- Smith III, Ted J., and Hogan, J. Michael. "Public Opinion and the Panama Canal Treaties of 1977." The Public Opinion Quarterly 51 (Spring 1987): 5-30.
- "Tema Central," (various authors) Tareas 97 (1997): 5-88.

U.S. Southern Command. "Profile of the United States Southern Command." Fact Sheet.
Headquarters, U.S. Southern Command, Quarry Heights, Panama, August 19, 1997.

Velasquez, Osvaldo. Historia de Una Dictadura: De Torrijos a Noriega. Panama: Litho Editorial
Chen, S.A., 1993.