

I am Major Frank Rivera, Airborne and Ranger Advisor to the Colombian Army.

I am one of several Advisors stationed here in Bogota to advise and assist the Republic of Colombia in the ~~maintenance of a modern army~~ ~~construction and~~ maintenance of a modern army...from military schools to units in the field.

Bogota is a modern city of a million and a half people. It is central to the country and is the capitol. Spanish conquest of this 4th largest South American country began ~~around~~ 1500. Bogota was founded in 1536 and the country remained under Spanish Colonial Rule until several small revolts culminated in the establishment of a Junta at Bogota in 1810.

That same year saw the rough beginnings of todays Escuela Militar located in Bogota. Those men who would command the Colombian Army began receiving some tactical instructions.

Following some setbacks in his wars of liberation against Spanish rule, the liberator Simon Bolivar ~~entered~~ ^{entered} Bogota victoriously entered Bogota in 1819. The revolutionary Congress proclaimed the Republic of Gran Colombia embracing ~~three~~ ^{but} countries. ~~and~~ By 1830, Venezuela and Ecuador broke from the group. ~~and~~ ^{and} the remaining provinces became Colombia by name in 1863.

Colombia...like the other six Latin nations liberated by General Bolivar...inherited a deep military tradition based largely on him. Before he died in Colombia he had said..." I go the way of arms...only because of the glory they give".

The traditions he established are yet honored at today's modern Escuela Militar. The curriculum of instruction for future Colombian Officers blends tradition with physics, language, horsemanship, military drill, ~~and~~ the technology of modern arms and tactics.

The ~~new~~ Academy ~~had~~ sustained many interruptions trying to get started during the war against Spain. From the hurried tactical instructions in 1810, the Army School was founded in 1813 with engineering for guns its

primary aim. The Spaniards destroyed this start three years later.

In 1833, General Santander...who had assisted Bolivar in taking Bogota... announced obligatory Army service...and the push began to unite the military and science communities. The Escuela Militar was again begun in 1848 with attention focused on mathematics. It ~~was~~ closed again with the end of the war in 1853.

Opened again in 1866 under the name 'Escuela de Ingenieria Civil y later Militar'...it/became the Escuela Militar ~~in~~ which ground to a halt during the 'Thousand Days War' in 1899.

The Escuela Militar was finally opened for good in 1907. In memory of the three founders...38 original cadets were graduated from the school. ~~the~~ ~~spectrum~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~in~~ ~~Colombia~~ ~~covered~~ ~~by~~ ~~the~~ ~~three~~ ~~men~~ The spectrum of life from religion to politics was covered by the professions of these three men. General Rafael Reyes....President of Colombia at the time....General Rafael Uribe...Minister of Colombia in Chile..assembled the first technical group.....and the Bishop of Bogota, Bernardo Herrera Restrepo, gave his moral support to the establishment of the Academy.

By 1943 the Academy had moved into ~~the~~ its present buildings in northern Bogota. A year earlier, high school courses had been adopted as a working base....and ~~in~~ 1962, university-level courses were added to the curriculum.

The prospective Officers also receive complete training in military subjects. And just as Academic subjects are updated and kept current with new methods, new developments....both in material and tactics....are constantly introduced into the military aspect of the curriculum. In connection with this...as well as with the overall operation of a Military Academy....~~is~~ ~~not~~ ~~like~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ a USMILGP to Colombia advisor has been assigned to the Escuela Militar.

LTC Grugan is this advisor. He is a West Point graduate..Class
of . He has been in Colombia since , and while here has been
doing

His job as Advisor to the Escuela Militar has many facets. He

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