

spending are self-serving insofar as "savings" are geared to meeting foreign debt and other structural adjustment program fiscal stringency guidelines. A difference would be made, in these circles, between reducing defense spending for the sake of enhancing health and educational programs, as opposed to reducing spending for the sake of budgetary orthodoxy. High sounding declarations of support for development and democracy are questioned by others who point at the power realities inherent in the modern global political economy spelling hostility to the implementation of redistributive policies that would reduce social polarization and enhance social justice.

There are other questions which must be addressed. Does it automatically follow that decreased aid will lead to greater development spending? Is there not evidence to suggest that increasing aid would allow recipients to spend more for military purposes? Or, less likely, that military aid permits recipients to preserve more of their own resources for non-military purposes? One must also distinguish between spending for prestige or kickback-laden weaponry largely irrelevant to a region's security threats (in Latin America, this means drug trafficking and organized crime), as opposed to purchases of equipment which is relevant, such as helicopters, police cars or communication technology.²

In any case, there may be an unfair tendency to generalize for the entire so called Third World on the basis of a reduced number of governments who put armies before their peoples. In Latin America at least spending on defense is down to 1.7% of its collective GDP as opposed to 3.1% in 1985. Yet fear of an arms race is growing, driven not only by local armies but also by the Pentagon and US arms makers currently pressing for a ban on sales of more advanced products to Latin America.

Aid Linkage, Conversion and Civil-Military Relations

Many of the arguments are valid but they can and must not negate the central contention that

²Ernie Regehr, "Military Spending and Development Aid to the Third World," *Ploughshares Monitor* (March, 1992); "Latin American Arms," *The Economist*, October 5, 1996.