

THE CRISIS IN COLOMBIA: WHAT ARE WE FACING?

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE,
DRUG POLICY, AND HUMAN RESOURCES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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THE CRISIS IN COLOMBIA: WHAT ARE WE FACING?

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2000

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY,
AND HUMAN RESOURCES,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m., in room 2247, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. John L. Mica (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Mica, Barr, Gilman, Shays, Ros-Lehtinen, Souder, Ose, Mink, Cummings, Kucinich, Tierney, and Schakowsky.

Also present: Representatives Burton, Ballenger, and Green.

Staff present: Sharon Pinkerton, staff director; Gil Macklin, professional staff member; Charley Diaz, congressional fellow; Lisa Wandler, clerk; Cherri Branson, minority counsel; and Jean Gosa, minority assistant clerk.

Mr. MICA. Good morning. I would like to call this hearing of the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources to order. Today, our topic is the United States' response to the crisis in Colombia.

We will start today's proceeding with opening statements by Members. We have three witness panels to hear from today, so we will move forward and hopefully be joined by some of our other colleagues in the next few minutes.

With those comments, let me first make my opening statement.

Today, this House subcommittee will examine the United States' response to the growing crisis in Colombia. We will take this opportunity to review the administration's track record of delivering resources, including previously authorized counterdrug aid and equipment to Colombia, as well as examine the current Colombian aid proposal.

This hearing will serve as the first real public hearing of the issue since the administration submitted its billion-dollar-plus emergency supplemental aid package.

Our hemisphere and the United States are facing one of the greatest challenges to its national security as the situation in Colombia continues to deteriorate. Left unchecked, the narco-terrorist threat in Colombia will continue to spiral out of control, threatening Latin America's oldest democracy and leading to regional instability.

As the illegal drug trade continues to grow, it fuels narco-terrorism, undermines legitimate government institutions, and leads to increasing violence in the region. The impact of this destabilization in the region will have a devastating impact on the U.S. national security interests.

After years of pleading and pressure by House Members and Members of Congress, I appreciate that, finally, the administration has submitted to Congress a Colombian aid proposal, which has just arrived. It arrived 7 months after General McCaffrey sounded the alarm, calling the situation in Colombia an emergency, and 4 months after the Pastrana government submitted Plan Colombia, asking for United States assistance.

[The information referred to follows:]

**U.S. Support for Plan Colombia
and the Andean Region**

Office of National Drug Control Policy

February 2000



SUPPORT FOR PLAN COLOMBIA & ANDEAN REGION

I. RESOURCE SUMMARY

(Budget Authority in Millions)

	2000 Request	2001 Request
Drug Resources by Program		
Push into Southern Colombia	\$511.7	\$87.5
Andean Regional Interdiction	238.2	102.4
Colombian National Police	67.5	27.7
Alternative Economic Development	92.0	53.0
Boost Governing Capacity	45.0	47.5
Total	<u>\$954.4</u>	<u>\$318.1</u>
Drug Resources by Department/Agency		
Department of Defense	\$136.8	\$62.4
Department of Justice	20.5	29.0
Department of Justice/DEA	3.0	3.7
Department of State	595.5	132.5
Agency for International Development	127.5	90.5
Department of the Treasury/OFAC	2.1	0.0
Department of the Treasury/Customs	68.0	0.0
Office of National Drug Control Policy	1.0	0.0
Total	<u>\$954.4</u>	<u>\$318.1</u>

Building on current funding of over \$330 million in FY2000 and FY2001, this proposal includes an additional \$818 million funded through international affairs programs (federal budget function 150) and \$137 million through defense programs (budget function 050) in FY 2000. These new resources are requested as an emergency supplemental appropriation in FY 2000.

In FY 2001, \$256 million is requested through budget function 150 and \$62 million through function 050. These programs will be administered by the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, and Treasury, as well as the Agency for International Development (USAID), the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Office of National Drug Control Policy. All funds in FY 2000 and FY 2001 are scored as 100 percent drug-related as part of the National Drug Control Budget and support the International drug budget function and Goal 5 of the National Drug Control Strategy.

II. PROGRAM SUMMARY

Colombia's Crisis

An estimated 80 percent of the cocaine that enters the United States originates in or passes through Colombia. Colombia also produces up to six metric tons of heroin annually, much of which is shipped to the United States. Cultivation of coca, the raw material for cocaine, has nearly tripled in Colombia since 1992. In addition, Colombian traffickers and coca farmers have recently adopted new cultivation and processing techniques, increasing the amount of drugs processed from each acre of crop. Colombia now cultivates more than half of the coca leaf grown in the world. If unchecked, the rapid expansion of coca crops and cocaine production in

Colombia threatens to increase significantly the global supply of cocaine over the next several years.

Government of Colombia (GOC) efforts to attack the drug trade are hampered by the fact that guerrillas and paramilitary groups, the main actors in Colombia's long internal conflict, control the major drug-producing regions. In addition to these illegal armed groups, organized drug mafias continue to control the international aspects of Colombia's drug trade. Aside from their involvement in the drug trade, the guerrillas and paramilitaries are also engaged in fighting each other and the GOC in an almost forty-year-old internal conflict, which has left thirty thousand dead. The two largest guerrilla groups, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN), and right-wing paramilitary groups have contributed to the erosion of democratic institutions in Colombia through corruption, kidnapping, murder, and other violence. Due to this violence, there have been 1.5 million people displaced in Colombia over the last 15 years.

Meanwhile, the Colombian economy is undergoing its first recession in 25 years, and the deepest recession of the last 70 years. Real gross domestic product is estimated to have fallen by 3.5 percent last year – the result of external shocks, fiscal imbalances, and a further weakening of confidence related to stepped up activity by insurgent groups. Unemployment has rocketed from under 9 percent in 1995 to about 20 percent in 1999, adding to the pool of unemployed workers who can be drawn into the drug trade or into insurgent or paramilitary groups. The deep recession has also sapped the Colombian government of resources to respond to its internal conflict, fight the drug trade, or address societal and political pressures.

Government of Colombia Response – *Plan Colombia*

The democratically elected government of Colombian President Andres Pastrana devised a comprehensive, integrated strategy, *Plan Colombia*, to address Colombia's drug and interrelated social and economic troubles. This program will cost \$7.5 billion to implement. Colombia will pay most of the cost itself, and President Pastrana is seeking \$3.5 billion in foreign assistance from the U.S. and other international donors. President Pastrana's plan focuses on five strategic issues:

- The peace process;
- The Colombian economy;
- The counter-drug strategy;
- The reform of the justice system and the protection of human rights; and
- Democratization and social development.

These five planks respond to Colombia's most severe problems comprehensively. The key to all of them is strengthening democratic institutions. Repairing the economy will make it easier for the Colombian people to provide for themselves and will decrease the lure of the drug trade and other illicit activity. Combating the drug trade will reduce corruption, allow for legitimate economic development, and remove a major source of economic support from the illegal armed groups who create havoc within Colombian society. This, in turn, will make the negotiating table a more attractive setting than the battlefield for solving problems. Decreasing

the scale of the internal conflict also will facilitate the reform of human rights and the justice system. Illegal armed groups will no longer be in a position to control and abuse the Colombian people, and the GOC will be able to focus on reforms within the government more than combating insurgents. True democratization and social development will bring better governance to the Colombian people.

Proposed U.S. Support for *Plan Colombia*

Over FY 2000 and FY 2001, the Administration proposes \$1.6 billion in assistance. This builds on current funding for Colombia of over \$330 million, and it includes an increase of \$1.3 billion in support of *Plan Colombia* – consisting of an emergency supplemental appropriation of \$954 million in FY 2000 and new funding of \$318 million in FY 2001. Since there is no single solution to Colombia's difficulty, the proposed U.S. aid is an integrated combination of funds for Colombian counterdrug efforts and for other programs to help President Pastrana strengthen democracy and promote prosperity. The Administration is also encouraging U.S. allies and the international institutions to assist Colombia in implementing President Pastrana's *Plan Colombia*. Further, the budget proposal would provide additional funding to support counterdrug regional interdiction and alternative development programs to shore up significant gains against drug production in Peru and Bolivia and prevent the traffickers from moving their operations to avoid law enforcement. It is in the national interest of the United States to stem the flow of illegal drugs and to promote stability and strengthen democracy in Colombia and the Andean region.

The proposed United States' contribution to support *Plan Colombia* has five components centered around reducing the supply of Colombian drugs to the United States: a push into southern Colombia coca growing areas, increased drug interdiction, greater support of Colombian National Police eradication efforts, alternative economic development, and assistance to boost Colombia's local and national governing capacity, including enhanced justice and human rights protection.

- **Push into Southern Colombia Coca Growing Areas** (\$512 million in FY 00; \$88 million in FY 01): The world's greatest expansion in drug cultivation is occurring in insurgent-dominated southern Colombia. With this package, the Administration proposes to fund \$599 million over the next two years to help train and equip two special counter-narcotics battalions (CNBN), which, in addition to the CNBN that the U.S. just trained, will round out a counter-narcotics brigade. These forces will move into southern Colombia to protect the Colombian National Police (CNP), as they carry out their counterdrug mission. CNBN mobility is paramount to the success of this effort. The package will provide 30 UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters and 15 UH-1N Huey helicopters, as well as funding to sustain 18 UH-1N Hueys now in Colombia. This will give the CNBNs the air-mobility they need to access remote and undeveloped regions of southern Colombia. The proposed assistance package will also provide resources to increase intelligence for the Colombian Joint Task Force – South, based at Tres Esquinas, which includes fully vetted participants from all the military services and the Colombian National Police. Further, the Administration's request will provide funds for shelter and assistance to the Colombian people who will be displaced due to the counterdrug effects of this push into the southern coca-growing regions of Colombia.

- **Counter-Narcotics Battalions:** The cornerstone of the push into southern Colombia will be the newly developed air-mobile counter-narcotic battalions (CNBNs). U.S. support for *Plan Colombia* provides funding for two such battalions, which, along with the 900-man battalion that already exists, will provide sufficient force to make this effort viable. These two battalions will be trained by U.S. troops on temporary duty in Colombia. This training will begin in March or April of 2000. The training of the two battalions will occur nearly simultaneously and should be completed about seven months after it begins. Thus, by late in this year the three-battalion force should be ready to conduct operations. In accordance with U.S. law and policy, the personnel for these CNBNs will be vetted for any signs of past involvement in human rights violations.
 - **Equipment:** These battalions will be equipped with U.S. equipment. It will cost about \$9 million to train and equip each battalion, roughly half going to cover training costs and half to provide non-lethal equipment (radios, uniforms, etc.). These costs will be funded through the Department of Defense. Another \$2 million per battalion for lethal equipment (weapons, ammunition) will be funded through the State Department.
 - **Training & Logistics:** These battalions will have substantial logistics capability along with combat capability, which will enable them to be reasonably self-sustaining. They will also have a self-contained capacity to train replacement personnel to fill slots as soldiers leave. The Administration's request includes \$3 million in FY 2001 to sustain training for the CNBNs and provide counterdrug training to other vetted Colombian forces involved in counterdrug missions. These troops will also be thoroughly vetted for compliance with human rights standards.
 - **Sustainment:** \$36 million over two years is also included to cover sustainment costs for the CNBNs (food, ammunition, fuel, etc.), force protection (construction of bunkers, perimeter lighting, etc. at existing Colombian Army facilities), and logistical support improvements for these units (training and equipping logistics personnel, including computers).
 - **Operations:** Initial operations by the Colombian National Police (CNP) and CNBNs will focus on the fringe of the coca growing areas of Putumayo and Caqueta and in the areas closest to existing operational bases. This will allow forces to gain operational experience in the field before they become fully air-mobile. It will also allow time for improvements to forward operating sites and will ease the integration of the helicopters into their operations.
- **Helicopters:** The U.S. proposal includes FY 00-01 funding of \$452 million to provide 30 UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters and 15 UH-1N Huey helicopters to the Colombian army, as well as funds to operate and maintain them. These helicopters will augment 18 UH-1Ns already in Colombia for the CNBNs and will provide the CNBNs the mobility and rapid access to undeveloped areas that they will need to support and protect the CNP in the remote southern coca-growing regions. The quantity and type of helicopters

chosen is intended to optimize the operations of the CNBNs by providing the Colombian Army the maximum capability at a reasonable cost. Giving each soon-to-be-trained CNBN dedicated aviation support will allow it to maintain a high operations tempo in support of the CNP's drug eradication effort.

- **Blackhawks v. Hueys:** While the UH-1N helicopters are less capable than the Blackhawks, they are also less expensive, easier to maintain, and faster to assimilate into operations because they only require modifications to existing airframes, while the Blackhawks are new production airframes. The Blackhawks, while more expensive and more complex to maintain, can fly farther and faster than the Hueys, carry more soldiers, and they are better suited to operate in the high elevations and hot conditions of Colombia. The GOC currently has 28 Blackhawks among its security forces.

Blackhawk and Huey Comparison

Specifications	UH-60 Blackhawk	UH-1N Huey
Maximum Range (nautical miles)	306	230
Cruising Speed (knots)	150	110
Troop-Carrying Capacity	11 to 20*	8 to 12*

* depending upon configuration

- **Delivery:** Anticipated delivery of the final 15 Huey helicopters will begin four months after funding is obtained. Blackhawk delivery at a rate of approximately 3 per month will commence 14 months after receiving funding. Pilots for the Hueys will largely be a combination of Colombian contractors and service members with some on contract from other Latin American countries. After being trained on the Hueys, pilots will then shift to Blackhawks.
- **Tactical Surveillance and Intelligence:** To support ground-based tactical surveillance and intelligence collection requirements, the request includes funds for procurement as well as operations and maintenance costs of low-altitude, long-duration reconnaissance aircraft with Forward-Looking Infrared Radar (FLIR). The request also includes other specialized intelligence-gathering equipment.
- **Humanitarian Assistance:** U.S. support for *Plan Colombia* also addresses the societal impact of the push into southern Colombia through meeting the needs of displaced persons, supporting human rights delegates to the region, strengthening local governments, and providing alternative economic development.
- **Displaced Persons:** The eradication of coca crops will hurt the illicit economy and will force some people to move to find employment. The U.S. proposal supports the positioning of international organizations, such as the Red Cross and the International Organization for Migration, as well as Colombian NGOs, to deal with the workers that will be displaced by the eradication campaign. Displaced persons will receive a 90-day emergency benefits package, followed by a "Contingency Plan" sponsored by

PLANTE (Colombia's alternative development agency), covering the time of return until the onset of a viable alternative development program.

- **Human Rights:** To address the expected increase in violence arising from the eradication effort, the Agency for International Development (USAID) will provide support to the human rights delegates of the National Ombudsman's office to circulate where possible in Putumayo and Caqueta.
 - **Aid to Municipal Governments:** In order to foster the recovery of municipalities once illicit production has been destroyed, USAID will provide simple grants for public infrastructure. To obtain a grant, the municipal government must meet criteria for transparency in financial management and active participation in alternative development. USAID will also establish *Casas de Justicia* in conflictive areas of Putumayo and Caqueta, as security permits.
 - **Small Farmers:** Finally, for those small farmers who do not leave the region, USAID will assist the GOC to implement an alternative development program of licit crop substitution, improved local governance, and environmental management similar to the program initiated in the rest of Colombia.
- **More Aggressive Andean Regional Interdiction** (\$238 million in FY 00; \$102 million in FY 01): Coca and cocaine are produced in a relatively small area of Colombia, while the Central American/Caribbean/Eastern Pacific transit zone is approximately the size of the United States. Enhancing Colombia's ability to interdict air, water-borne, and road trafficking attacks the narrow end of this funnel, which is essential to decreasing the northward flow of drugs. Proposed U.S. support includes funding over the next two years for radar upgrades to track suspect targets, aircraft (AC-37 and OV-10) and airfield upgrades to give Colombia a greater ability to intercept traffickers, and intelligence support to allow the Colombian police and military to respond quickly to drug activity. Proposed funding will also support the U.S. forward operating location in Manta, Ecuador. Additionally, these funds will provide assistance to enhance interdiction efforts in Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador to prevent drug traffickers and growers from moving into neighboring countries. Key among the U.S. funding proposals are the following:
 - **Forward Operating Locations (FOLs):** As a consequence of the 1977 Panama Canal Treaty, U.S. Forces were required to withdraw from the Republic of Panama by December 31, 1999. In order to continue regional drug interdiction, replacement operating locations were identified in Ecuador and Aruba/Curacao, with one more location to be chosen in Central America. U.S. support for *Plan Colombia* provides \$38.6 million for initial construction of a U.S. Forward Operating Location (FOL) in Manta, Ecuador, where the U.S. has already negotiated a long-term presence. This FOL will provide the U.S. Government with the capability to enter the source zone rapidly and remain on-station longer, without the need for aerial refueling.

- **U.S. Customs Service Support:** The FY 2000 emergency supplemental request would also fund \$68 million for the U.S. Customs Service to replace APS 138 radar systems in four P-3 AEW (Airborne Early Warning) drug interdiction aircraft with the new APS 145 system. The Customs P-3 aircraft is used for drug interdiction and will emphasize detection and monitoring in the cocaine source zones, primarily Colombia. The Customs radar systems are purchased from and maintained by the Department of the Navy. The Navy will soon stop purchasing and providing regular support for the APS 138 radar, when it completes the conversion of active aircraft to the new APS 145 radar system. The \$68 million would fund the one-time cost of upgrading the four radar systems to the new APS 145 system.
- **Air Reconnaissance:** The request includes funds to enhance further Colombian Air Force airborne reconnaissance capability and CNBN protection. For tracking airborne aircraft, the request includes procurement of two nose-mounted F-16 radars for installation on two C-26 aircraft, giving Colombia an air-to-air tracking capability. Additionally, the Plan calls for outfitting two AC-47 aircraft, bringing the Colombian inventory up to six such aircraft. The AC-47 provides close air support protection to the CNBNs. One aircraft would be outfitted with a Forward-Looking Infrared Radar (FLIR) and a second aircraft would be outfitted with a FLIR, night vision cockpit, and fire control system.
- **Colombian National Police (CNP)** (\$68 million in FY 00; \$28 million in FY 01): The Administration proposes additional funding of \$96 million over the next two years to enhance the CNP's ability to eradicate coca and poppy fields. This will upgrade existing CNP UH-1H Hueys to Super Hueys (greater speed, lift, range), purchase additional spray aircraft, provide secure bases for increased operations in the coca-growing center, and provide more intelligence on drug traffickers. Eradication is an essential component effecting the economics of the drug trade. The CNP's ability to eradicate cultivation deep in FARC territory and at high altitudes has been hindered by weak security and inadequate equipment. This funding, in conjunction with the establishment of the CNBNs, will enable the CNP to conduct operations in drug-growing areas previously beyond their reach.
- **Alternative Economic Development** (\$92 million in FY 00; \$53 million in FY 01): The Administration includes new funding of \$145 million over the next two years to provide economic alternatives for Colombian farmers who now grow coca and poppy. The request also increases local government's ability to respond to the needs of their people. Through PLANTE, Colombia's alternative development agency, U.S. funds will provide basic social infrastructure to communities committed to voluntary eradication. Assistance will increase communities' productivity through credit and technical assistance for planting and marketing replacement crops. As interdiction and eradication make illicit farming less profitable and appealing, these programs will assist communities in the transition to licit economic activity. Included in this proposal is \$30 million to fund alternative development in Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador. Also included is \$25 million to assist internally displaced persons. USAID will provide basic social services for individuals displaced by violence and conflict.

- **Boosting Governing Capacity** (\$45 million in FY 00; \$48 million in FY 01): The Administration proposes funding of \$93 million over the next two years to boost the governing capacity of the GOC. The majority of this aid is dedicated to justice-related projects to be undertaken by DOJ and USAID. U.S. assistance includes increased training for the police, prosecutors and judges in areas of human rights, drugs, maritime and border security, corruption, kidnapping, and money laundering/asset forfeiture cases. Funds will also be used for the security of witnesses, judges, and prosecutors in the criminal justice system, as well as assistance in prison design and administration. Additionally, U.S. support for *Plan Colombia* will provide for procedural and legislative reforms to ensure that the system functions fairly and effectively, with particular emphasis on the transition to an accusatory system, including oral trials. There must also be close coordination between civilian and military justice systems to ensure that any member of the armed forces implicated in human rights abuses is properly investigated and held accountable for crimes. Projects to strengthen governance capacity, particularly in the area of human rights and the rule of law, include:
 - **Human Rights Strengthening:** Funds training and support for human rights non-governmental organizations, as well as government investigators and prosecutors, including a specialized human rights task force (approximately \$15 million over two years).
 - **Judicial Reform:** Funds efforts to move to a modern accusatory system, as well as the expansion of USAID's *Casas de Justicia* program (approximately \$12 million over two years).
 - **Training to Support the Administration of Justice:** Funds training for all actors involved with the Administration of Justice, including judges, prosecutors, defense lawyers and police (approximately \$10 million over two years).
 - **Security for Witnesses and Justice Officials:** Training and support to develop an effective security program for witnesses and justice officials (approximately \$5 million over two years).
 - **Anti-Corruption Campaign:** Funds anti-corruption prevention programs and funding for an anti-corruption task force (approximately \$6 million over two years).
 - **Counterdrug Law Enforcement:** Funds support for counterdrug task force and bilateral and multilateral case initiatives, illustrated by the recent Operation Millennium and the arrest of, among others, Fabio Ochoa of the Medellin Cartel (approximately \$8.5 million over two years).
 - **Financial Crimes Enforcement and Asset Management Assistance:** Funds support for task forces to fight money laundering (in particular the Black Market Peso Exchange) and seek asset forfeiture of ill-gotten gains, as well as support for a newly created Financial Intelligence Unit (approximately \$11 million over two years).

- **Prison Security Upgrades:** Funds improved procedures and training for a corrections force. This includes little in the way of physical construction until necessary reforms are put in place (approximately \$8 million over two years).
- **Maritime and Port Security:** Funds support for maritime enforcement task forces and port security (approximately \$4 million over two years).
- **Anti-kidnapping Strategy and Task Force:** Comprehensive program to investigate and prosecute kidnapping, including the development of a law enforcement task force and command center for communication and information sharing (approximately \$2 million over two years).

Mr. MICA. Because the United States' response has been slow to assist Colombia in combatting narco-terrorism, that country now supplies 80 percent—some 80 percent of the world's cocaine. This explosion in coca cultivation from Peru and Bolivia to Colombia has occurred in just the past 4 or 5 years.

The explosion in poppy cultivation in Colombia is equally disturbing and even more recent than what we have seen with coca. Through the DEA's Heroin Signature program, we know that Colombia, not the Far East, accounts for some 75 percent of the heroin seized on United States streets. We have a chart up here that denotes that. From the Signature program, they can almost identify the fields where that heroin is coming from, the source of it.

Several years ago, Colombia grew only enough poppies to fill a flower arrangement. What used to be a supply of hard drugs being processed and transited through Colombia has turned into a torrent and glut of deadly narcotics pouring across our borders.

Both drugs and the death that accompany drugs are spilling onto our shores, and American blood also has been spilled on Colombian soil. Last summer, five American men and women from the United States Army were killed in the line of duty in Colombia when their United States' reconnaissance plane crashed on a mountain in a counterdrug mission which took place in narco-guerilla territory. This marks the first time in United States history that American military personnel have been killed in action in Colombia's drug war.

In addition to these five Americans, three United States contract pilots have been killed in Colombia over the past 2 years. Three Americans were abducted and brutally murdered by the FARC, which is Colombia's largest group of drug trafficking guerrillas, and that took place earlier this year. Numerous Americans have been kidnapped by Colombian narco-guerrillas. In fact, the longest held U.S. hostages are three American missionaries from my district, who have been unaccounted for since 1993.

In short, despite years of congressional pleas for counterdrug assistance to Colombia, countless hearings and intense congressional efforts, resources approved by Congress have failed to be provided to Colombia. Someone must be held accountable for the disaster that is now at our doorstep.

Time and again, the Clinton administration has ignored the emerging situation in Colombia, despite congressional oversight hearings that have tried repeatedly to call attention to the impending crisis.

To borrow a phrase, the record is a "flipping disaster."

First, information sharing was denied—and let's just take a quick second to look at how we got in this situation.

First, information sharing was denied in 1994, turning the situation into sheer chaos, as my colleague from California, Steve Horn, so aptly described. As you will recall, as of May 1, 1994, the Department of Defense decided unilaterally to stop sharing real-time intelligence regarding aerial traffic and drugs with both Colombia and Peru. Now, as I understand it, that decision, which hasn't been completely resolved, has thrown diplomatic relations with host countries into chaos.

That was a comment in a hearing by Congressman Steve Horn, August 2, 1994. I put that up for the subcommittee to review.

In 1996 and 1997, when this administration decertified Colombia without a national interest waiver, it severely undermined the legitimate drug-fighting efforts of General Serrano and the Colombia National Police, cutting off international military education, training, and critical equipment to that country.

Even worse, today, the absence of United States intelligence sharing, due in part to the reduced air coverage after the forced closure of Howard Air Force Base in Panama, our drug counterefforts in the region have been further crippled.

We held a hearing on this GAO report, and I think it was quite enlightening to see that even pleas by the United States Ambassador from Peru asking that surveillance flights be kept up and also warning that, if we didn't participate, we would see more cocaine coming out of Peru and also out of Colombia. In fact, that prediction in 1998 has come true; because we have not paid attention to the requests even of officials of this administration who are on the front line.

While very publicly calling for \$1.6 billion in emergency aid last month at the White House, this administration requested only \$85 million in State Department INL funding for Colombia in the fiscal year 2000. The Congress passed a supplemental aid package to increase the funding for counternarcotics work in Colombia. Sadly, less than half of the equipment Congress funded in that bill has been delivered in an operational fashion. In fact, we found that up until just a few weeks ago, the three helicopters which account for the bulk of aid dollars, when finally delivered, sat idle for lack of proper armoring or ammunition.

The headline that is posted is interesting because—this is not the headline from a few weeks ago. This is a headline from 1998, in the Washington Times, “Delay of helicopters hobbles Colombia in stopping drugs.” As I said, we have been trying for years to get this equipment on-line in the real war on drugs. We find ourselves in the same situation, when we can't get three helicopters to Colombia with proper armoring and ammunition even in the last few months.

Another story that appeared in the paper—I haven't confirmed this, but I am told that it is certain—that the ammunition we asked to get to Colombia was delivered during the holidays to the loading docks of the State Department. It appears that, unfortunately, we have a gang that can't get the ammunition to shoot straight to Colombia where it is needed.

This administration, unfortunately, has resisted congressional efforts to ensure that needed drug-fighting equipment makes it to Colombia in a timely manner. This administration has fought the Congress for years on Blackhawk utility helicopters for the Colombian National Police and, unfortunately, has a pathetic track record of delivering the assistance. And I have shown, again, we are back here looking at trying to get these resources to where we know they are needed.

Unfortunately, nearly half of the \$954 million that is provided in the supplemental aid package for Colombia is for 30 Blackhawk

helicopters for the Colombian military, again, which we requested years ago to be on-line in Colombia to fight this battle.

Given the high costs of these assets and the poor delivery track record of the State Department, I am concerned about committing this amount of money to a program that has not worked well in the past. As chairman of this subcommittee, I want to ensure that the final aid package contains funds for programs that have a proven track record of success, and guarantees some way to transport this equipment in a timely fashion.

There are reports of increased activity by the 17,000 Marxist narco-terrorist guerrillas, also known as the FARC. This army of insurgents controls nearly 40 percent of the Colombian countryside. The FARC and the ELN are heavily financed by drug traffickers, with an estimated \$600 million coming directly or indirectly from illicit drug trade. The FARC army has gone largely unchecked and is now expanding beyond Colombia's borders.

I am deeply concerned about reports of FARC incursions into neighboring countries. The basic tenet of the administration's aid package is to use the Colombian military and the police to push into southern Colombia. I am also concerned that we do not allow the drug traffickers to simply shift production operations to neighboring countries, especially those with nonsecure borders like Ecuador, which has recently experienced domestic turmoil, and Panama.

With the price of coca leaf rising above the profitability level in Peru and Bolivia, I am also concerned that drug traffickers are not allowed to reactivate coca fields in those countries. We cannot afford to roll back years of successful eradication efforts in both Peru and Bolivia.

One of the points that will be made in today's hearing is that Colombia matters. It matters both economically and strategically. The United States can ill afford further instability in that region. With 20 percent of the United States daily supply of crude and refined oil imports coming from that area and with the vitally important Panama Canal located just 150 miles to the north, the national security and economic implications of Colombia's rebel activity spilling over into neighboring countries are enormous.

For all these reasons, I believe the final aid package must have a balanced regional approach. This subcommittee will continue to play a key role in ensuring that the United States' counterdrug aid to Colombia is both sufficient, appropriate, and also that those resources are delivered in a timely manner.

I am committed to continued congressional oversight of this issue, because I believe both the influx of illegal drugs to the United States is our greatest central challenge and also we face an insidious national security threat from the situation there.

I know that many of my colleagues share this concern. As we face this serious and growing challenge in Colombia, our vital interests are at stake. The situation in Colombia requires our immediate attention, but the nature and extent of the United States' aid needs to be carefully considered, especially in light of this administration's past track record.

This hearing hopefully will shed light on the situation in Colombia as we help frame the national debate on how to address the growing crisis.

I am pleased at this time to yield now to the ranking member of our subcommittee, the gentlelady from Hawaii, Mrs. Mink.

Mrs. MINK. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for your opening remarks, which I believe sets an appropriate tone for these hearings and for the congressional discussions to follow.

There is absolutely no doubt that there is a crisis in Colombia and that the United States has a great responsibility in addressing this particular crisis, particularly because of the drug issue. Colombia supplies 80 percent of the world's cocaine, and the DEA administration here in this country estimates that as much as 75 percent of the heroin that enters the United States originates in Colombia.

The aid package proposed by the President is \$1.6 billion total for Colombia, and it is the United States' response to requests from the Colombian Government to adopt its plan, which is basically to support the government's efforts in its own economic development or redevelopment, and at the same time answer the tremendous demands that the U.S. Government has with respect to limiting the production and transport of these dangerous drugs into the United States.

I believe that it is important, as we consider and deliberate on this issue of this particular package of assistance to Colombia, that we understand that there has been, in effect, a 35-year-old civil war in that country, which has killed 30,000 people and displaced over a million. We know that 40 percent of Colombia's territory is controlled by left-wing rebels. And the U.S. State Department, as well as human rights groups, have reported that paramilitary groups murder and kill civilians largely because of their political beliefs.

I have to note that, in February 1999, one of my constituents, Lahe'ena'e Gay, from the Big Island, was among three individuals who were brutally murdered. So I come to this hearing with no small concern about the situation in Colombia, the takeover by rebels and guerrillas and other individuals making governance almost impossible.

But, Mr. Chairman, it is unlikely that this long-standing pattern of civil war within Colombia can be changed by a \$1.6 billion insertion of money, certainly not in 2 years. It will probably require continued consideration by the Congress and continued allocation of funding.

Our primary concern, of course, is the continued enormous increase of the flow of illegal drugs into this country, and that is the national security issue that we are attempting to address. If we provide aid primarily in the form of military equipment, military expertise and military personnel, I believe it is naive to think that we will not become drawn deeper and deeper into the civil war unrest within their country. Therefore, we must consider the grave consequences to the United States of the introduction of increased numbers of U.S. service personnel who may become the next casualties in the Colombian civil unrest.

Americans have a long-standing skepticism about intervention in other country's civil wars. There have been notable exceptions in the interests of enforcing human rights abroad. The doctrine of nonintervention requires that we must be able to justify military action in terms of our national security interests. It is true that the

insurgents are funding their military efforts with the cultivation and sale of illegal drugs, most of which comes to the United States, but this does not obscure the fact that the support of the Government of Colombia will, with this type of an aid package, draw us further and further into the internal political situation of that country.

I believe it will be more sensible for us to tilt the balance of aid to direct more funding to nonmilitary purposes. If we were to assist the Colombian Government in developing its economy and building a viable infrastructure so that the goods and commodities that are grown by the people of Colombia can reach the international markets, I believe we would be better able to answer the long-range problems of that country.

While we, of course, support the Pastrana government, and I do so, I visited the area earlier in 1999, we have to remember that our primary interests of intervention in any form is the necessity to stop the production of cocaine and heroin and to prevent its introduction into the United States. We have to focus on this issue of interdiction and also with the additional funds enhance our law enforcement activities within the United States.

I am pleased that we have a very important and distinguished array of witnesses who can add to this debate, and I will be here to listen to their advice and response to questions which we put to them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentlelady.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Patsy T. Mink follows:]

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**STATEMENT OF
 CONGRESSWOMAN PATSY T. MINK
 "U.S. RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS IN COLOMBIA"**

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2000
 10:00 A.M.
 2247 RAYBURN HOUSE OFC. BLDG.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding today's hearing on the Administration's proposed \$1.6 billion assistance package to Colombia.

Colombia supplies 80% of the world's cocaine. Although the numbers are in flux, the Drug Enforcement Administration estimates that as much as 75% of the heroin that enters the United States originates in Colombia.

The aid package, proposed by the Administration after consultation with President Pastrana of Colombia, includes a \$954 million FY2000 emergency supplemental and \$318 million in FY2001. The plan's goal is to reduce the supply of drugs to the United States by assisting the government of Colombia in its efforts to limit the production, refinement, and transportation of cocaine and heroin.

These efforts will be carried out in a country where a 35-year-old civil war has killed about 30,000 people and displaced about 1 million people. About 40% of Colombia's territory is controlled by left-wing rebels. The State Department and human rights groups have reported that paramilitary groups murder and kill civilians because of their political beliefs.

Mr. Chairman, it is extremely unlikely that this entrenched, long-standing pattern can be changed in just two years. While we have a legitimate concern in protecting the United States' interest abroad and stemming the flow of illegal drugs into this country, a quick fix may not work.

If we provide aid primarily in the form of military equipment, expertise and personnel, it is naive to think that we will not become drawn deeper and deeper into this bloody, 30-year-old civil unrest. Further, we must consider the grave consequences if any U.S. service member or civilian should become a casualty of Colombia's civil unrest.

Americans have a long-standing skepticism about intervention in other countries' civil wars. Although there have been some notable exceptions, particularly to enforce human rights abroad, the doctrine of nonintervention requires that we must be able to justify military action in terms of our to national security interests.

It is true that the insurgents are funding their military efforts through the cultivation of illegal drugs. However, this does not obscure the fact that we can support the government of Colombia without getting drawn into their counter-insurgency campaign.

It would be more sensible for us to tilt the balance of aid to direct more of the aid to non-military purposes. If we were to assist the Colombian government in developing its economy and building a viable infrastructure, the government would be better able to withstand the onslaught by the insurgents.

While we of course support the Pastrana government, we must remember that the primary U.S. interest is to stop the production of cocaine and heroin in Colombia, and even if we cannot stop the production, we absolutely must stop it from reaching our shores and getting into the hands of our citizens. We must focus on domestic interdiction to block the flow of drugs, rather than being diverted into Colombia's civil war.

Today we will hear from witnesses who will discuss details of the plan and the U.S. interests at stake. In considering this plan, we must not only consider its merit and necessity, but we must also consider our long-term commitment to the people of Colombia. Mr. Chairman, thank you for convening today's hearing. I look forward to hearing the testimony of the witnesses.

Mr. MICA. I would now like to recognize the chairman of our full committee, the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Burton.

Mr. BURTON. Thank you, Chairman Mica.

Let me say that a lot of the things that I was going to cover have been covered, so I would like to submit my statement to the record and just make some brief comments.

Mr. MICA. Without objection.

Mr. BURTON. First of all, let me just say that the war in Colombia is our war as well as the Colombians'. Every year, 14,000 Americans die from drugs and drug-related violence; and those drugs are coming mainly from Colombia. So it is not just their war, it is our war.

In Baltimore, a councilman recently said that one out of eight—one out of eight of the citizens there is a drug addict. They also stated that the drug enforcement administration says that Baltimore has 45,000 heroin addicts. Now, this is just one major city in the United States. So for anybody to say that this is not our war as well as the Colombians, they are just not reading the statistics and the facts. People are dying in the United States as a result of the flood of drugs coming in from that part of the world, and we haven't been doing anything about it.

We talked with General McCaffrey back in 1996 about three Blackhawk helicopters. We wanted to spend \$36 million for those Blackhawks. And he said we shouldn't be taking that money because a lot of it was supposed to go to Bolivia and Peru; and, as a result, the Blackhawks weren't sent.

Congress has been talking about getting these Blackhawks down there for years. Denny Hastert, the Speaker of the House, Chairman Gilman, Chairman Mica, and myself have all been hollering to high heaven about the need to get those Blackhawks down there; and we have run into opposition from the State Department.

I would like to read from a statement before Chairman Gilman's committee on February 12, 1998.

Secretary Albright: Mr. Chairman, on that issue, let me say that I think there is some dispute as to whether those helicopters are needed or not. General McCaffrey, with whom I spoke just before I came to have breakfast with you, discussed this issue, and he believes that they are not necessary.

General McCaffrey said February 1998 they are not necessary. And, as I said, we have this budget of \$230 million or so, and \$50 million of that would have had to be spent on the helicopters. It would have a cascading effect on our drug programs throughout the world.

Well, they are necessary. They were necessary. This was a miscalculation by the administration, and I think history will prove that.

Now, I welcome the administration to this fight in Colombia. I appreciate that. I appreciate General McCaffrey stepping up to the table and saying it is time we did something. I only wish that we had started doing it earlier. Because we haven't done it earlier, it is going to cost more money now than it would have otherwise. And the surrounding countries are at risk. Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela are at risk as well.

Now the State Department and their subsidiary, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, the INL, are charged with delivering most of the assistance to Colombia; and the State Department has not been doing its job.

Just last week, Mr. Beers, who is the INL Assistant Secretary, informed the committee staff that the standard floor armoring for the Blackhawk helicopters funded for the CNP did not fit. We sent three helicopters down there. We actually have six in the pipeline. Three of them were delivered. They have been sitting there for how long? 100 days. They have been sitting there for 100 days. They said they didn't have the proper armor on them. Well, they finally got the armor down there. It didn't fit. So they are still sitting there. Now they have gone out on some missions and risked the lives of the people in the CNP without that armor. But that shouldn't be necessary.

Once again, it was a screw-up over at the State Department. 50,000 rounds of ammunition were sent down there, 50,000 rounds of ammunition. Only problem with that ammunition was it was made in 1952, and it wouldn't work.

So you have got helicopters that they can't fly and ammunition they are sending down there that won't work. So they said, OK, we made a mistake. We are going to send them another 50,000 rounds of ammunition. Where did they send it? As Chairman Mica said, they sent it over to the State Department over from Washington. Now, I don't know how many machine guns they have in the State Department, but they are not focused on Colombia.

So we have screw-up after screw-up after screw-up, and we have the State Department saying we don't need those helicopters. Secretary Albright said: I just talked to General McCaffrey. We don't need those helicopters down there.

At the same time, the guerrillas are being well funded by the drug cartel. They have been getting as much as \$100 million a month, and the estimates of their force is between 17,000 and 30,000, and they are growing every single day.

You know, it has been stated I think here today that we ought to be dealing with this from an economic standpoint, getting economic assistance down there. Well, I think that is one of the things that needs to be done. But the fact of the matter is appeasement is not going to work with those guerrillas.

They started talking about a peace agreement not too long ago, and all the while they were talking about a peace agreement they were involved in attacking cities surrounding the area they control. So you can't trust those guys. You have to deal with them from a position of strength. That means we have to get them the military assistance they need, and we have to get it down there to them as quickly as possible.

Now, a lot of the things that are supposed to be in the pipeline have not yet been delivered. I don't have my figures right here in front of me. But there are a lot of things that the Defense Department was supposed to get down there that haven't been sent.

Aid not delivered or operational to Colombia: Three UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters, which I mentioned; funding for operations and support for Colombia National Police Air Wing, \$6 million.

Funds that are programmed, but not spent: Procurement of mini-gun systems and ammunition for Colombia National Police, \$3.2 million.

Things that are partially delivered: Reconstruction of Miraflores counternarcotics base. That was canceled. That was \$2 million.

Moneys to be reprogrammed: Security enhancements for forward locating Colombia National Police bases, \$6 million.

And I can go on and on and on. There is a whole bunch here.

Podded radar for aircraft reprogrammed, \$5 million; DC-3 operating funds, \$1 million.

There is a whole list of these things.

We learned at our last hearing here at the subcommittee there are still items from the 1997, 1998, and 1999 drawdowns which I was just talking about, excess U.S. military equipment that has not been delivered to the CNP. Why haven't they been delivered? Well, probably because Secretary Albright had been told that it wasn't necessary for that stuff to be down there, like the helicopters.

It is necessary. It should have been done previously. I am glad it is being looked into and done now. Better late than never. But we need to get on with it.

And one other thing I would like to say. The DANTI forces down there, the part of the CNP that has been dealing with the drug problem, have experience in this area.

The proposal made by the administration is going to give \$1 out of every \$17 to the CNP and the rest to other agencies, mainly the Colombian military which do not have the expertise.

Now General McCaffrey will probably tell us today that the CNP does not have the ability to get all around the country like the army does. Well, they would have if we had gotten the materials down there to them earlier, the Blackhawk and other things; and that can still be done.

In any event, we welcome the administration to this fight. Congress is not trying to micromanage, we are just trying to make sure the job gets done before we have to send American young men and women down there. We don't want that to happen. We don't need a war we are involved in in Central America. But if we don't do something about this situation rather quickly, we are going to have a big problem, and we may have to be involved.

So let me end up by saying I appreciate the administration seeing what needs to finally be done. We appreciate their participation, and I hope we get on with it as quickly as possible.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Dan Burton follows:]

Statement of Chairman Dan Burton
at the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice & Drug Policy
2247 RHOB, 10AM, 2/15/00

I would like to thank Chairman Mica for having this important hearing on U.S. aid to Colombia. The Republican-led Congress has been pleading with the Clinton-Gore Administration for years to get aid to Colombia before it falls to the narco-traffickers. I welcome the Administration to the War on Drugs, I just hope it's not too late. Every Congressional Republican attempt over the last four years to get aid to the Colombian National Police (CNP) has been met with stiff resistance, stonewalling and incompetence by the administration. The CNP's anti-narcotics unit, the DANTI, is the only vetted group in Colombia that is free of human rights abuses. Still, the administration's \$1.3 billion proposal is a welcome sign that they have finally realized what we've been telling them for years -- what happens in Colombia affects the United States. It is certainly a more compelling threat to our national security than what happens in Kosovo or Bosnia.

Colombia is not a far-away place. Bogota is less than five hours by plane from Washington. It's closer than San Francisco. Drugs from Colombia are found on nearly every street and in every schoolyard in America. Every year more than 14,000 Americans die from drugs and drug-related violence. In Baltimore a city council member recently stated that 1 in 8 Baltimore citizens is a drug addict. Tragically, my colleague, Mr. Cummings, who represents much of Baltimore, told us at a hearing in this subcommittee last August of the blank stares he sees on the street corners in Baltimore. He said many of the faces he once knew are now "zombies staggering around, looking for their next fix." The Drug Enforcement Administration says that Baltimore has over 45,000 heroin addicts who spend over \$1 million per day on their habit. In Chairman Mica's district in Orlando, over 50 people, many of them teenagers, died from Colombian heroin overdoses last year. Once again -- what happens in Colombia affects the United States.

While Colombia's drugs have been tearing apart American society, the situation in Colombia is a disaster. They have been involved in a four-decade civil war. It threatens the stability of its neighbors and the world economy. Should democracy fail in Colombia, there is little doubt the conflict will escalate into neighboring countries of Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela -- which provides nearly 25% of the oil to the United States, and Panama. The Panamanian government is incapable of defending the Panama Canal now that the United States military no longer has a presence there.

The Administration continually claims that Congress is "micro-managing" the War on Drugs. However, the last five years have been wrought with broken promises and absolute failures by the administration, and the State Department in particular, in delivering Congressionally-directed assistance to reaching Colombia. Most appalling has been the reluctance of the State Department to admit its failures and fix the problems.

Almost daily, we hear reports that something else has been bungled by the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL). They are charged with delivering most of the assistance to Colombia. Lives are continually being placed at risk because the State Department cannot or will not do its job. Someone needs to take responsibility for this, whether it be INL Assistant Secretary Rand Beers, or the Secretary of State herself. Blunder after blunder has

shown that this State Department has performed abysmally. Here are several recent examples.

Just last week, Mr. Beers informed committee staff that the standard floor armoring for the Black Hawk helicopters Congress funded for the CNP did not fit. The State Department ordered the wrong armor kit. The Black Hawks had already been unused on missions for 100 days because the State Department was unable to coordinate the delivery of weapons systems and floor armor at the same time as the helicopters. Despite realizing they had ordered the wrong equipment, the State Department had these helicopters fly on several dangerous missions without floor armoring. This risked the lives of the CNP officers on board, and exposed the U.S. taxpayer-funded Black Hawks to enemy fire. That was a very dangerous gamble. Someone at the State Department needs to answer for this mess.

Only weeks earlier, according to a news report, INL had delivered outdated .50 caliber ammunition **from 1952** to the CNP. It was unusable except for training -- **it was 50 years old!** Realizing its mistake, the State Department ordered a second shipment...except this time 50,000 rounds of ammunition wasn't delivered to Colombia, it was delivered to the State Department itself, in Foggy Bottom here in Washington.

This subcommittee learned at its last hearing that there are still items from the 1997, 1998, and 1999, 506(a) drawdowns (excess U.S. military equipment) that have not been delivered to the CNP -- **WHY NOT?** They have needed this equipment for four years, though the sense of urgency seems to have been lost on the State Department. **They need this equipment NOW!** When you add this to the long list of other items the State Department has promised, or been directed to deliver, yet failed to do so, it's staggering. How can anyone take the President's aid package seriously when there are so many outstanding and broken promises from the State Department?

Still, the State Department complains Congress is "micro-managing" the War on Drugs. I submit if Congress were not conducting oversight, the problem would be much worse. The INL bureau at the State Department gives amateur night a bad name.

I applaud the Clinton-Gore Administration for finally listening to the Republican Congress and putting forward a plan for Colombia. It's several years too late, but better late than never. I was being interviewed on MSNBC the other night. I was talking to Paul Begala, who used to work for the President. I feel the aid package is very unbalanced toward the Colombian military, who has a dubious human rights record, and is short on aid to the CNP, who are clean of human rights problems. There needs to be more of a balanced approach. However, I told him that I agreed, in principle, with the President on this issue. I think Paul was a little surprised to hear me say that.

This Administration has clearly neglected Colombia for a long time. We are behind the eight-ball. If we are going to make a difference now, the sloppiness and the mistakes and the foot-dragging have to stop. The State Department and the National Security Council have to do their jobs better, and if they don't the President needs to find someone who will.

I could go on and on, but I only have a few minutes. I have many questions, and hope to get truthful answers when the questioning period begins.

Mr. MICA. I would like to recognize the gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. Tierney.

Mr. TIERNEY. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. But with my voice the way it is, I think I will wait for the question and answer period. Thank you.

Mr. MICA. I will go to Mr. Gilman, chairman of the Committee on International Relations and also a member of our subcommittee. You are recognized.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman; and I want to thank you for today's hearing and keeping focused on the Nation's drug policy. And we welcome our witnesses who will be here, and particularly General McCaffrey.

These hearings and your continuous interest, Mr. Mica, in the vital issue of drug trafficking, have helped keep the heat on our Nation's policy, which has been notoriously slow to react to the threat which illicit drugs pose to our Nation's security.

Colombia, now the source nation for more than 80 percent of the world's cocaine and most recently up to 75 percent of the heroin sold or seized on our streets, is a major national security concern, not only for our Nation but it should be similarly for the rest of the world as well.

For years, many of us in the Congress have been urging the administration to pay attention to what is happening to our neighbor to the south. Colombia is now capable of producing more than 400 tons of deadly cocaine annually. That massive drug production capacity, along with Colombian drug lords' creative ability to market and to create demand for heroin here in our own Nation, should be a wake-up call for both our Nation and for Europe. It should set off an alarm throughout the globe for everyone truly concerned about the safety and security of our young people and communities in the scourge of illicit hard drugs originating in America's backyard.

We had good testimony the other day when you arranged that summit of world leaders with regard to narcotics, and I was pleased that General McCaffrey was able to be there to hear their concern as well as our own.

The administration, which regrettably fought us tooth and nail a few short years ago over just a few helicopters for the narco-police to be able to eradicate the growing opium and coca leaf production in Colombia, fortunately is now sounding the alarm by the beleaguered Andean nation. And the Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter once said, "Wisdom too often never comes and one ought not to reject merely because it comes late." Let us hope it isn't too late for the case in Colombia.

We now welcome these serious concerns about Colombia and about our drug policy. Along with many of my colleagues in the Congress, particularly in this committee, we have raised similar concerns years ago when Colombia became a major player in the heroin business and again in 1997 when it first became the world's greatest coca leaf producer, exceeding Peru.

We are pleased that General McCaffrey, our Nation's drug czar, will be testifying this morning.

General McCaffrey, we want to congratulate you on the new counternarcotics intelligence sharing plan which you announced

yesterday at the White House to improve coordination and information sharing. Hopefully, with the help of this new program, in the future we can avoid being caught off guard on developments like the Colombian and heroin crisis we are now facing.

Yesterday, General McCaffrey stated, "We have a drug emergency in Colombia. Support for the administration's plan is critical if we are going to be able to stop increased production in Colombia from outstripping gains made in the rest of the region."

Now that we have admitted that the serious problem exists, we can start going about treating the cause in Colombia.

The President of Colombia, recently on 60 Minutes, hit the nail on the head on what the problem is. According to President Pastrana, the \$1 million to \$2 million a day which insurgents earn from drug trafficking now threatens his nation's survival as a democracy.

Until recently when Congress took the lead, we had averaged less than \$100 million to United States counternarcotics aid to Colombia each year. That is equal to 6 weeks' income from the Colombian narco-guerrillas. These massive amounts of illicit moneys make them the best-armed, the best-trained, the best-equipped guerrillas anywhere in the world with their war chest financed from the sale of drugs. Hopefully, now the administration is getting serious, and it needs to treat Colombia as a serious national security regional threat.

Several past Presidents have called our drug crisis a national security threat. Only when we get this serious and when we give the courageous Colombians, like General Jose Serrano, whose antidrug police is DANTE, the means and sustained support for their fight against drugs at the source, can we expect to turn this crisis around.

Regrettably, I am skeptical of the State Department's performance. Witness that latest mess that Congressman Dan Burton just mentioned, the delivery of armor flooring which did not fit the Blackhawks which we had earlier provided to the antidrug police, causing them to sit on the tarmac for months without the ability to participate in Colombia's drug war.

These endless series of failures don't give us much comfort. It is essential that we face the reality that there is a narco-based war raging in Colombia; and the good guys, our friends and neighbors in Colombia, are losing. Our national security is at stake, and so is the future of Colombia, and so is the future of many other nations.

It is encouraging that yesterday a high-level United States delegation went to Colombia to meet with their leaders to discuss Speaker Hastert's \$1.6 billion aid package to Colombia that will escalate Colombia's war on drugs. We will be taking up that planned Colombia aid package in early March.

I look forward to our witnesses' testimony today, Mr. Chairman; and particularly I am anxious to hear how the administration reached its decision to heavily tilt this counternarcotics aid package toward the military over the police. As we all know, the elite anti-drug police in Colombia have a proven track record fighting drugs consistent with the fundamental respect for human rights.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

I would like to recognize now the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Kucinich. You are recognized.

Mr. KUCINICH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman; and I want to compliment you on your sensitivity to these issues. I think your leadership in the Congress in this area has been important.

I want to say from the outset that the administration has worked cooperatively, as I understand, with President Pastrana in trying to create an environment which would be conducive to the maintenance of that democracy. I think that as we review the testimony today, we are going to see that the quality of the democracy is in danger because of this narco-terrorism.

I think that General McCaffrey has certainly given us solid leadership in trying to see the U.S. interests are protected. But I hope that in the hearing today we will be able to determine the extent to which President Pastrana's efforts toward trying to achieve a peaceful negotiation with FARC has been undermined by the rising narcotics trade in Colombia and that if we can see what the linkages are with not only FARC, but any of the other elements that are involved in narco-traffic we can perhaps learn a little bit better why efforts toward peaceful resolution have been frustrated.

I want to again thank the Chair for his leadership, and I look forward to reviewing this testimony. I have, as I am sure some Members do, competing claims on my time right now. But I do want to thank you for pursuing a necessary, important subject. Thank you.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman.

I now recognize the gentleman from Connecticut, Mr. Shays.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you.

I deeply regret that President Clinton, when he took office in 1993, deemphasized the war on drugs and cut the drug czar's budget by nearly half in the first 2 years. Colombians have been fighting the drug war for years with their lives.

Over 10 years ago, I went to Bogota with a delegation of Members of Congress to visit with government officials and the victims of the bombing of their DAS building, which is their FBI building. 700 people were injured; over 70 were killed.

It is true, Colombians export the bulk of drugs to the United States. But it is equally true that we, the United States, still export the chemicals to make the drugs. We, the United States, still export the weapons to protect the terrorists and drug lords. And we, the United States, still export the dollars to pay for the drugs.

We clearly have a practical and deep moral obligation to help our brothers and sisters in the south fight this drug war.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman.

The gentlelady from Illinois is recognized.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I wanted to raise some serious questions that I raised last August when we had a similar hearing and that I feel still have not been answered and are now being also raised by other credible voices, including the New York Times and Chicago Tribune editorial boards and former Ambassador to El Salvador and Paraguay, Robert White.

The administration's \$1.3 billion aid package to Colombia, \$955 million in security assistance puts the United States at a crossroads. Do we invest in a militaristic drug war that escalates the regional conflict in the name of fighting drugs, or do we attack the drug market by investing in prevention and treatment at home and seek to assist in stabilizing Colombia?

According to the General Accounting Office, "Despite years of extensive herbicide spraying, United States estimates show there has not been any net reduction in coca cultivation. Net coca cultivation actually increased 50 percent." And this 50 percent increase in coca cultivation comes after \$625 million in counternarcotics operations in Colombia between 1990 and 1998.

So, considering that demonstrated failure of militarized eradication efforts to date, why should we believe that investing even more money in this plan will achieve a different result? And what will it take to achieve total victory in Colombia? Are we prepared to make that type of investment in dollars and in lives? How many lives? And, if not, what is the purpose of this aid?

Considering the fact that more than 100,000 civilians have died in Colombia's civil war and five servicemen perished on our reconnaissance flight last year, is it ethical to escalate the war in Colombia in order to prevent Americans from purchasing cocaine? Will the aid achieve a 10 percent reduction or a 20 percent reduction or a 50 percent reduction in drugs? What is the target amount? Or is the purpose to degrade the military capability of the FARC or bomb them to the negotiating table?

I am mystified that there is nothing in this package aimed at paramilitary groups, despite their known involvement in the drug trade. And why are we investing so heavily with so few accountability measures in the Colombian armed forces, which has long had a history of human rights violations, including support for military groups?

The New York Times on Sunday warned, "Washington should have learned long ago that partnership with an abusive and ineffective Latin American military rarely produces positive results and often undermines democracy in the region."

Exactly what is it that we believe this aid will accomplish? Is it the first in a series of blank checks for a war with no foreseeable end game? What is the exit strategy? With the continued failure of a military solution to drug production in Colombia, why shouldn't an innovative alternative development approach be used instead? Why not spend half or all the money on crop substitution or development?

A landmark study of cocaine markets by the RAND Corp. found that providing treatment to cocaine users is 10 times more effective than drug interdiction schemes and 23 times more cost effective than eradicating coca at its source.

If decreasing drug use in America is the ultimate goal, why aren't we putting equal resources into domestic demand reduction where each dollar spent is 23 times more effective than eradication? Today we are discussing \$1 billion plus for Colombia, and yet we aren't doing enough for treatment here at home.

A recent study by researchers at SAMHSA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, has indicated that 48

percent of the need for drug treatment, not including alcohol abuse, is unmet in the United States. Why is it that we can find funds for overseas military operations while continuing to ignore the enormous lack of drug treatment here at home?

Mr. Chairman, before becoming entangled in a foreign war, it seems to me that the Congress should use its oversight authority to require the administration to explain how this escalation will reduce illicit drug use at home better than investment in prevention and treatment in the United States.

The administration should also explain how increasing funds for a policy will change the result when past increases and support have not changed the outcome. These troubling strategic issues need to be resolved in a satisfactory manner before we increase our involvement in Colombia.

I appreciate your indulgence on the time. I thank you very much.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentlelady. I look forward to General McCaffrey's response to some of the points she has raised. This must be fun, General, to get it from both sides here.

Let me recognize, if I may, the gentlelady from Florida, Ms. Ros-Lehtinen.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

As you pointed out in your opening statement, Colombia is one of our oldest democracies; and it is a shame to see this beautiful country mired in crisis after crisis with the increasing control of the narco-guerrillas in Colombia and in surrounding areas with the increase in coca production.

When the U.S. Congress does step in and try to help the Colombian people who have sacrificed so much, as Mr. Shays has pointed out, with their own blood in this ongoing drug war, the administration looks like the Keystone Kops, sending in the wrong armor kit to fund the Blackhawk helicopters that especially Mr. Burton and Mr. Gilman have fought so long to give to the Colombians to fight the narco-guerrillas. We sent them the wrong armor kit to outfit these Blackhawks. We sent them outdated and useless ammunition and also sent it to the wrong place.

And while all of this crisis looms over Colombia and law-abiding Colombians pay the price, the continuing threat of the tentacles of FARC looms over all the neighboring countries. Because hemispheric stability is very important to United States interests, what happens in Colombia can have a devastating effect on the very fragile democracies of Venezuela, of Ecuador and Peru. And to say nothing, as the gentlewoman from Illinois pointed out, of our ongoing crisis here in the United States, our alarming drug statistics, the increasing number of young people who are dying from drug abuse.

So I agree with what Chairman Burton had said, that this is not a war on drugs just for Colombia, that this is a war that has got to engage all of us. It is an international war on drugs. It is not just a domestic war.

And we need to ask some real questions in the coming months as the debate heats up on this aid package: Will this aid package work? Is it going to do what we hope that it will do? Are the funds going to the right organizations? Is it correct to continue to fund

the Colombian military? And should we be increasing the role of organizations such as the CNP?

So we look forward to engaging the administration at long last on this very important topic, and we hope for the sake of our young people and for the sake of stability in our southern neighbors that we will have an end soon to this narco-drug war. And we think that it will be once we get engaged and once we give the proper folks the tools they need to get rid of this venom that is increasing its deadly toll on our young people.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentlelady.

I now recognize the vice chairman of our panel, the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Barr.

Mr. BARR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, you indicated that you look forward to the General perhaps enlightening the gentlelady from Illinois whose hostility to helping Columbia has blinded her to the facts. One doesn't even have to wait in order to hear from General McCaffrey. One simply has to look at the facts and look at what the General released in his written testimony.

Demand reduction activities account for 32.3 percent of the national drug control budget. That is one-third. International efforts are only 8.4 percent of the budget, and interdiction activities are only 10.4. So, by any measure, the amount of money that we are expending for interdiction and international efforts is, in fact, currently far less than that devoted to demand reduction.

Perhaps the gentlelady's hostility to interdiction in international efforts might be directed to asking some very tough questions of the administration as to what is happening to all of that demand reduction money that is already being placed into treatment, prevention, and research. That might be a little bit more productive.

The gentleman from Indiana, the chairman of the committee, was very kind, as he usually is, and very soft in his statements. He used the word—the term “screw-up” several times. I think a better word is sabotage. Very few things happen at the Department of State or at any agency of our U.S. Government simply by incompetence or mistakes. In my experience, Mr. Chairman, things happen because they are planned to happen that way. Steps are taken or not taken because an intended result is sought to be accomplished. Sometimes that intended result can be accomplished by taking positive action. Sometimes, as in the case of this administration and this Department of State, and frequently, it is accomplished by not doing certain things.

In fact, I believe that the lack of equipment going to the heroic efforts of General Serrano and the Colombian Government, in fact, is a calculated effort by the State Department to sabotage our efforts to get the material, to get the resources to the forces in Colombia that are fighting the narco-terrorists and is not the result of simple incompetence. I hope that this hearing today and the other hearings that we have in the future will highlight that.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask unanimous consent, at this point, to have inserted in the record an article that you authored which appeared today in the Washington Times entitled, “Was war on drugs sabotaged” which, as is par for your writings and your comments,

was direct, to the point, substantiated by substantial references to the record and facts. And I ask unanimous consent to have them inserted.

Mr. MICA. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. BARR. During the course of these hearings and future hearings—and I know, Mr. Chairman, both you and the two other chairmen that are with us today, Mr. Gilman and Mr. Burton, intend to have further hearings as well—I do hope that one of the things we focus on is that we, and our partners in Colombia, learn from success. Frequently, people don't learn from their mistakes; we are refusing to learn from our successes.

When we had a balanced, comprehensive, tough policy against drugs in the Reagan and Bush years, the success was palpable. We saw demand reduced. We saw the use of drugs, particularly by teenagers, drop dramatically when our colleague, President Fujimori in Peru, took tough, consistent steps. One of his policies was, "you fly, you die," his shoot-down policy. Amassing troops in areas such as the northern border of Peru, bordering the southern region of Colombia, amassing troops there and taking concrete steps in Iquitos and the riverine traffic areas has paid tremendous dividends.

That is why, as General McCaffrey has stated in his written testimony, the production of raw coca and the production of cocaine in those two Andean countries to the south of Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, has dropped dramatically.

This didn't happen by chance or screw-up. It happened because those countries are taking a tough, consistent, aggressive stance against these people. They don't negotiate with them; they fight them, and the sooner the Colombian Government realizes that, the sooner we can get people in the administration that realize that, then we will continue to see the successes that we saw earlier in the 1990's and that we are not seeing today.

While I certainly agree with Chairman Burton in saying that to the administration, we would rather have them here later than not at all, that is not the end of the game. We have to monitor this assistance if we can get it through the Congress and the President signs it, because this administration has a sorry record of not doing what the law provides.

We even had a United States Ambassador to Colombia appear before one of our committees a couple of years ago who basically said, under oath, in response to questions as to why the law was not being carried out in Colombia by him, he said, well, I work for the President, and if I'm directed not to do something, then I don't do it.

That is the sort of problem that we have here, Mr. Chairman, and I commend you for holding these hearings and the future hearings, and the other chairmen who are here today, to not only get to the bottom of this but to constantly draw attention to what is happening with this administration and why we are losing the interdiction effort when the success stories are out there. What works, we know works. It has worked in the past, and let's use it now.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman.

I now recognize the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Souder.

Mr. SOUDER. I think it is sad that we are at this point when we could see many years ago that we were going to get to this point. And I do believe that we were slow in getting there. But I also want to thank not only General Serrano and the people in Colombia who have been dying and fighting because of the drug abuse in this country but to thank General McCaffrey because, I think, since he has come in, he has aggressively fought inside an administration that had seriously neglected this problem and has been an advocate internally.

I want to thank General Wilhelm and Randy Beers, who have been through many battles as we tried to get additional narcotics funding.

I have been down there for 5 straight years. I have worked to get the Blackhawk helicopters to the police. We have battled over every dollar. We argued about the diversion to the Balkans when I believe that the compelling national interest was in the Southern Hemisphere.

Clearly, our No. 1 oil supplier is Venezuela. Colombia is our second biggest supplier of oil by-products. We have the Panama Canal now questionable whether it can be defended with the narcoterrorists continuing to move up from the Darien peninsula, in addition to the children dying in Fort Wayne and all over this country because of this drug program.

Clearly, this is a compelling national interest, and we need to figure out how to best accomplish the goals as fast as possible. As someone who has been aggressively an advocate of the best equipment possible, and the Blackhawks, I think we need to look at our mix package to see how much we can get delivered, how fast, what is the most effective mix.

I think we need to look at the question of—I understand the argument that the national police may not be able to carry out all this battle without the defense and the military, and I agree with that basic premise, but we need to make sure that when we are transferring the funds to the military that, in fact, they change, which they are committed to trying to change. But I don't want to hear about them only having non-high school graduate draftees, as opposed to volunteer people at adequate numbers that have been trained who have a long-term commitment to this group, like they do to the national police, and that this is an elite unit.

Because if we pour these dollars into a defense department that, in fact, has not developed an elite unit, they will be wasted dollars, and then the charges will become true in and of themselves. That suggests that in the phase-in process, we may want to have a little bit different mix as their defense department and their military gets up to speed.

We know the human rights record of the national police. I believe that this administration under President Pastrana and the new defense minister are committed to cleaning up the past problems in human rights, whether it be with the right-wing terrorist groups or with the paramilitary or the FARC or the ELN. But, in fact, we need to make sure of that before we put all of our eggs, or the bulk of our eggs and dollars, in this one area.

So I hope we will have a fair debate as we work through the specifics of the package. I believe that there are people in this admin-

istration who have been battling, and it is good to see that the President is now on board, too. We need to figure out how to reduce this incredible increasing supply coming into our country and work together to get it done.

I yield back.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

And recognize now the gentleman from California, Mr. Ose.

Mr. OSE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to be here. I came this morning primarily because every time I have the opportunity to visit with General McCaffrey, I learn something new, and I am grateful for his appearance today.

Of specific interest to me today—and I regret he is not on the witness list, is I was hopeful of visiting with Mr. Beers about what intestinal fortitude it took to actually come forward with the news that we had been so brilliant as to deliver 50-year-old ammunition to the Colombian National Police and then turn around and replace that by shipping 50,000 more rounds to the State Department. I understand Foggy Bottom is not very dangerous this time of year, but I was hopeful that we would have an adequate explanation from that.

General McCaffrey, I have the utmost respect for you. You have the most difficult job possibly in this entire administration, and I am looking forward to your testimony today.

I yield back.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

I think that concludes our opening statements. I want to take just a moment to thank the members of our subcommittee and also Mr. Gilman, who chairs the International Relations Committee, the Speaker of the House, Mr. Hastert, for their cohosting the recent International Drug Summit that our subcommittee and committee participated in, and the chairman of our full committee, Mr. Burton, for also helping to sponsor that, and everyone who participated.

We brought together nearly 50 parliamentarians from around the world, representatives of other congresses, leaders in the international antinarcotics efforts, heads of Europol, Interpol, and also demand and treatment programs from throughout the world because we know we cannot win this war on drugs fighting it alone.

I also want to pay particular tribute and thanks to General McCaffrey who was a full participant in those proceedings, and hopefully they will be productive and fruitful.

With that, I would like to now recognize our first panel, and that consists of one individual who is well-known to all of us, General Barry McCaffrey, who is Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Welcome back. I think you saw that we have some diversity of opinion, certainly no loss for words.

And I would like to, again, advise you this is an investigations and oversight subcommittee of Congress. If you would stand, please, sir, and be sworn. Raise your right hand.

[Witness sworn.]

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

General, welcome back. This is a very serious topic. To update members of the panel, the latest statistics we have received is, in

1997, 15,973 Americans lost their lives to drug-related causes and over 100,000 probably since 1992. So this has an incredible impact on our society.

With those opening comments, General, we will not run any clock on you; and we appreciate your patience in hearing the diversity of opinion from our panel and welcome your testimony.

**STATEMENT OF GENERAL BARRY R. MCCAFFREY, DIRECTOR,
OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY**

General MCCAFFREY. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, to you and Congresswoman Mink, the opportunity to meet with you to respond to your own interests and to try and put some context in what has been an enormously complex and challenging problem that we have faced over the last several years. One, which I might add, that I bring sort of an unusual historical perspective to, having worked not only for 4 years in the current position as drug policy director but also 2 years prior to that, happier times I can assure you, as commander in chief the Southern Command, preceded by several years of service on the Joint Staff working for General Powell. And I would be glad to try and put into perspective what it is we are trying to achieve and how we're going about it.

Let me also, if I may, thank you for including the right people in this hearing: Ambassador Pete Romero, Assistant Secretary of Defense Ana Maria Salazar, DEA Ops officer William Ledwith and most particularly, CINC U.S. Southern Command, General Charles Wilhelm. All have been enormously effective partners in this effort.

Someone who is not here today and has actually been the quarterback of this effort is Tom Pickering, who, with an interagency team of Randy Beers and others, is now in Colombia dealing with just this issue.

So I think your timing on the hearing is appropriate, and I welcome the diversity of viewpoints represented in your opening statements.

Let me also take note that you called former Ambassador to Colombia Morris Busby, a figure of enormous courage and dedication to this issue and currently Council on the America's President, former Ambassador Ted McNamara, another extremely knowledgeable and thoughtful person on the issues we face.

I am going to give you five brief sets of comments to show you where we are, and then I'll be glad to respond to your own interests.

Let me, if I may though, begin by asking your permission to put into the record both written comments and copies of the charts I will show you. We have done a tremendous amount of work to capture the numbers that will allow us to have an adequate policy debate on this issue.

Mr. MICA. Without objection, that material will be made part of the record.

General MCCAFFREY. Chris, if you would go ahead and take down that first chart.

Let me, if I may, talk generally to this issue. First of all, to say that we do have an overall strategy, U.S. national drug strategy. What we are talking about is goal No. 5: How do we reduce the supply of drugs, both foreign and domestic? And this national strat-

egy has a classified secret annex in which we lay out the supporting symmetrical guidance to overseas intelligence, law enforcement, the armed forces, et cetera.

It's working pretty well. The general element of the national drug strategy on the north-south axis was to build multinational cooperation, and so we are trying to move from what I would characterize as a series of bilateral confrontations to one of multinational cooperation.

On 4 October, in Montevideo, Uruguay, we signed an enormously important document. It came from the Santiago Summit of the Americas. It basically committed all of us in the hemisphere to building practical ways of cooperation not only in the obvious ways—intelligence sharing, interdiction, extradition, evidence sharing, precursor chemicals—but also indeed to broaden this discussion to include demand reduction topics, science, and media campaigns targeted to reducing consumption among adolescents. We think we are moving that general larger concept in the right direction.

The second thing we did was we went to the Andean Ridge. It's important for us to understand the overview facts. The supply of drugs in the world grossly exceeds U.S. demand. We do not consume most of the drugs in the world. We roughly consume, as an example, around 3 percent of the world's heroin. We roughly consume a quarter of the world's cocaine. Our problem is we have too much money, and so our money fuels international crime and indeed one could argue has a corrosive impact on democratic institutions through violence and corruption.

Having said that, the cocaine in the world comes out of three nations essentially: Peru, Bolivia and Colombia. And, in sum, these numbers I placed into the record now to give you the CNC's overview of where we are; we have achieved dramatic successes in two of those countries. Peru, the dominant cocaine-producing nation on the face of the Earth, under President Fujimori's leadership has reduced production by more than 66 percent. Bolivia, under the Banzer-Quiroga team, has cut down in a very short period of time, essentially 2½ years, production by more than 55 percent.

I have personally seen this. This comes out of our CIA crop analysis studies. I have flown over the Chapare Huallaga. The coca is disappearing from the valley floors. They are on the right track. And we ought to be a little modest in claiming undue credit on this, because I would argue it was the political will of the Peruvians and the Bolivians and their police forces and democratic institutions that achieved most of it. But we are moving in the right direction.

The problem is Colombia. We have just published in the last 3 weeks a revised past crop estimates on cocaine production. We went back and revised our algorithm on alkaloid content in the plants. They have a new species they are using. We went back and looked at laboratory effectiveness. They are using new, better industrial techniques. And we looked at, of course, our very solid data of overhead satellite photography, and we came up with an analysis that suggests that cocaine production in Colombia has gone up 140 percent in a little less than 4 years.

Today—yesterday, we released the crop estimates for this year. Colombia produced, in our view, 520 metric tons of cocaine. It is astonishing. We're talking 70 percent or more of the world total. And that cocaine, we would argue, is at the heart and soul of the incredible impact that 26,000 armed people are having on Colombian democratic institutions.

The FARC, the ELN, the AUC, so-called paramilitary terrorist groups, if they were just using bank robberies, kidnappings, extortion, blowing up the oil pipelines, Colombia would be in mayhem. But when you add to that total in President Pastrana's terms a million or two a day, we're talking money of \$300 million to \$1 billion a year.

So when you see the video outtakes of the FARC units in the field, they are wearing shiny new uniforms. They have more machine guns than the Colombian infantry battalions have. They have planes and helicopters and wiretap equipment, and they are assassinating mayors and intimidating journalists and corrupting public officials.

And, oh, by the way, it is not just in Colombia. It has spilled over in a significant way in the neighboring regional partners of Venezuela and Ecuador and Panama in particular, and it has an enormous impact on the United States.

And if you would allow me to correct the number I am trying to drive into our public debate, it isn't 14,000 dead a year. It is 52,000 dead a year.

Your congressional funds went to do a recent study that went through the autopsy reports across the Nation, and that is our view of the unmistakable impact of drug abuse by 6 percent of our population on the death rates, along with the \$110 billion in damages, along with the fact that it drives our criminal justice system, our health care system, and our welfare system.

And as you look at the Andean Ridge, Colombia is now the nexus, the center of mass of 80 percent of the illegal drugs coming into America in terms of heroin and cocaine. And we think we need to stand with democratic partners in the region.

Let me, if I may—go ahead and put up the next chart—again, show you the numbers and to show the drug problem, which is my legal responsibility. My portfolio is related unmistakably to two other problems. One of them is the peace process. And I think there is no question, the misery of the Colombian people, which has been caused by decades of endemic violence, almost unimaginable violence with no apparent outcome, is the top national priority not only for the President but for the people, the 36 million people that live in this country.

And yet when you look at it, as long as the FARC, the ELN and the paramilitaries have this tremendous wealth, if there is no quid pro quo, if there is no reward and punishment, why would they talk instead of fight?

Now, the third issue that President Pastrana has to face up to is the economy. Colombia is a huge country, and I have been trying to correct "tiny Colombia" to remind us it is probably a third to part the size of Western Europe. It has got a lot of people. They are wealthy in terms of natural resources—oil, gas, flowers, coffee beans, et cetera. They have tremendous economic potential, and

they have had smart economic leadership. But they are in an economic crisis—20 percent unemployment, enormous impact on the inflation rate. Why would anyone invest in Colombia with 26,000 people in the field who will abduct you and torture you until you pay money to get free?

And so Colombia has become a net importer of food. And there is a strong argument out of our own intelligence system that within the coming 5 years or so they may actually turn into a net importer of energy. It is an outrage, and, again, it comes from the drug issue.

Next chart.

We can't just deal with Colombia. Several of you made that point. I think you're quite correct.

We've done an enormously good job in supporting Peruvian and Bolivian authorities. And as you look around the world, particularly the DEA with their worldwide mission has been skillful in creating new realities. But, in this region, we have to take into account with the package, the \$1.6 billion that we forwarded to Congress, that this is not a Colombian problem. It is regional. So you will see in there significant assets first for Peru and Bolivia, and both the Vice President of Bolivia and the Prime Minister of Peru have been up to see me to express their view that there should be more. I think the logic is tenuous, but I am not prepared to argue publicly against it.

There is money in here potentially—we have not made the final calls on Brazil, Venezuela—we have a problem with overflight—as well as Panama and other nations. We clearly see Ecuador as involved in the drug issue.

We have got to approach this as a regional problem. And, finally, we can't do this if we don't provide CINC U.S. Southern Command with the assets they require to support the effort with adequate air interdiction assets and, second, if we don't give them the intelligence collection tools and training tools he needs to do its job. And with the enormous drawdown in the Department of Defense and with the kind of assets that are being retired out of the force, we are inadequately supporting our CINC in the U.S. Southern Command. We're going to have to think through this and sort out how do we go about it.

Fortunately, we have had U.S. Customs Service step in and provide a tremendous air interdiction and surveillance capabilities as well as other government agencies. The U.S. Coast Guard has done a superb job also with FLIR aircraft and direct intelligence collection. A regional problem. Thank you.

Chris, next chart.

We sent over a plan totaling \$1.6 billion. We look forward to hearing your own viewpoints on this plan. It's not written in concrete. There is something important, though, to understand about the \$1.6 billion. We can't talk about it unless it's in the context of the Colombian devised strategy, "Plan Colombia." We cannot substitute United States thinking, certainly neither among congressional staffs nor in the administration, for having the President of Colombia, its Minister of Defense, Foreign Minister, Interior, PLANTE and others, devise their own approach to this; and that is what we did.

They have come up with a document. It's conceptual in outline. It needs meat on it. It is not yet a planning document. But it called for \$7.5 billion. That was \$4 billion out of the Colombian budget. That's where the CNP is getting resourced. It called for \$3.5 billion out of the European Union, international banks, et cetera. And that's where an enormous amount of what I think is a very coherent, integrated, alternative economic development, building judicial systems, et cetera. That's where the preponderance of that money will come, from their international loans as well as support from the European Union, a process in which the administration has actively supported their attempts to gain international support.

And I tell you that because, otherwise, one could make an argument that I think is incorrect, that it doesn't take into account the broader requirements in Colombia.

Now if you look at \$1.6 billion itself, to simplify it, it is a \$950 million supplemental, and it is a \$350 million add-on in fiscal year 2001 budget to the \$300 million we already had in there for the Andean Ridge.

If you look at the total package, essentially 85 percent of it goes to Colombia. The rest goes to Peru and Bolivia. They are just about flatlined, I would argue, at fairly high levels of resources. We have not decremented them as coca production has plunged.

Of the remainder of the program, if you look at it, half of it is a mobility package. That's what that is. It is 63 helicopters, 30 Blackhawks, 33 UH-1Ns rebuilt, with the operational requirements of spare parts, the training package to get the crews. That's what it is. And that mobility package, in our view, in the Colombian plan allows Colombian democratic institutions to regain sovereignty over their own terrain, particularly in the south.

And I'll be in Colombia next Tuesday through Thursday. We are going to Tres Esquinas. As you land in Putumayo or anywhere down in that southern zone, essentially a third of the land area is under coca cultivation. It is unbelievable. And there are five FARC fronts down there, thousands of them armed to the teeth, and they are targeting our aircraft going in and out of those fields right now.

This is, in that part of Colombia, an out and out war over drugs. And I would add to that, if you would allow me, some notion of are—what's the debate between supporting the police and the armed forces? In our view, this should be Colombian strategic thinking, not United States. But I would tell you straight up, the Colombian police, who are enormously courageous, this General Serrano has cleansed their ranks. He fired 3,000 cops when he took over. By and large, they are doing pretty well as a high integrity, high courage force. There is 2,500 of these cops that are essentially assault units.

We do not want to militarize the Colombian police and make anemic the Colombian armed forces. Those 2,500 DANTI cops are not going down south and kicking buns on five FARC fronts and cutting down the coca. We have to allow the Colombians to reassert control, and that means their navy and marine corps has a first-rate conceptual plan to go get control of the riverine system. Those are the roads down there. They have got to go down there and do that. The Colombian army has got to get back into these places on the frontier, Larondia, Tres Esquinas in particular, and regain con-

trol so that the police can enter in a law enforcement way, provide alternative economic development as well as crop eradication.

That's what the Colombians are going to try to achieve. It looks sensible. I think it is well thought out, and I do believe it is achievable. Thanks.

Finally, just if I may in sort of a conceptual outline of what are we trying to do down here, what is the deal. I don't think it is useful to any of us to waste too much time on the history of it. Mr. Chairman, without question, your leadership and others has been instrumental in achieving adequate levels of support for this counterdrug strategy; and I am publicly appreciative of what you have done, along with many of your colleagues.

I think the history of it is not terribly important to me, but I'm worried that we not get involved in anemic political theater over who lost Colombia. Nobody lost Colombia, and we are not going to save it; 36 million Colombians are.

Now, having said that, we all learned in college in freshman logic class, you shouldn't argue about facts. I don't think we are going to argue about facts. I think the facts are this is what has happened since 1995 on support to Colombia. These are the facts. We went up 3,500 percent in the support we provided Colombian authorities, 1995 to 2001. Congress had a great deal to do with that. But it started at 29.8, went to 62.8, 117.5, 166, 367, and we just sent down over \$1 billion. That's the facts.

Now, another set of facts. I don't want us to get too far down in the details of one helicopter, two or three. I've got the details. I know what they are, and I'd be glad to share them with you. But I would like you to understand if you start in 1994 and go to 2000 on helicopters to Colombia, you find that we've put 28 Blackhawks in there, 10 Huey 2s, 24 Bell 212s, 22 UH-1N.

What about the CNP? The police? We have got 47 aircraft on the ground, of which 42 were provided by the United States. Is this adequate? No. Are there three more to go? Yes. Of the six we authorized, three are there minus armor packages. But you have got to understand, the Blackhawk, the best helicopter on the face of the Earth—the next time you see me I'll probably be peddling them, I hope—it is an incredible piece of machinery, but it takes 10 months to build one.

The first three went down there in 8 months. Sikorsky has done a tremendous job supporting us, and there's three more to go, and they're customized to CNP. That is why armor kits don't automatically fit. And, by the way, there are 30 more in this plan; and, beyond that, the Colombians are going to buy 17 more. So it is clear to me, with your support, we can finally get an adequate level of mobility.

We are still hung up, Mr. Burton, on the six of them; and did I flip-flop. And let me just tell you again quite clearly, when the six helicopter question came up, I am unabashedly in favor of it, but not at the cost of jerking out of Bolivian and Peruvian INL funding at the last minute 50 percent of the dollars for a nation that finally started eradicating cocaine. That was the deal. When Congress wisely, congressional initiative, provided funds for six with their spare parts, et cetera, I was glad to support it. And I

am certainly glad to support the robust package we've now placed in front of you.

Final note, even on the notion of a robust package, I would argue that the reason to support this package, taking into full account the legitimate concerns on human rights and the peace process which need to be answered to your satisfaction, I think when we do this we need to understand this is a huge national security and health and educational threat to us. That's why we are doing it.

By the way, Colombia and the Andean Ridge are important international partners. But the number of aircraft we are talking about is half the number of aircraft that I had in my division as one of nine United States military divisions in the Gulf war attack.

So this is a reasonably sized package to let General Wilhelm and others, the United States Ambassador, support Colombian planning.

I think we sent you something that merits your full consideration. I thank you for the chance to lay out this thinking; and I look forward, sir, to responding to your own questions.

Mr. MICA. Thank you for your comments and your testimony.

[The prepared statement of General McCaffrey follows:]

**Statement by General Barry R. McCaffrey
Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy
Before the House Committee on Government Reform,
Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources
Colombian and Andean Region Counterdrug Efforts: The Road Ahead
February 15, 2000**

Introduction

All of us in the Office of National Drug Control Policy thank the Committee for the opportunity to testify today about the drug trafficking situation in Colombia and the Andean Region, and the administration's proposed support package to address that situation. Chairman Mica, Representative Mink, distinguished members of the subcommittee, your interest in all aspects of drug control policy and your commitment to bipartisan support of a comprehensive response to the nation's drug abuse problem are much appreciated. We welcome this opportunity to review the comprehensive initiatives that are being conducted in support of Goal 5 of the *National Drug Control Strategy*: Break foreign and domestic drug sources of supply.

Latest Cocaine Production Data

The final 1999 coca cultivation and potential cocaine production estimates for the Andean Region released by the CIA's Crime and Narcotics Center show progress in attacking the cocaine trade. Overall Andean net coca cultivation declined to 180,000 hectares in 1999, 4 percent less than the 1998 figure, and 15 percent less than in 1995. Potential global cocaine production fell to 765 metric tons, a drop of 7 percent from the 1998 figure, and an 18 percent drop since 1995.

Although the overall coca cultivation trends are positive, this data confirms that there has been a major shift of coca cultivation from Peru and Bolivia to guerrilla-controlled territory in Colombia. The new data illustrates the urgency for Congressional action in support of the administration's \$1.6 billion aid package to Colombia. Without additional U.S. assistance Colombia is unlikely to experience the dramatic progress in the drug fight experienced by its Andean neighbors.

**ANDEAN POTENTIAL COCAINE PRODUCTION
(Metric Tons)**

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Peru	460	435	325	240	175
Bolivia	240	215	200	150	70
Colombia	230	300	350	435	520
Totals	930	950	875	825	765

ANDEAN COCA CULTIVATION
(Hectares)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Peru	115,300	94,400	68,800	51,000	38,700
Bolivia	48,600	48,100	45,800	38,000	21,800
Colombia	50,900	67,200	79,500	101,800	122,500
Total	214,800	209,700	194,100	190,800	183,000

The Crisis in Colombia

President Pastrana and his reform-minded government took office in August 1998. He has faced multiple challenges from the outset of his administration. These ongoing multiple and inter-related crises in Colombia threaten many US national interests. Among these interests are: stemming the flow of cocaine and heroin into the US, support for democratic government and rule of law, respect for human rights, promoting efforts to reach a negotiated settlement to Colombia's long-running internal conflict, maintaining regional stability, and promoting legitimate trade and investment. Without substantial financial, technical, and political support from the United States, these inter-related crises will not only negatively affect our nation, but threaten to undermine democracy and stability in Colombia and the region in the near term.

Rapidly expanding cocaine and heroin production in Colombia constitute a threat to US national security and the well-being of our citizens. Ninety percent of the cocaine entering the United States originates in or passes through Colombia. The cultivation of opium poppies in Colombia has expanded from almost nothing in 1990 to over 6,000 hectares now, producing enough high purity heroin to meet over half of the U.S. demand.

Over the last decade, drug production in Colombia has increased dramatically. In spite of an aggressive aerial eradication campaign, Colombian cultivation of coca, the raw material for cocaine, has more than tripled since 1992. New information about the potency of Colombian coca, the time required for crops to reach maturity, and efficiency in the cocaine conversion process has led to a revision of the estimates of Colombia's 1998 potential cocaine production from 165 metric tons to 435 metric tons.

The newly released 1999 figures indicate that both the number of hectares of coca under cultivation in Colombia and the amount of cocaine produced from those crops continue to skyrocket. Colombian coca cultivation rose 20 percent to 122,500 hectares in 1999; there was a corresponding 20 percent increase in potential cocaine production to 520 metric tons. Left unchecked, these massive increases in drug production and trafficking in Colombia will reverse gains achieved over the last four years in Peru and Bolivia, and continued expansion of drug production in Colombia will likely result in more drugs being shipped to the United States.

US National Interests Threatened

The problems in Colombia affect the lives of Americans at home and abroad. Illegal drugs cost our society 52,000 dead and nearly \$110 billion dollars each year due to health costs, accidents, and lost productivity. The US has been successful in reducing the number of cocaine users by over seventy percent since its peak in 1985. If left unchecked, the rapid expansion of drug production in Colombia threatens to significantly increase the global supply of cocaine and heroin. Without effective supply reduction programs, cheap and easily-obtainable drugs can undercut the effectiveness of our successful demand reduction programs and increase the drug threat to our communities. In Colombia, narco-funded terrorists kidnap and murder US citizens, and attack and extort US companies doing business there.

Changes in Drug Trafficking

In large part due to successful counterdrug programs in Peru and Bolivia, the drug production problem in the Andean Region has changed dramatically over the last decade. Until recently, most coca was grown in Peru and Bolivia, and coca base was shipped to Colombia for processing and distribution. Aggressive drug crop eradication, interdiction operations, and a broad array of law enforcement programs, in combination with alternative economic development programs in Peru and Bolivia have reduced coca cultivation in those countries 66% and 55%, respectively, since 1995.

Unfortunately, the traffickers found favorable conditions to move production into Colombia, converting it into the world's largest producer of coca. Domination of Colombia's vast coca growing regions by guerrilla or paramilitary groups, another relatively recent phenomenon, has greatly handicapped Colombian President Pastrana's ability to reduce drug production or enforce Colombian national law. These new circumstances require a change in strategy, policy, and resources if we intend to protect our nation from becoming the target of dramatically increased amounts of cocaine and heroin and avert possible increases in drug addiction, violence and crime. It is in the interest of both the United States and Colombia to curb the Colombian drug trade and increase prospects for peace and stability in Colombia and the Andean region as a whole.

The immense amounts of money generated by the drug trade are also fueling violence, lawlessness, and Colombia's long internal conflict. Colombia lacks the resources to dislodge the organized terrorists and private armies that provide a safe haven for a drug-based economy. These illegal armed groups have a dominant presence in about half of Colombia's national territory and are the overwhelming source of the human rights violations committed in Colombia. High levels of violence, insecurity, and attacks on infrastructure are displacing large numbers of rural inhabitants and discouraging both Colombian and foreign investment, exacerbating Colombia's worst economic recession since the 1930s. Narco-financing of the guerrilla groups has produced a paradoxical situation in which the guerrillas are militarily strong and politically weak. All of these factors are undermining the Colombian government's good faith efforts to negotiate peace and bring an end to the decades of violence.

Meanwhile, the Colombian economy is in its first recession in 25 years, and the deepest recession of the last 70 years. Real gross domestic product is estimated to have fallen by 3.5 percent in 1999, the result of external shocks, fiscal imbalances, and a further weakening of confidence related to stepped up activity by insurgent groups. Unemployment has rocketed from under 9 percent in 1995 to about 20 percent in 1999, adding to the pool of unemployed workers who can be drawn into the narcotics trade or into insurgent or paramilitary groups. The deep recession has also sapped the Colombian government of resources to address societal and political pressures, fight the narcotics trade, or address systemic security requirements.

Plan Colombia

The Pastrana Government authored an integrated strategy, "Plan Colombia," that recognizes that solving Colombia's inter-related problems will require significant action on a variety of fronts. The plan articulates a set of far-reaching, interlocking policies designed to promote peace, strengthen democracy, combat drug trafficking, improve the human rights climate, and revive the economy. The Government of Colombia estimates that implementing Plan Colombia will cost about \$7.5 billion over the next three years, and Colombia has committed to spending \$4 billion of its own resources and international financial institution loans to execute the plan. The Pastrana Government is asking the international community to provide the remaining \$3.5 billion in bilateral foreign assistance. The Administration proposal is responsive to the requirements identified in Plan Colombia.

President Pastrana's plan focuses on five strategic issues:

1. The peace process;
2. The Colombian economy;
3. The counter-drug strategy;
4. The reform of the justice system and the protection of human rights;
5. Democratization and social development;

These five planks respond comprehensively to Colombia's most severe problems. At the core is the need to strengthen the democratic institutions and their ability to rule. Repairing the economy will make it easier for the Colombian people to provide for themselves and will decrease the lure of the drug trade and other illicit activity. Combating the drug trade will reduce corruption, allow for legitimate economic development, remove the principal source of economic support from the illegal armed groups who create havoc within Colombian society, and make the negotiating table a more attractive setting than the battlefield for resolving their problems. Decreasing the scale of the internal conflict will facilitate the reform of the justice system and lead to improvement in the human rights situation. Illegal armed groups will no longer be in a position to control and abuse the Colombian people, and the GOC will be able to focus on

reforms within the government rather than reacting to terrorist actions. True democratization and social development will bring better governance to the Colombian people.

President Pastrana has also placed his personal prestige behind the decision made by Colombia's military leadership to improve the military's human rights performance, end collusion with right-wing violence, and punish those who violate these new policies. Under current leadership, the Colombian military is also undergoing a cultural transformation which, if sustained, bodes well for Colombia. Defense Minister Ramirez and Armed Forces Commander Tapias have taken dramatic steps to deal with the legacy of human rights abuses and impunity that have clouded our bilateral relations in the past. The forced retirements of Generals Millan and del Rio because of ties to illegal paramilitary organizations and the arrests of General Uscategui and Lt. Col. Sanchez Oviedo for alleged involvement in the 1997 Mapiripan massacre conducted by paramilitaries are particularly significant. The US State Department's annual human rights report has also documented a steadily declining number of reported human rights violations by the Colombian military. Clearly, these are only steps toward a solution. Still, these good faith efforts demonstrate the will to address the remaining human rights problems in the Colombian military and to resolve the difficult challenges facing Colombia.

The Assistance Package and the National Drug Control Strategy

The administration's proposed Colombia/Andean Region support package is perfectly in line with our National Drug Control Strategy -- a strategy that represents a comprehensive approach focusing on: educating children about the dangers of drug use, decreasing the addict population, breaking the cycle of drugs and crime, securing our borders, and reducing the supply of drugs. Our effort to support Plan Colombia directly supports goal-five of the National Strategy: Break foreign and domestic drug sources of supply. Funds used for overseas supply reduction still represent a small percentage of our entire National Drug Control budget. For example, including the administration's Colombia/Andean Region counterdrug assistance proposal, USG funding in Fiscal Year 2000 by counter-drug activity would break down as follows:

- Demand reduction activities (e.g., treatment, prevention, research) accounts for 32.3% of the National Drug Control budget (\$5.9 billion).
- Domestic law enforcement accounts for 49% of that budget (\$9 billion).
- In contrast, our international efforts are only 8.4% of the budget (\$1.5 billion), while interdiction activities account for the remaining 10.4% (\$1.9 billion).

To deal effectively with the overall drug problem, we need to deal simultaneously with drug supply reduction, transportation, distribution, and abuse issues that have a complex interrelation. The proposed package will make an important addition to this effort.

Maintain Regional Support

Also critical to US national interests is enhancement of counterdrug support to the surrounding nations, especially Peru and Bolivia, to ensure that the drug producers and traffickers can not respond to increased counterdrug efforts in Colombia simply by moving their operations to other countries. The current governments of Peru and Bolivia have shown the political will to attack drug trafficking in their nations within the framework of democracy and respect for human rights. If we are to help implement a plan that will cripple large-scale cocaine production in the Andes, we must continue to support Bolivia and Peru.

The Administration Proposal

The administration developed a proposal for a two-year assistance package to help implement Plan Colombia and bolster our counterdrug support to other nations in the region. The proposal suggests a \$954 million Fiscal Year 2000 supplemental appropriations package and a supporting \$318 million increase in the Fiscal Year 2001 budget. The proposed assistance is a balanced, comprehensive package supporting counterdrug activities, alternative economic development, rule of law, human rights, good governance, and the resettlement of internally displaced persons.

The proposed package is based on interlinked initiatives:

- Counterdrug equipment, training, and technical assistance to help the Colombian police and military to establish government control of the vast coca growing regions in southern Colombia;
- Major increases in Colombian alternative economic development programs, including new job generation, to wean small farmers and migrant workers off cultivating drug crops;
- Strengthening governing capacity and human rights mechanisms;
- Supporting Colombia's economic recovery;
- Promoting progress in Colombia's peace process; and
- Enhancing regional drug interdiction and alternative development programs to support continued progress against drug trafficking and avoid displacement of Colombia's drug trade to the surrounding countries.

Push Into Southern Colombia

The Colombian National Police (CNP) will continue to be the primary responsible agency for drug law enforcement operations including eradication, lab destruction, chemical and drug shipment interdiction, and dismantling trafficking organizations. The CNP's crop control efforts are currently severely limited by the danger posed to eradication aircraft and personnel by

the efforts of the guerrillas and paramilitary forces to protect the main source of their income. Military support will be required to provide a sufficient level of security for the CNP to perform their law enforcement mission. The proposed assistance package would enable the Colombian Army to operate jointly with the CNP as they move into the dangerous drug production sanctuaries in southern Colombia by providing funds to stand up two additional Army Counternarcotics Battalions. The first Army Counternarcotics Battalion, which was trained and equipped by the US, was brought on line in late 1999. The proposed assistance package will also provide resources to increase intelligence for the Colombian Joint Task Force – South, based at Tres Esquinas, which includes fully-vetted participants from all the military services and the Colombian National Police.

Colombia's current drug producing sanctuaries exist in large part because the illegal armed groups take advantage of Colombia's rugged geography, lack of basic infrastructure, and poor road network. To be effective, the Counternarcotics Battalions must have sufficient air mobility to operate in the vast coca-growing areas. As a result, the largest single component in the proposed package involves providing the Counternarcotics Battalions with adequate lift capability – 30 UH-60 (BlackHawk) and 15 UH-1N helicopters; 18 UH-1N helicopters were delivered to Colombia in November 1999 for this purpose.

Additional CNP Funding

The package also includes substantial additional support for the Colombian National Police, including procuring additional spray aircraft; upgrading existing helicopters and planes; providing training, equipment, secure communications; building new bases and enhancing security at existing bases. The \$95 million proposed in this assistance package for the CNP is in addition to the approximately \$158 million the CNP received from the FY 1999 counterdrug emergency supplemental package, and the approximately \$88 million FY 2000 and \$73 million request for FY 2001 in State/INL's budget. We believe the total of these funds would provide the CNP with a robust capability to carry out their counterdrug law enforcement responsibilities.

Intelligence Enhancements

The proposed assistance also includes resources to enhance both the Colombian and US governments' ability to collect, analyze, and disseminate the intelligence necessary to support all aspects of operational planning and execution. Though much progress has been made over the past five years, we need to continue to build the top quality intelligence support that is critical to effective implementation at both the strategic and operational levels. A portion of the funding goes toward improving the Colombian government's ability to field effective intelligence programs in support of both police and military operations. Other funds will be applied to US programs that support both Colombian and US government efforts, including those being carried out by US law enforcement agencies.

Interdiction Support

In addition to crop control efforts, the Government of Colombia needs to wage a vigorous drug interdiction effort. The assessment of US and Colombian analysts is that the air transportation node that services Colombian cocaine labs and growing areas is vulnerable to interdiction. The goal is to cause a major disruption of the traffickers' ability to move their product. A successful interdiction campaign, similar to the Peruvian airbridge denial effort, is required. The \$82 million for Colombian air interdiction programs contemplated in the package would establish Colombia's ability to interdict drug air transit in southern Colombia, and improve upon existing capability in northern Colombia through aircraft upgrades, additional ground-based radars, and improvement of existing air bases near the drug-producing regions. The package also includes \$68 million to fund radar upgrades to four US Customs Airborne Early Warning Radar equipped P-3 aircraft for increased detection and monitoring missions in Colombia.

More than \$30 million in additional funding would also be provided to improve riverine, maritime, and overland interdiction efforts to prevent the traffickers from finding alternative transportation routes or methods.

Human Rights Policy

In accordance with U.S. law and policy, all assistance to the Colombian police and armed forces is contingent upon human rights screening. No USG assistance is being provided to any unit of the Colombian police or military for which there is credible evidence of gross human rights violations by its members. None will be provided to such units, unless, as required by U.S. law, the Secretary of State determines that the GOC is taking steps to bring those responsible for gross human rights violations to justice. The Colombian military has markedly improved its human rights performance in recent years. Unfortunately, at the same time, the number of abuses committed by the guerrillas and, particularly, by the paramilitaries has also increased. We have urged the GOC to take effective steps to end abuses and impunity within its security forces. We welcomed President Pastrana's decisions in 1999 to retire four generals linked to paramilitary groups, as mentioned above and statements by President Pastrana and top military officials that they would not tolerate collaboration with the paramilitaries. It is important to acknowledge that the Colombian military has one of the longest unbroken records of support for democracy and civilian government in the hemisphere.

Bolstering Government Capacity and Alternative Development

The Government of Colombia will need to provide improved local government services and licit economic alternatives to the illegal drug trade in order to consolidate its authority in the drug-producing regions and to ameliorate the effects on the population of increased counterdrug efforts. The proposed assistance package contains a major increase in US support for Colombian alternative development programs and funds to improve the delivery of municipal government services in the affected areas.

If the funding is approved, we would be committing \$270 million over the next two years to alternative development, enhancing good governance, judicial reform, and human rights protection. This is in addition to some \$4 billion that the GOC is committing to Plan Colombia from its own resources, including loans obtained from the International Financial Institutions, which would be aimed primarily at social, humanitarian, and infrastructure development, as well as economic revitalization.

The expanded alternative development programs proposed in this package would accelerate the damage done to the coca business while avoiding violent confrontations with a displaced coca labor force. Alternative development programs have been a key factor in recent, record-level reductions in coca cultivation in Peru and Bolivia, once the major producers of coca. Coca leaf prices rose in Peru in 1999 after many years of steady decline. It is imperative to expand our efforts to provide licit economic opportunities in all three of the coca source countries to prevent farmers and laborers from returning to coca production.

Colombia's ability to enforce drug control laws is weakened by poorly functioning courts, untrained or inexperienced judges and prosecutors, threats and corruption. The Government of Colombia requires assistance in strengthening its criminal justice capacity – law enforcement, the police and prosecutor investigative capabilities, increased prison security – to build long-term counterdrug capability, enhance the rule of law, and increase public confidence in the justice system. The proposed package contains a significant administration of justice element to address these challenges.

The \$88 million for justice-related programs illustrates that the USG is committed to a comprehensive solution to the problems in Colombia and to protecting human rights and the rule of law. Many of these dramatic and inter-related challenges to the rule of law that Colombia faces stem from the culture of violence bred by a long-standing insurgency and weak governing institutions in the interior of Colombia. The growing narcotics trade has spawned additional violence and corruption. US assistance to the program includes increased training for the police, prosecutors and judges in areas of human rights, narcotics, maritime and border security, corruption, kidnapping, and money laundering/asset forfeiture cases. Funds will also be used for security protections for witnesses, judges, and prosecutors in the criminal justice system, as well as assistance in prison design and administration. Additionally, US support for Plan Colombia will provide for procedural and legislative reforms to ensure that the system functions fairly and effectively, with particular emphasis on the transition to an accusatory system, including oral trials. There must also be close coordination between civilian and military justice systems to ensure that any member of the armed forces implicated in human rights abuses is properly investigated and held accountable for crimes.

Other proposed initiatives relating to increasing GoC governing capacity are a substantial increase in US assistance to international organizations and Colombian non-governmental organizations helping Colombians displaced by the internal conflict, as well as funding for programs designed to protect human rights workers, strengthen Colombian government and non-governmental human rights entities, and establish and train specialized units in the National Police and Prosecutor General's Office to handle human rights cases.

The remaining Colombia-specific programs in the proposed package are designed to address the inter-related issues that exacerbate or facilitate the drug trade in Colombia. The Government of Colombia needs to create better conditions for a successful peace process, and greater domestic and foreign investment. The US would provide technical assistance to initiatives relating to economic recovery. We would also provide some training opportunities for Government of Colombia negotiators and policy advisors to facilitate progress in the peace process. We believe that to the extent that Plan Colombia reinvigorates the Colombian economy, enhances GOC governing capability, discourages human rights abuses, and reduces the money available to guerrillas and paramilitaries from involvement in drug trafficking, it will encourage the peace process.

Other International Support

The USG is seeking to ensure that other donor nations that are part of the global cocaine consumption market assist Colombia to move forward with Plan Colombia. With our strong support, the International Monetary Fund has approved a \$2.7 billion program for Colombia. In addition, we are supporting the Colombian Government's request for more than \$3 billion in loans from the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. Efforts to build support among potential bilateral donors in Europe and Asia are underway.

Regional Support Elements

In order to maximize the effectiveness of increased counterdrug efforts in Colombia, we must reinforce counterdrug efforts in the surrounding countries to capitalize on successful programs there and to prevent the traffickers from simply moving their operations to avoid law enforcement. Successful execution of source zone interdiction programs is dependent upon US interagency detection and monitoring and intelligence support. The proposed package would provide \$38.6 million to establish Forward Operating Locations in the region to enable the US to continue its robust regional interdiction initiatives now that the bases in Panama have closed.

The proposal also includes \$46 million for programs that would adapt air, land, and riverine interdiction efforts in Peru and Bolivia to changes in trafficker routes and methods, and would provide modest funding to support increased interdiction challenges in Venezuela, Ecuador, and Brazil. Increased effectiveness of interdiction programs will depress trafficker demand for coca leaf and base and reduce coca farm-gate prices, which will, in turn, increase the allure and effectiveness of alternative development programs. The proposed package includes an additional \$30 million above the baseline funding for alternative development programs in Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador to handle the increase in demand for licit alternatives to coca production.

The Andean Region assistance package has been crafted in response to the need for a strategy to eliminate coca production in the Andes where it is most prevalent, and prevent its return to Peru and Bolivia where so many coca growers have moved away from the drug trade into licit activities. The proposed assistance package will be effective only if it is implemented as a whole and is kept in place for the long term. It offers the best hope for decisive, permanent

action against the flow of illegal drugs in the United States, and in favor of democracy, peace, stability, and respect for human rights in our hemisphere.

Conclusion

Now is the time for a major effort to support the counterdrug efforts of the governments in the Andean Region. There is strong political will in Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia to attack the drug trade, root out corruption, end violence, and establish peace and security within the framework of democracy and respect for human rights. There is also strong will in the governments of Ecuador, Venezuela, and Brazil to ensure that successful counterdrug efforts in the current drug source countries do not displace the drug trade into their nations.

While Colombia has become the center of illegal drug production in our hemisphere, the commitment of the Government of Colombia to attacking drug production and trafficking is indisputable. The Government of Colombia is now conducting a robust counterdrug effort including eradication of drug crops; lab destruction; alternative development; attacking drug mafias; and air, maritime, riverine, and land interdiction operations to seize and destroy drugs and chemicals. Hundreds of Colombian police and military personnel, judges, prosecutors, government officials, and innocent civilians have lost their lives as a result of drug trafficking and the violence it generates. Just as we share with Colombia the threat to national security and social well-being posed by illegal drugs, we share the responsibility to act against them. It is imperative that the United States Government do its fair share to fight drug production and trafficking in Colombia and the region, and support our democratic allies.

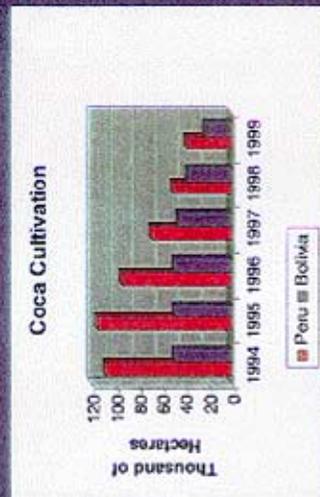
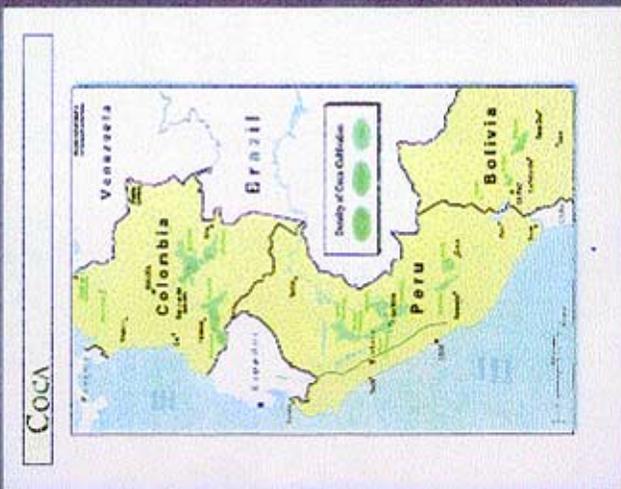
The Administration looks forward to working closely with Congress to develop a package that will stem the tide of drugs flowing into the United States from the Andean Region while providing the necessary funding to help Colombia confront its current problems.

**Current Situation in Colombia
and the Andean Region**



Barry R. McCaffrey
Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy
February 15, 2000

Source Zone Strategy is Working in Bolivia and Peru



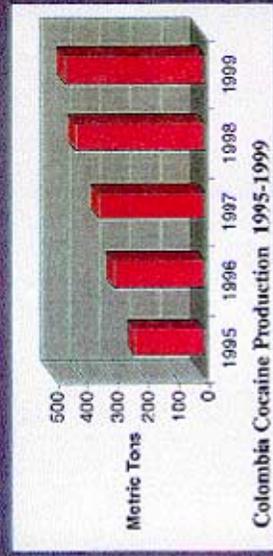
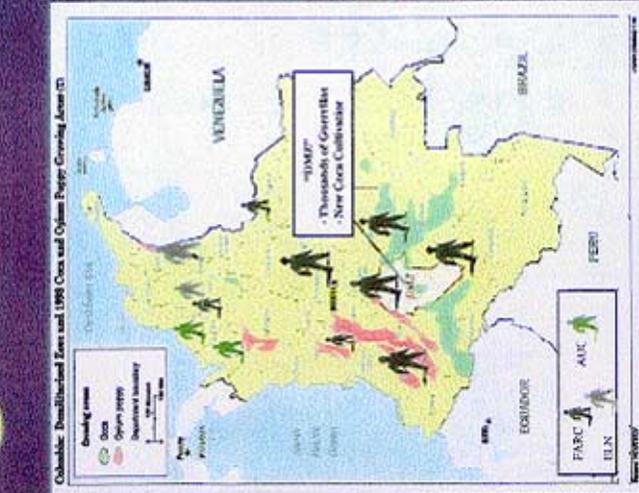
✓ In Peru coca cultivation is down 66 percent since 1995

✓ In Bolivia coca cultivation is down 53 percent since 1995

Source: DCF Crime and Narcotics Cover (latest) -based drug crop estimates



Colombia's Interlocking Problems Resulting in Dramatic Drug Increase



Colombian production is almost three times what was previously calculated.

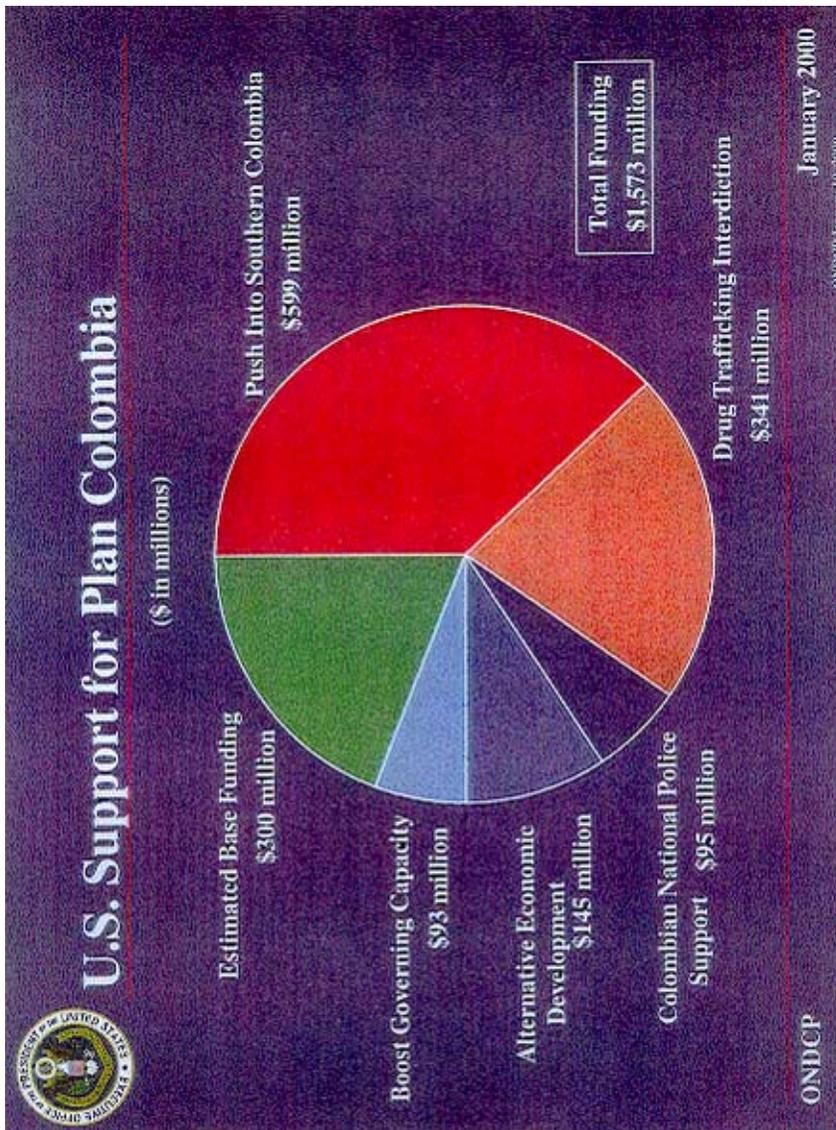
- Drug trade funding violence, internal conflict, and human rights violations
- Paramilitaries and guerrillas controlling cultivation and production areas
- Peace process at risk
- Economy crippled by violence and uncertainty
- Emigration/capital flight



Integrated Regional Solution Required

- Administration Initiative calls for significant increases in funding -- almost \$1.6 Billion over two years
- Solution is regional in scope with emphasis on Colombia -- the center of gravity
 - Interdiction/eradication operations
 - Alternative Economic Developments
 - Strengthen Democratic Institutions
 - Continued support for Peru and Bolivia
 - Increased support for Ecuador
 - Forward Operating Locations are key







Potential Impact of Andean Ridge Initiative on US Interests

Counterdrug Operations
in Southern Colombia



- Reduce Global supply of cocaine & heroin
- Address source of regional instability

Boost Government Capacity



- Strengthen democracy and rule of law
- Enable long-term solution

Support Economic Recovery



- Reduce future dependence on US Aid
- Re-establish growth in key South American economy

Assist the Peace Process



- Reduce funding for insurgency
- Peacefully resolve longest continuous conflict in Western Hemisphere

Regional Initiatives



- Expand regional CD cooperation
- Avoid displacement of drug industry to other countries in the region

OSM/CE/January 10, 2007

Mr. MICA. One of the concerns I've had is that it's common knowledge, and the press has reported, that Colombia is now the third largest recipient of United States assistance, after Israel and Egypt, and that funding took place, I believe, a year ago this past October, appropriated by the Congress.

I tried to give a full year of time for those funds to be appropriated in their fiscal year up to October 1st, then became concerned that less than half the money was actually in Colombia and held several closed-door meetings, not to embarrass the administration, but to see if we could work together to get those resources on line.

It still appears that we have problems in getting that equipment to Colombia, General. And now we have \$1 billion-plus package here. What would you say that you will be able to do to make certain that things that have been promised—the President has made several pronouncements of surplus material back to 1997, that haven't been delivered. How are we going to ensure that this equipment and these resources get there?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I think you have put your finger on an enormously legitimate concern. You know, you look at the management tools we have in place—the United States Embassy in Colombia, the interagency process here in Washington, it is inadequate to handle this workload. We will screw this up seriously if we don't put together a mechanism that is adequate for the challenge—assuming Congress passes the program—adequate to the task.

So I think the fellow who most clearly understands that, besides Mr. Berger, is—Madeleine Albright's asked Under Secretary Pickering to be our quarterback. So we are not ready to reveal how exactly we are going to do this. We're putting together a team, a high-level team to be a permanent secretariat for the interagency process. We have got to give our CINC the right guidance. We have 800 people in a headquarters in Miami perfectly prepared to manage heavy lifting, and then we're going to have to look at the U.S. Embassy and make sure we have got the right kinds of people.

Mr. MICA. Well, one of the things I did on the short term was call in every agency. We did this behind closed doors, and we did it fairly regularly up to just recently. I really would like your assurance that you are doing the same thing. Because somebody has to be constantly on top of this, General.

The other concern I'd have, and let me say—we have General Wilhelm who will be here. I must say that the military has been able to get some of the resources in place rather efficiently, and I think they've got one battalion trained. They had one incursion, I think, that was successful, as opposed to the Colombians getting their pants beaten off.

But this report that I ordered from GAO came out in December. I'm sure you are somewhat familiar with it, and maybe we could put that one chart up there. That doesn't match exactly to this, but, this is DOD's Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance Counter Drug Aircraft Support in Central and South America, and it has what's requested by the Southern Command and then provided by DOD, and it shows actually a declining from 1998 to 1999—I mean, only a fraction of what was provided.

There are two ways to go after this. One is stopping it at its source through eradication and alternative development, et cetera, and the other is getting it as it's coming out, but that requires intelligence and information.

Now, we provided in 1998 an unprecedented amount of funds from the Congress for all aspects of this effort. However, in 1999, DOD, which I think has been doing a good job with what they have been given, got very little of what was requested.

What's happening here?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, we've got some force structure problems. The military now, U.S. Armed Forces, is the smallest since 1939, the year my dad was sworn in as an infantry officer. We are moving some of the more suitable platforms out of the active inventory and into retirement. We have other worldwide assets. I won't pretend to speak to those responsibilities. That's sort of an overview of the challenge that we face on, you know, some very serious efforts.

Now, having said that, I think one of the biggest single problems we had was the withdrawal from Panama. When we lost Airfield Howard, we lost a superb 2,000-airmen, 7-day-a-week, 24-hour-a-day operation, providing 2,000 to 3,000 flights a year. That was one of the biggest problems.

We've now reset our assets. We are operating in many locations. Congress has given us the funds to begin three FOLs: Aruba; Curaçao; Manta, Ecuador. We are operating out of Roosevelt Roads. I believe the Customs Service has stepped up in a major way to support us, as has the Coast Guard. But we have a tremendous decrement based on the loss of Panama, forward basing in Panama.

Mr. MICA. Well, General, finally, probably one of the most difficult parts of my job has been to deal with the parents of children who have died, the 50,000 and 15,900 direct deaths in my district. Even more so, I had to write the parents of one of the individuals who was killed over in Colombia who was from central Florida and tell them that their young person died in an effort so that thousands of others wouldn't die with drug overdoses and the ravages of drugs on our streets.

I think one of the concerns we have heard expressed here is how many United States troops will be dedicated to this effort, and maybe you could tell us what you think this will take in Colombia. Now, I know there will be no fighting, but in training and other missions—how many individuals we will have at risk? Again, the toughest part of our job is when something goes wrong and we lose an American life in this combat.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I don't know the answer. And I say that—you know, I was in uniform from age 17, essentially for 35 years. But you are also talking to a guy whose daughter is a captain in the National Guard, and my son is an infantry major. So I am very keenly aware of the threats to our young people in their worldwide deployments. I don't know what the answer is. I think we ought to tell the CINC to sort this out.

Mr. MICA. Are we going to have double or triple the training folks?

General MCCAFFREY. I don't know. You will have to let the CINC get the mission and do the planning.

Right now, it runs to between 80 and 200 people in-country. I can't imagine that we're talking a substantial increase. That is principally a mobility package, and it's two more battalion training packages. So I wouldn't imagine the in-country footprint would be very large. But I would rather have the CINC design the answer than me wing it.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Hawaii, our ranking member.

Mrs. MINK. I thank the chairman.

General McCaffrey, your testimony has been very enlightening.

The first chart that you showed the committee at the beginning had to do with the cocaine production and the very dramatic reductions in both Peru and Bolivia in production as well as in cultivation. My question goes to the remarkable results that have been achieved by these two countries, and I assume from what I know about the alternate development programs that were instituted by both countries that there was not a large infusion of military equipment or military personnel that achieved these results.

Could you explain what the American policy or American participation was, the cost of it which so dramatically changed the situation in both of those two countries?

General McCaffrey. Let me, if I can, start by underscoring the enormous difference among these nations. And I know you're aware of it and all of you on the committee are, but they have very different legal traditions, social organizations. The military, police, and judicial systems are unlike each other throughout these 34 nations. I mean, they don't even speak the same languages. In these cases, they do. The historical context is quite different.

Having said that, let me assure you we put a lot of money into Bolivia and Peru. We put \$1 billion into Bolivia over the space of 8 years, and it paid off. It didn't pay off until the last 3 years when we had the political will, the national conversation Banzer and Quiroga engineered, which then allowed some very effective use of police and military who reinserted them in the Chapare and who then combined with the very intelligent use of alternative economic aid tied to a reward-punishment system. Up until then, we have been paying people to not grow cocaine, and that doesn't work.

In Peru, we had some brilliant leadership by President Fujimori and his people. They went after the political basis of the Sendero Luminoso. They did use military and police power with incredible effectiveness.

We did support them. I was the Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command. We began the air bridge into Peru—Peru, Colombia. We used United States intelligence assets, AWACS, U.S. Navy, ground training groups to reinforce their police, the Umepar police, out in the Huallaga Valley; and it paid off much more effectively, to be honest, than I anticipated. I was astonished. And that's why I would rather give the credit to the Peruvians necessarily than to us, but we put in a lot of assets.

Now, Colombia is a different thing. Colombia is a giant country with trackless jungles and rivers for highways, with a huge armed insurgency of people who, in many of our viewpoints, have walked from ideology to banditry and who are now fighting over huge flows of money. And to them that's worth fighting over. And we've got

a democratic government, a pretty decent democratic government with great traditions of military subservience to civilian institutions, and they are in an emergency situation.

So this package is our best thinking on how to support Plan Colombia which they put together. That's the differences, Madam Congresswoman.

Mrs. MINK. In your printed testimony on page 4, you have a listing of the five strategic issues that President Pastrana has incorporated in his \$7.5 billion Plan Colombia.

Now, do you have a monetary distribution of that \$7.5 billion in each of the five areas? For instance, in the peace process, the Colombian economy, the reform of the justice system, and on democratization and social development? What would be the distribution of that \$7.5 billion, putting aside the counterdrug strategy which is item No. 3?

General MCCAFFREY. Yes, the Colombians, of course, came up with that plan; and I would call it a conceptual framework as opposed to detailed plans. I don't think they have an adequate answer. They have got to go get some of that money as an example in the European Union, in the IADB and the World Bank.

Mrs. MINK. As I understand, they have commitments of loans from various international groups.

General MCCAFFREY. Pretty good. Right. I think it is \$1.3 billion, if I remember, that they have already got. But they haven't fleshed out either the resources for sure, nor the details of their plan.

Having said that, take our piece of it as an example. Of that \$1.6 billion, last year the U.S. total, about 5 percent of it, was in non-interdiction, nonintelligence, nonpolice-military activities—5 percent of it.

In this package we sent over to you, it goes up to 20 percent. It's got a \$240 million package in there for alternative economic development, development of the judicial system, reform of the prison system, the peace process, et cetera.

So our own U.S. funds are clearly a greatly increased weighting toward these other areas.

Mrs. MINK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

I'd like to recognize now the chairman of our full committee, Mr. Burton.

Mr. BURTON. General McCaffrey, let me just start off by saying I have been quite critical in the past of many of the things that have not been done and some of the things that you have said, but I want to tell you your presentation today was very impressive. It sounds like we are on the right track, and I want to compliment you for what you said today.

Now if we could just follow through, I think it would be great. I do have a couple of comments I'd like to make for the record, and I'd like to ask a couple of questions.

First of all, you said that the Blackhawks take 10 months to produce; and I think that's probably an accurate statement. The problem is, to get the Blackhawks that we need down there in a proper timeframe, Sikorsky probably cannot get them produced that fast.

I want to read to you something that was said back in September 1996. This is an exchange before the International Operations Committee. I was talking to Colonel Colante, and it went like this.

I said, "I don't understand this. If new Blackhawks are required and the drug war is as important to the United States of America as we all know that it is, why couldn't we use some of the Blackhawks that are already in our arsenal to send to Colombia in lieu of the new ones until they arrive? I mean, don't we have any Blackhawks available? If we don't have any Blackhawks that are already produced in our arsenal, why not, Colonel?"

And Colonel Colante said, "I'm afraid I can't speak for the Army. I wear a purple suit working for the DSAA, but the decision to do that would have to be made by the Chief of Staff of the Army, and it hasn't been posed to him."

I went on to say, "I'm posing it right now. If we are talking about the need for 11 Blackhawks to assist in the war against drugs against the drug cartel and the communists down there who are supporting them, why in the world can't we take the Blackhawks that are currently in existence in the Army and send them down there and replace them as new ones come on line? Why should we wait 6 months to a year? The war is going on right now."

And he said he would take that under advisement and work on it. That was in 1996; and, of course, we haven't done that.

Also, I'd like to comment on—in 1996, the White House promised the House International Relations Committee that they would send 12 Huey 2s down there and 6 Blackhawks. As of this year, the Huey 2s have not been sent; and three of the Blackhawks have been sent down, which we referred to previously.

So what I'd like to ask you, General, after saying what I said earlier about the plan you have talked about today sounds very good, why can't we take out of the military arsenal some of the Blackhawks that we already have, send them down there, along with Huey 2s that we probably have, so that they can get started as quickly as possible, rather than waiting for new ones to be produced by Sikorsky?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, Mr. Chairman, if I may, I spent all my life organizing machinery, people, spare parts, et cetera; and the most important thing you get out of that background is you have got to do a system. You can't just send machinery. You have got to train the crews. The hardest part is getting the maintenance system up in advance of deploying machinery. You have to build the hangars, and the lead times on learning to fly a Blackhawk helicopter is an 18-month proposition.

So when we get ahead of ourselves, when we send six Blackhawks to the Colombian army, which we did several years ago, they now have, as you know, 28 total in the force. I flew in there and looked at them painting over the \$100,000-plus radar reflective paint job so they could get Ejercito de Colombia on the tail boom; borrowing pilots from the Colombian air force to put them in a Colombian army uniform so they would have their own helicopters.

The program we are now doing, I can assure you we are not going to do that. So we just got the hangar built for the Blackhawks. That is a \$6 million flying machine. When you do the

advanced phase maintenance, you have got to have a hangar. And we are just now getting trained people on line. Some of those UH-1N aircraft down there have contract pilots. And, by the way, you can't just crank these guys out even at 18 months and put a bunch of new kids behind the control of a \$6 million plane that flies at night as effectively as it does in the daytime. That's the answer.

Now on the drawdown authority, I couldn't—I wouldn't substitute my judgment for the Secretary of Defense, but we need to be very careful. We did a lot of thinking about this hearing, Mr. Chairman, in the last several days. The drawdown authority as a tool to support U.S. foreign policy interest is about over. We're going to have to be very careful about this entire program.

When the U.S. Armed Forces cut itself by a third in structure or more, we had plenty of equipment that was available to use for other purposes. But we are now down at the point where our ability to deter attack in the Korean peninsula, in the Gulf, in the peacekeeping operations is seriously strained.

So, again, drawdown authority is for the Secretary of Defense to decide. Do we accept the risk of handing over U.S. Armed Forces materiel?

Mr. BURTON. Let me just followup on that.

I think this is a problem of military significance to the United States right now. And I certainly would not want to diminish our ability to protect the United States in the event we had a problem in two theaters in other parts of the world, as we are supposed to be prepared to do. But I do think that since this problem is getting worse and worse by the day down there and the FARC guerrillas and others are growing rapidly and getting resources from the drug cartels, I think it is imperative that we move as rapidly as possible while at the same time making sure that we have qualified personnel to use this equipment. And if it is possible to get helicopters down there, Blackhawks and Huey 2s, quicker and get people trained more quickly, I think that that is something that you and others ought to take a serious look at. I would just urge to you do that.

And with that, once again, I thought your presentation was very good today, and since I've been so critical in the past, it's time I threw a few accolades at you.

General MCCAFFREY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We'll look very carefully at your notion of accelerating the delivery of this equipment.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

I will yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. TIERNEY. Thank you very much.

I am going to try some questions, General, as long as the voice holds out. I know you must be beside yourself with joy over being congratulated by the chairman.

Let me just ask you a question. There are some, including the former Ambassador to El Salvador and Paraguay, who think that what we're doing here is simply having a policy of interfering in another country's civil war. And, in fact, I would like to get your reaction to that. Are we not just saying on the one hand that we are going after narcotics when in fact we are involving ourselves in a dispute that is 40 years old?

General McCaffrey. I think not. I think that the responsibility for sorting these questions out belong in Colombian hands, not United States. We've got a responsible, thoughtful, democratic government we are dealing with, the Colombians. They're in absolute misery. I mean, some of these numbers, it astonishes me that the American people haven't yet learned of the cost to Colombia of this drug problem.

And I took into account the comments of one of your committee members earlier, that it starts with the money we spend on illegal drugs. But a half million of these poor people have fled the country in the last several years. We've got brain drain going on in Colombia. Maybe that is to the advantage of the United States and Spain and the other places they are going—and Canada.

Internally, there are as many as a million people in the last decade who have lost their homes because of the savagery that comes out of this drug issue.

It's impacted on the economy. It's imperiled the ability of the government to have elections. One of the districts in Bogota couldn't elect a mayor because they were so intimidated by the thought of getting murdered by FARC operatives. It is right in the national capital.

So I think the Colombians have suffered enormously. We, in my view, and her regional partners, deserve to support them not just with police and military and intelligence and interdiction and precursor chemicals and arms control for smuggling but also with economic aid and political goodwill.

Your point is a good one.

Mr. Tierney. General, it strikes some people as odd, if our intention really is just to focus on narcotics and not to be involved in a civil war, why it is that we seem to be focused pretty much exclusively on FARC and that entity and to the exclusion of the paramilitaries?

You talked about displacement, but credible sources indicate that 47 percent of the displacement is created by paramilitaries and 35 percent probability by the guerrillas, about 8 percent from the Colombian armed forces. Human rights and international humanitarian law violations in 1999 were accredited 78 percent to the paramilitaries and 20 to the guerrillas and 2 percent to state security forces.

The fact is, there is significant evidence that a lot of the Colombians don't see a great distinction between the Colombian military and police and the paramilitaries. And if we wanted to have a credible policy that really looked like we were going after narcotics and not after interference in an internal dispute, wouldn't we want to put some condition on this that the government would, in fact, not just tell us that they are going to do that, as they have done in the past, but actually do something about the paramilitaries? That, I think, the evidence is overwhelming that there has been some collusion between the military and the police and the paramilitaries; and the people in Colombia, frankly, I don't think are going to have a lot of faith that you are sending this money down there so heavily lopsided down toward military intervention is going to be much comfort to them.

General MCCAFFREY. I think your point on this AUC, quote, self-defense units, is entirely correct. I mean, these are some of the most brutal people imaginable. I mean, the level of violence in Colombia is beyond imagination for Americans. The murder rate is up over 90 per 100,000 per annum. Ours, which is shameful, is around 8 per 100,000 per annum. And a lot of that mayhem does come out of these so-called paramilitary forces. I think you are quite correct.

It is my own view that the support we are providing to Colombian democratic institutions, to the CNP and the armed forces will be used to provide the rule of law in southern Colombia.

I think they will use it against AUC, who are clearly involved in the drug business themselves, to include directly in one occasion at least running a laboratory. These are criminals. They have attacked the Colombian police and murdered them. They had a death threat on President Pastrana. That was the paramilitary groups.

Mr. TIERNEY. Ought we not get more of an assurance that they will, in fact, go after those in an even-handed manner? I don't see anything in this package that gives me the comfort that they are going to take as aggressive a stand against the paramilitaries and break some of that cooperation that various people have had in the past. I know there have been isolated incidents where they have stood up in some progress. But ought we not to have with any of the aid that we send down there the conditions that make it clear to us and give us a comfort level that they are in fact going to go after those paramilitaries.

Because I feel for sure, General, the people that live in that country, as terrorized as they are, don't make a distinction right now between what is going on in the government military and the police and the paramilitaries. And they are not going to be greatly comforted if we give them more money.

General MCCAFFREY. Let me if I may, though, your point is a good one. I essentially agree. We have to fully comply with the Leahy Act. We have to be observant, not of rhetoric, but watch what are they doing. We need to vet units. We need to listen to human rights community. I will report out to them when I come back from Colombia next week. I think your point is a good one.

Now, having said that, if I may, let me strongly, though, put on the table an observation. The Colombian people do not have a problem distinguishing between the FARC, the paramilitaries and the police and the armed forces. There is—by any measure of polling or knowing these people, overwhelming support for the police, the Army, the Catholic Church, and democracy. There is—the last poll I saw was around 6 percent for the paramilitary, and around 3 percent for the FARC.

The FARC and these units are terrorists. They are not going to win at the ballot box. They are trying to win through savagery. But the people do not feel that way. There is a tremendous respect for the police and democratic institutions.

They voted, at risk of their lives, at the last election. And the FARC did not—does not credibly plan that process. Never mind these criminal paramilitary units.

Mr. TIERNEY. General, I think there has been a remarkable indication that the people in Colombia have one thing they can do which is organize and pull together, and they have been unbeliev-

ably resilient. Ought we not insist that we show some signs to the reallocation or the different allocation of this money by more support to crop alternatives, to ways to get that crop to market, to roads, to things of that nature? Shouldn't we build their confidence by putting more of the money in that direction than by putting it to military uses, which I still say, despite your remarks which I give you due credit for them, but I have other people telling me different things, and they are fairly credible also, that there is a concern by great people down there that, in fact, the government and the paramilitary still are engaged in supporting one another.

And I think we need to build support and have this package be conditioned on some of these things like better support for the judicial system, better assurances that there will be civil trials. And as people will be pursued, that those outstanding warrants will in fact be enforced. That people will get their crop to market and be able to safely reclaim some of their lands or at least go out and pioneer new lands with support on that.

I think that I would like to hear your discussion on why we can't condition this aid on those types of situations.

General McCaffrey. Well, I think, fundamentally, the program we sent down to you doesn't make sense unless you see \$7.5 billion. There is a, in our view, a coherent, well thought out Colombian plan to take all these issues into account.

And then in addition, even within our \$1.6 billion piece, as I mentioned, there is a massive increase in alternative economic development supports, support for the judicial system, prison reform, the peace process, et cetera. It is a \$240 million package that is in there. And it has gone up from 5 percent to 20 percent of the total, notwithstanding, in addition the World Bank loans, et cetera.

Now, finally, I think, going back to what it is we are asking you to consider, this is a mobility package to reinsert in the coca growing regions of the south democratic control. That is what that is. And when I find the Tres Esquinas, I can assure you, sir, there is no democratic control down there. This is five FARC fronts armed to the teeth, and they are fighting for heroin production and cocaine production, which is killing Americans and Venezuelans and Colombians all throughout the hemisphere.

That is what we are doing. We are going after the production of heroin and cocaine in southern Colombia and giving them the mobility and the training they need to do their job.

Mr. Tierney. Let me just end then, please, General, by suggesting that when we attack country by country like that, doesn't it just move the supply from one country to another, from Southeast Asia to Peru, from Peru to Colombia, from Colombia to where we are now if we do this?

General McCaffrey. I think your point is a good one. We need to be concerned about that. There ought to be a regional approach. You are quite correct. At the same time, we ought to be happy that Thailand in 15 years with our help has worked itself into a situation where it is 1 percent of Southwest Asian heroin production. And they have got a tremendous treatment system. Things are better off in the long-standing ally, Thailand, because of our support.

Pakistan has largely eliminated drug production. This is working. In Peru and Bolivia. And we ought to be happy for them.

The problem we are now focusing on is Colombia and its spillover effect. I think you are quite correct. We have to keep our eye on a regional responsibility to confront this evil. But the same time we have got to remember what we are doing. This is devastating in its impact on America. Those are 520 metric tons of cocaine that will come out of Colombia. By the way, they have a huge drug abuse problem, and it is growing, to include heroin addiction.

Dr. Nelba Chavez and I went there the last time. We went to a drug treatment facility for children to underscore our concern for their kids. Those drugs are all over Western Europe, Spain, Amsterdam, Russia.

Mr. TIERNEY. I guess my only point was it was no less of a concern to this country and other places when it was in Peru or Bolivia. And we still have it with us today. After decreasing the situation in those countries, we now have it in Colombia.

General McCaffrey. Yeah.

Mr. TIERNEY. And my concern is, you know, if we go down there and use the military and all of this in Colombia, we are next if we don't deal with the supply and demand.

General McCaffrey. Well, your concern is a correct one.

Let me also, if I can, leave on the table, in 3 years there has been a net reduction in cocaine production in the world of 7 percent. It was 11 percent last year, and this explosion in Colombia has changed it. So there is actually a lot less cocaine killing somebody's children and destroying the work force than there were 3 years ago.

This is actually working. We have got to stay at it for 10 years, I would agree. And we have got to watch the regional total, not just go to one spot and think we can find the Schweinford ball bearing factory of the drug business. It doesn't exist. I think you're correct.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman. I might just say that one of the things we did with Mr. Hastert was, when we went down into Peru and Bolivia several years ago, to help start those programs for crop eradication and substitution. And they have been very effective. We have done it also with the United Nations, and we co-sponsored last week's summit with the U.N. with Pino Arlacchi, and they have been very successful in that effort.

The first thing that we needed, though, in Peru was stability. I remember going to Peru 9 years ago and bombs were going off. You could not have any crop substitution-eradication program. So they had to have stability. And there are only so many places you can produce cocaine. And this summit last week also pledged to participate in the eradication, if you can believe this, of cocaine production in Bolivia within the next year, year and a half. So it can be done. But you do need the stability, a joint effort. And in this case, an international effort. I just wanted to interject that.

I will recognize the gentleman who chairs our International Relations Committee, Mr. Gilman.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General McCaffrey, I was looking over your chart, and in support for Plan Colombia, and I note that Colombian National Police receive only \$95 million of that proposed, out of \$1.5 or \$1.6 billion proposal. Why are we giving such a small amount to the Colombian National Police, who have demonstrated an excellent record in achieving a reduction in

cocaine, a reduction in heroin and have been doing a courageous effort? And the military apparently is getting close to \$600 million for pushing the southern Colombia. Why is there such an inequitable distribution between the police and the military?

General MCCAFFREY. You're quite correct in your confidence and respect for the Colombian police. And General Serrano's leadership and these field combat units of the police, the DANTI, some 2,500, they are equipped with now 47 aircraft. They have got a decent, pretty decent mobility capability. But there is 2,500 of them. There is 26,000 people organized with heavy mortars, helicopters, aircraft. They are using essentially chemical weapons. The 30 manned detachments of the Colombian National Police are not who will intervene at Tres Asquinas and go out and start operating against the coca division.

Last year, the Colombians had more than 25 aircraft hit by ground fire. This is incredibly dangerous work. They have got to get, in our judgment, supporting the Colombian thinking, they have got to get the riverine forces down there to control the lines of communication. They have got to get mobility down there. And they have got to put at least three, if not more, counternarcotic battalions of the Army and then allow the police to go in and time that with alternative economic developments so we are not just driving people off the land. That is what we are trying to do.

In addition, last year, we put \$350 million into Colombia. And since we did not have the same confidence that we have now in the General Tapias leadership, Minister of Defense Ramirez, and others, this almost all went to the police. So I think this is a balanced program that—

Mr. GILMAN. Well, General McCaffrey, General Serrano has been pleading for Blackhawk helicopters so he can get to the higher altitudes and eradicate the heroin crop, the poppy crop that he has said that if he is given the wherewithal to do that, he can eliminate that crop within a 2-year period.

How many Blackhawks have we delivered to General Serrano to do this work? How many does he now have from our Nation available to do the kind of thing that he wants to do to eradicate the heroin crop?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, he has got 47 aircraft.

Mr. GILMAN. I'm asking about Blackhawks, General.

General MCCAFFREY. He has got six Blackhawks. He has got three more en route. Let me just tell you, Mr. Congressman, you know, I have done this kind of thing my entire life. I would not substitute my judgment for Minister of Defense Ramirez. There is 240,000 people in the armed forces of Colombia, and they control the national police also. The same minister has both sides of it.

I sat there with the President of their republic, with their minister of defense, and with their foreign minister. This is their plan. And by the way, it makes a lot of sense to me. We do not wish to take the Colombian National Police and turn them into a force capable of engaging in open combat with the FARC front.

Mr. GILMAN. I am not suggesting that, General McCaffrey. I am just suggesting that we give General Serrano the wherewithal to do what he wanted to do, and that is to eliminate the heroin crop, the poppy crop. And we have only given him, to my understanding,

three Blackhawks that are operable and three that are not operable at the present time.

I am saying let's give—and I am not saying detract the funding from the military. Give them what they need to do something in the southern area of Colombia. But also at the same time, let's make certain we are not shortchanging the Colombian antidrug police who have been doing such an outstanding job and can do an even better job.

And it looks to me like we are concentrating on the military and forgetting the antidrug police. And I hope that you take another look at that and make certain there would be a little more equity in the distribution of those important funds. Both are trying to do the important work.

Serrano has demonstrated he can do it, and I want to make certain that we are going to not neglect that aspect of the funding. Let me ask you—

General MCCAFFREY. Let me if I can just say President Pastrana assured us that the Colombian National Police budget would be more than adequate to fulfill their task. I think let's just watch and see what happens. I think that is the case.

Mr. GILMAN. I hope we are not going to do more of watching and less of actual support that is sorely needed.

What is the annual operating rate for the six Army Blackhawks that have been delivered? Isn't it less than 40 percent?

General MCCAFFREY. The six Colombian Army?

Mr. GILMAN. Yes, six Army Blackhawks.

General MCCAFFREY. I don't have an answer for you. I will provide it for the record.

Mr. GILMAN. I have less than 40 percent.

How many Blackhawk pilots does the Colombian Army have? Isn't it true that they are using civilian pilots to fly the old UH—

General MCCAFFREY. Mr. Gilman, that is precisely what I tried to walk through. We need a system approach. They don't have a maintenance system, a training system, the hangars to rapidly absorb the most modern technology on the face of the Earth.

Mr. GILMAN. And yet they are offering 30 Blackhawks. They don't have the maintenance operable.

General MCCAFFREY. We will have a plan over the coming years that will provide a trained, maintained, balanced force to support their Army. That is what I—

Mr. GILMAN. How long will it take us to do that, General?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I mean it takes 18 months to get a Blackhawk pilot. It takes 10 months to build the plane. It takes 2 to 5 years to put together a credible system. I don't know. We will be working at it for a long time.

Mr. GILMAN. Well, at the same time, don't the antinarcotic police have 150 trained chopper pilots now?

General MCCAFFREY. The Colombian National Police do not have a system to support a sudden infusion of Blackhawks, period. It doesn't exist. As a matter of fact, were I the President of Colombia, I would not be putting Blackhawks in the Air Force, the Army, the police, or anywhere else. I wouldn't do it. They have elected to do that. And we are going to have to support them in making it happen.

Were I the President of Colombia, they would all be in the Air Force in one spot. But we will support their own thinking. We will have to do it in a very judicious way, and I'll bet we pull it off if we get CINC U.S. Southern Command engaged in monitoring this.

Mr. GILMAN. But you're talking about a 2-year period. In the meantime—

General MCCAFFREY. It will be longer than that.

Mr. GILMAN. Pardon?

General MCCAFFREY. I think it will be longer than that. You are looking at 30 Blackhawks, 33 UH-1H. They are going to buy 17 more Blackhawks beyond that.

Mr. GILMAN. How long will that take to make them operable?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I mean, they will have to go in only when we see a lay down of a system that can absorb them.

Mr. GILMAN. How many years are we talking about to make this operation useful?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, the part of it that I am here to brief you on is 2 years.

Mr. GILMAN. In the meantime, though, the drug police are operable and can use a few more Blackhawks put into place. They can achieve success and not wait 2 or 3 years.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, we will look very carefully at your own viewpoint, Mr. Gilman.

Mr. GILMAN. I would hope you would.

General MCCAFFREY. Thank you.

Mr. GILMAN. I was quite disturbed, distressed to read in recent news reports that President Pastrana is quoted as saying that the fugitive FARC commander who ordered the brutal execution of three Americans would not be extradited to the United States. Is our administration going to press Pastrana on that issue? Do you feel that extradition would interrupt the peace negotiations between the Colombian Government and the FARC?

General MCCAFFREY. I don't know the status of an extradition request for that person. I would be glad to provide it for the record. Each one of these are, by name, two attorney generals. I don't know what the status of that extradition.

Mr. GILMAN. That doesn't come within your purview as our drug czar.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, the first extradition in 10 years from Colombia just occurred. We are very encouraged by that. We actually extradited a Colombian citizen charged with drug-related offenses. So it is a tremendous statement of courage on the part of the Colombians. They finally did that.

And we think there is 30 more targets of the millennium operation that we are now after. We want those 30 people out. And we are getting very courageous support from the Colombians about this. You need to talk to Mr. Ledwith. One of the most brilliant law enforcement operations I know of was Operation Millennium, six nations. And we are going to try and extradite many of those subjects.

Mr. GILMAN. Well, I would hope that you would continue to pressure President Pastrana in that direction. I think it affects our whole strategy of what we are doing in Colombia and make certain that we get cooperation from him.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. I think we have time for two more Members. There are two votes coming up, and we are going to run the clock. Ms. Schakowsky, you're recognized. We will catch one from the other side.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to include for the record an article by Robert White that appeared in the newspaper.

Mr. MICA. Without objection.

[The information referred to follows:]

The Washington Post



Robert E. White

Shades of Vietnam

Although President Clinton seems unaware of it, the \$1.3 billion he is requesting to fight coca production in Colombia amounts to intervention in another country's civil war. Neither the president nor the secretary of state has given the American people any coherent explanation of what is at stake in Colombia or of how massive military assistance can do anything but make matters worse.

Americans have always been skeptical about the wisdom of intervening in the civil wars of other countries. Although our diplomatic history is studded with lapses, the doctrine of non-intervention still carries considerable weight—enough to require that those advocating military excursions be able to justify them in terms of global threats to national security.

Our intervention in El Salvador's struggle did not truly constitute intervention, President Reagan argued, because the revolutionaries were not fighting in their own cause but as hirelings of Moscow and Havana. The rationale for involving the United States in Colombia's civil war rests on the equally specious ground that the FARC—the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—are not an authentic insurgency but an armed drug cartel that fights to protect its profits—"narco-guerrillas" to quote from the charged vocabulary of the White House drug policy adviser, Gen. Barry McCaffrey.

The largest component of the military assistance, titled "Push into Southern Colombia," calls for \$600 million to train two additional special counterterrorist battalions with 30 Black Hawk helicopters and 33 Huey helicopters so the army "can access this remote and underdeveloped region" of Colombia. Some of the funding would provide shelter and employment to the Colombian people who will be displaced. Although there is \$145 million for crop substitution, the emphasis will continue to be on aerial spraying of herbicides to destroy the coca leaf. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that this is a counterinsurgency strategy packaged as a counter-narcotics program.

To Gen. McCaffrey, with a thin background in foreign policy and a mandate to win the war on narcotics, it must seem logical to reduce complex political, economic and social forces to one manageable target and attack it with military force. But is it too much to hope that experienced diplomats will grasp the elementary proposition that an insurgency that has acquired the strength and cohesion necessary to dominate 40 percent of the national territory represents something authentic in the history of Colombia, something not adequately explained by references to illicit commerce?

Has it truly escaped senior administration aides that the Colombian civil war is more about massacres of civilians and selective assassinations than armed confrontation? Does it really not matter that to declare war on the FARC puts us in league with a Colombian military that has longstanding ties to the drug-dealing, barbaric paramilitaries that commit more than 75 percent of the human rights violations afflicting that violence-torn country? It is curious that a government as sophisticated as ours should cling to the naive belief

cannot get their crops to the city. The \$1.3 billion in the Colombia aid package for war could be more constructively used to build farm-to-market highways that would peacefully carry the government's authority into this remote zone.

Nowhere in the official statements on Colombia will Congress find any discussion of risks vs. rewards or any measurement of objectives in relation to resources. Recall that in El Salvador, our bloody, divisive 12-year pursuit of military victory proved fruitless. We finally settled for a U.N.-brokered accord that granted the guerrillas many of their demands.

The FARC-controlled territory that this program casually commits us to reconquer is 20 times as large as El Salvador—roughly the size of California. The Colombian military has no experience in carrying the war to the insurgents. What will happen when FARC troops, at home in jungle and savanna, repel the army and shoot down our helicopters? Will we then swallow the bitter pill of political-military defeat? Not if Vietnam and Central America are any guide. Far more likely we will plunge deeper into the quagmire.

The writer, a former ambassador to El Salvador and Paraguay, is president of the Center for International Policy.

Heading for trouble in Colombia.

that spraying with herbicides can do anything but drive the campesino cultivators deeper into the jungle. The campesinos grow coca not just because it commands bonanza prices but because the traffickers' planes land nearby and pay cash on the barrelhead.

Alternative production—rubber and palm oil, for example—could compete because their prices, while lower, are more stable. But the isolated farmers

2/8/2000

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Also, I wanted to ask, because I have so many questions, if the record could be open so I can submit them in writing.

Mr. MICA. Without objection, we will keep the record open for 2 weeks.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you very much. General McCaffrey, my unease about this whole plan revolves around three areas. One is our objective. When I look at the materials that you have presented and listened to your testimony here today, I have to ask you: What is our objective in Colombia? What are the specific measurements of that? And how do we know when we have achieved victory?

Now I hear you talking about a much longer term plan. It seems to me we only have the most general of overviews. Included in that are questions: How many lives are we willing to say are worth it? How much money are we willing to continue to put in? How many additional people is it satisfactory to have displaced within Colombia?

You said you don't know how many American troops will be dedicated or even put at risk in this plan. Aren't those things that need to be clearly spelled out, our objectives, and how do we know if we have achieved them. What are the benchmarks?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I think you are quite correct. There is no question. You have just outlined our challenge. By law, 2 years ago, the Congress told me to devise the performance measures of effectiveness. This is it. And there is a classified annex. And we actually have very specific targets that we are trying to achieve in the Andean Ridge and in Colombia, and they are measurable.

And we know what we are trying to achieve, and that is to eliminate 520 metric tons of cocaine and 6 metric tons of heroin and a criminal organization which is causing devastating impact on our regional partners. And there are ways to go about determining whether we are achieving our purpose or not.

And as I have tried to suggest, it is achievable. This is not a hopeless proposition. When we do it, we ought to not just go after police and military. There ought to be a broader Colombian and regional strategy to take into account the immense suffering of the people. I think that is exactly what we have to achieve, and we have to be able to tell Congress that that is what is happening over the coming years.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I want to ask you about the push into southern Colombia. As you pointed out, this is an enormous country. We are talking about a region the size of California, 20 times the size of El Salvador. And by the way, I just wanted to point out that one of the observations that Robert White made was that we should recall that, "in El Salvador our bloody divisive 12-year pursuit of military victory proved fruitless. We finally settled for U.N. broker accord that granted the guerillas many of their demands," and by the way, he also points out that the Colombian military has no experience in carrying the war to the insurgents.

So we are talking about a huge area. And we are focusing in on Putamayo and Caqueta Departments in southern Colombia where two-thirds of the coca is now grown. But since the Amazon Basin is so huge, what is to say that, when we focus there, maybe even succeed there, that it won't simply move to another part of the

Amazon Basin, and that we will be just where we were and even further now into what has been characterized by some as a Vietnam-like quagmire.

General MCCAFFREY. Yeah. Well, I think those are all legitimate concerns. I would argue strongly that Colombia is not El Salvador. Colombia isn't Mexico. Colombia isn't Vietnam. These are not useful historical or metaphorical analogies. There are 36 million Colombian people involved in abject misery, much of which is driven by the massive production of cocaine and heroin which is fueling an internal struggle that has now devolved into sheer savage banditry.

And it is our view that we should, "we" meaning the regional partners, stand with elected Colombian democratic officials with a broad guage support of alternative economic development, support for judicial systems, as well as support for the police and army.

I basically agree with your concerns. It is not hopeless. They can push into southern Colombia. There is no shortage of courage in Colombia. There is no shortage of political will to rid themselves of something that is unraveling their economy and threatening the peace process.

Why would you talk if you are a FARC front that is getting hundreds of millions of dollars a year out of the drug cartels, taxation though it may be. They are taxing them in the growing fields, taxing them in the laboratories, and taxing them down the riverine systems. The FARC and the despeje are acting with outrageous impunity. I can't imagine politically where they are doing this. They are causing the campesinos to begin growing coca.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. So are you saying until there is a demonstrable military victory and control of the south, that then there is no hope of peace, and that that will be one measure of our progress.

General MCCAFFREY. I think it's the viewpoint of the Colombian leadership that as long as the drug money is fueling the FARC, the ELN, and these paramilitary criminal organizations—

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Which are hardly mentioned in this plan.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I am not sure that that is the case. The Colombian police and the President and the mayors and the journalists are cognizant of the tremendous threat posed by all those units as well as somebody that is obviously at the heart and soul of it, these criminal organizations, these literally hundreds of criminal groups that are actually producing the drugs and moving them up into the United States. But that is what that support is designed to achieve is to knock those people out.

What are they after? They are going to chop down the coca and chop down the opium poppies. And to get in there, you can't have 2,500 cops go south and do that. It is worth your life. At El Billar a couple years ago, they sent one of their elite counterinsurgency battalions out, and they lost the whole battalion. This is big business down there. This is high threat environment. This is driven by drug money.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Can I just say, Mr. Chairman, that the questions that I will submit also deal with—you have talked about how democratic the Colombian Government is, but I wanted to raise some questions, and I will do that in writing about that.

Mr. MICA. This is very important. And I am going to impose on the General. We are going to vote right now, and then we will come back. I have Mr. Souder and two others that want to—

General MCCAFFREY. I have got to leave for the great State of Wyoming to address a joint session of the legislature and meet the Governor and State authorities so.

Mr. MICA. We will be back here in 15 minutes, start promptly, and I will have you out, 5 minutes a piece, at 5 minutes of 1 p.m. This meeting stands in recess.

[Recess.]

Mr. MICA. I would like to call the subcommittee back to order. The Director has limited time. We will go in availability of Members arriving.

Although he is not a member of our subcommittee, he is chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee of the House. Mr. Ballenger, you are recognized for questions.

Mr. BALLENGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like the opportunity if I may, General McCaffrey, to ask you the question: Is the administration wedded to the 30 Blackhawks? What I would like to do is, I think you probably know the numbers, but they cost about \$14 million each. Huey IIs, which are rebuilt Huey, old Hueys, I have ridden in one, and it seems to have close to the same capabilities as the Blackhawk, and they only cost \$1,400,000. So somewhere along there, you can get seven or eight of these Huey IIs for the same price as one Blackhawk.

And not only that, the delivery time of the Blackhawk is 18 months, which the Huey II I think they can start delivering in July at the present time. I think they also have the maintenance capabilities in Colombia for this. And pilot training is much simpler for Huey IIs.

And as far as I can tell, you might be able to cut down on the total number of helicopters and supply something for the peaceful purposes, shall we say crop alternatives and so forth. Could you react to that statement?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, of course the Colombian armed forces and police are trying to control a giant country with 240,000 people. Very few—when you look at the Colombian police probably have 2,500 people they can move around. The Colombian Army probably have 20,000 generously. They need range. They need altitude. They need lift capabilities. I can assure you, sir, the Huey II is not the same as the Blackhawk. I won't go into my ode to the Blackhawk, but it is an incredible piece of day-night machinery with the kind of range I think will be required to get back in the south.

They will have a mixed fleet, though. There are 33 UH-1Ns in there, and it will be rebuilt.

Mr. BALLENGER. Is it not true that UH-1Ns are pretty old pieces of equipment already that was used, and we bought it from Canada? And its capabilities are nowhere near what Huey IIs are.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I think you should probably ask the CINC, who will probably have a more informed viewpoint on this than I will. The UH-1Ns out of Canada were in pretty good shape. They will be refurbished. They are going to provide a tremendous and more immediate responsive capability.

But at the same time, I think the 28 Blackhawks they already have, the 30 that we are proposing that they receive, and the 17 additional that they will purchase will give them a modest capability to try and reinsert democratic institutions in the south of Colombia.

Mr. BALLENGER. Well, just in moving the troops, the battalions that we are speaking of in the south; if it takes 18 months to get the first Blackhawks, are we sure that the Colombians are still going to be there 18 months from now; whereas, on the Huey IIs, you can get delivery in almost a couple of months. And not only that, the numbers you can get for the taxpayers' dollar. Can you get the numbers to be able to move a battalion much more rapidly than you could with the Blackhawk. I realize there are some differences in lift capabilities, but the numbers that would be available at a rate of 10 to 1 in savings is something worth looking at.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, it has been very carefully analyzed. I think the program we sent over has a great deal of logic behind it. We, again, had been working on this for just about a year. We do have a time space lift notion on what we can do to support them. There should be a mixed fleet. You are quite correct. We shouldn't just have a pure fleet of Blackhawks in Colombia right now. There won't be a delay of 18 months before something happens. Blackhawks are there now. More will arrive in a deliberate fashion, about as rapidly as the maintenance and spare parts.

Mr. BALLENGER. Yeah, but when you say the maintenance and spare parts, that is your 18 months that you said earlier it will take that long to train the pilots, the maintenance, and the various and sundry other parts. So, in reality, even though you have Blackhawks there and everybody knows, and not only that, but the maintenance capabilities of a Blackhawk, as I understand, is about 20 percent of the fleet the question was asked earlier. What is the flying capability of that fleet in operation? And I understood that 20 percent is pretty average for them.

General MCCAFFREY. I wouldn't think so. I hope not. But that certainly is a concern. A Blackhawk helicopter properly maintained under contract is a tremendously robust machine. When these poor police and Colombian military units are trying to achieve, they get shot at all the time up through 50 caliber weapons. They take hits. And the Blackhawk helicopter can absorb multiple hits. We have seen them take 20, 30 rounds and keep flying. You put armored kits on it, and we will be able to save lives and achieve our purpose, which really is to destroy cocaine and heroin production affecting our own country.

Mr. BALLENGER. One more question if I may. Before we finally get to the finish on this product, and considering the number of votes that would be necessary to pass it, I have noticed a couple of people on the other side of the aisle speaking about funds for crop alternatives, more peaceful efforts and so forth to generate that. Again, the idea that you can get seven Huey IIs for the price of one Blackhawk, with the same number of helicopters, maybe you needed a few more because of their lift capabilities, you could generate some money that maybe would get some peaceful donations vote-wise on the other side of the aisle.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I think that we ought to—we have tried to table a coherent well thought out plan. And we ought to argue it in my view on its merits, every single subelement of it. And I think the mobility package looks to be a pretty good one for this force. And, again, to put it in perspective, the entire package we are talking about is far less than one of the nine divisions in the Gulf war. We are a huge country. And for a force, you know, that is trying to confront a criminal institution that kills 52,000 people a year, that is really what we are after.

Mr. BALENGER. I can understand that. But again I look at the viewpoint that it might be the taxpayers of the United States, in comparing the situation, who might look more at the dollars than it. In other words, why shouldn't a Ford be just as good as a Cadillac? Everybody would argue the point that we would rather have Cadillacs. But if you can get a Ford tomorrow, and you have to wait 18 months to get a Cadillac, what makes sense?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, of course our collective judgment, I hope the American people have some confidence in it as well thought out as we could make it, is that this package represented a decent way to go about serving our interests.

Mr. MICA. Thank you. I recognize now the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Souder.

Mr. SOUDER. I thank the chairman. I wanted to make a couple points for the record. I have a few questions, too. One is that there has been an unfortunate perception here I think that the FARC are some sort of romantic revolutionaries rather than drug thugs. They have become funded by the drug movement, provided protection for the drug movement. And sometimes, I think, as the General pointed out, there is 3 percent or less support in the FARC in the country. Sometimes I think there is more support here in Congress than there is in Colombia for the FARC, and it is a very disappointing process.

As far as the right wing paramilitary groups, if they don't get directly tied to drugs, then we would be intervening in a domestic conflict if they aren't tied to drugs. If they are tied to drugs, we ought to go after them just like we are going after the FARC and anybody else.

Furthermore, the right wing is not an American concept, it's a Neo-Nazi type right wing, which in my opinion is also a left wing socialist type of approach. Those who are watching this can be very confused by the rhetoric that is going around.

I wanted to pursue a little, because I take this a little personal, I know we have had a long-term disagreement about the Blackhawk helicopter question regarding funds for the CNP versus Peru and Bolivia.

I offered this amendment, I believe, still when you were at SouthCom, General McCaffrey, and we then proceeded to argue this as more senior Members took the amendment, the committee chairman and so on over the years. But the truth is, in the context of the drug budget, given the President's limitations, taking the helicopters can be seen as taking the money from Peru and Bolivia. But we asked for the designation to come from unobligated INL funds which were being transferred to the Balkans. That was not

the decision of the drug czar or the people even at the lower levels of the State Department who were dealing with narcotics.

But to act like this was some kind of law that, when we passed the Blackhawks, it meant that we came from Peru or Bolivia, it was not my intent or anyone else's intent in Congress.

There was an administration like decision that the Balkans were a critical place to put our funds, funds from Latin or—that could have been devoted to this problem in antidrugs were diverted. The AWACS were diverted, and that was a systemwide decision, not a drug policy decision.

And I just want to say for the record, because this has been thrown around a number of times, implying that my intent in that amendment was to move it from Bolivia into Colombia, my intent was to say we had a national interest stake way back in 1985, which you so eloquently told us in our first visit that I attended at SouthCom around I think it was early 1996 with Congressman Zeliff and now Speaker Hastert. And then when General Clark was at SouthCom, he warned us we were in danger of losing Colombia and what was happening there. Then he went over to the Balkans to command that. Now General Wilhelm has been telling us. This isn't something new.

What is new is that the President of Colombia is now clean. The defense minister is committed to reforming the Defense Department. General Tapias in the military is committed to reform. That is new. But I wanted to clarify that, too.

Now, my two questions relate to, one, you made a reference to Venezuelan overflights. And Congressman Ballenger, Congressman Delahunt, Congressman Farr, and I met with President Chavez as well as our Ambassador. We are hopeful that we can work out some kind of procedures. It is a very delicate process with Venezuela. But there is no question that if we put this pressure on in Colombia that Ecuador, which is clearly going through political transformations as well, that is a kind way to say it, and in Venezuela, that we could push this problem out. And I would like to hear and we will ask the other panelists, too, how we are going to deal in particular with Ecuador and Venezuela. We usually talk about Peru and Bolivia.

And the second thing is you said that we went back and revised the data that came up with this kind of emergency process in Colombia. Could you explain why we didn't have that data earlier, what caused the revisions, and elaborate on that a little bit?

General MCCAFFREY. I think your point on the spillover effect in Venezuela and Ecuador is quite correct. And Under Secretary Pickering is in Venezuela today, and will consult with the government. We are concerned. I went into Venezuela and saw President Chavez and presented our worries about what was happening.

I gave him a computer-generated DIA reproduction of airborne drug flights in and out of the Andean Ridge prior to his change in air exclusion and since then. And it is unmistakable that Venezuela is being used in a major way by international drug criminals coming out of southern Colombia and out-dropping, or air dropping or air landing drugs in Haiti, Dominica Republic, Jamaica, and to some extent, up into Central America. And we have got to do something about it. And it is a regional problem. It is not a Ven-

ezuelan and United States problem. It is one that affects certainly Colombia's ability to air and to de-cos. Aircraft are going back in, loitering in their airspace, in some cases landing and waiting out the interdiction capability, which is coming out of, of course, out of Aruba and Roosevelt Road.

So we have got to do something about it, and I hope in a very respectful and transparent way gain the support of the Venezuelan authorities for a regional air interdiction solution. And Mr. Pickering will try and continue that dialog.

Mr. SOUDER. Can I ask a direct followup while you're on that point, that when we went and met with President Chavez, I think he understands the nature of it. Clearly, there is a difficult domestic situation. He has made public statements that have made this very awkward, as we are finding in other Latin American countries and South American countries of how do we deal with a rising tide of nationalism in these countries. There seems to be some willingness of looking at, if we help them put in new radar, train people to operate the radar, working with shared information. But it looks like we may be heading into some new areas as we deal with some of these different countries. I am hopeful that we will not drive him away from us, but rather look how to be inclusive in the process.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I think you're quite correct. I read the Embassy cable out of your visit. I think your own interventions were helpful to this process. We will have to see how we can move ahead. But I think it is a difficult situation right now that is causing problems to regional drug interdiction.

Gosh, I'm trying to think.

Mr. SOUDER. The new data.

General MCCAFFREY. One of the most professional groups I deal with, and among many in the intelligence collection business is CNC. And, basically, it's run by the CIA, a brilliant group of people. They have been using satellite photography for several decades now to analyze things on the ground. And one of them they have been following are crops, crop production estimates. And so there—as I suggested to other people, when you look at this drug issue, data is a problem. There are islands of hard data. There are islands of decent data, where, if it's big, you're happy; if it drops, you're sad. Then there are extrapolations in some of these issues.

One of the hard data is hectarage undercultivation. If it is outdoor growth of opium, poppies, or marijuana, or coca bushes, we are photographing it; and we know essentially in a year-to-year whether it's going up or going down and where it is. And we put it on maps and give it to our allies.

We did go in, and we just finished doing this with Mexico a week ago. And we did it with Colombia. DEA lead went in and tried to do a revised analysis of efficiency of laboratory process, an alkaloid content of the plants. And it was a brilliant piece of work. Colombian intelligence system had to get in there and get crop samples all over the country. And we have done that very quietly in the last several months.

Out of that, CNC then did a revised analysis of the 1998 production and came up with over 400 metric tons. And so that we didn't have in a historical sense a big discontinuity with a footnote revised algorithm. They then ran it backward for I think 3 or 4 years

to say—and, again, it was with assumptions, how quickly do these new, quote, “industrial processes” come into play. From mosh pits that are now in 55 gallon drums, lacerating the leaves with weed wackers, packing them tightly, pouring kerosene on them, and getting much increased yields of cocaine.

So that is what they did. Then we did an analysis of the 1999 data, and using the new algorithms as well as the new hectareage undercultivation and got a 20 percent increase in cultivation and a matching 20 percent probable output of cocaine out of the growing region. Really first rate work by the CIA.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

General MCCAFFREY. And DEA was very involved also.

Mr. MICA. Thank you. Mr. Ose from California.

Mr. OSE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to make sure I understand something, General. If I heard correctly, it takes 10 months to build a helicopter, 12 months to build a hangar for the helicopter, and 18 months to train the pilots, I wasn't quite sure if that meant the pilots and the ground crew on maintenance, which totals up to 40 months if you add it end to end.

Are these—

General MCCAFFREY. That would be one classic stupid way to do it.

Mr. OSE. You have to understand I am in the Federal Government now, so I am obliged to ask that question.

General MCCAFFREY. I mean, that is the danger, though. You make a good point. You have to see a system. You have got to start a pert. diagram process to have it all come together. And the last thing that happens is you roll Blackhawks off a plane. But you are quite correct. We have to be very prudent in how we go about this.

Mr. OSE. Do we have the pilots for the Colombian military or the national police being trained today pending the arrival of these Blackhawks?

General MCCAFFREY. No.

Mr. OSE. So in effect—

General MCCAFFREY. I mean, there is a training program. First of all, let me defer if I can. The good answer to this question will come out of Ambassador Romero and the CINC. They may have to do it for the record. But there is now—for this package of 63 aircraft, there will be a plan detailed to do all these things. But Congress has got to pass the money.

Mr. OSE. I understand.

General MCCAFFREY. And then we will make sure, though, that that kind of thinking is implicit in the delivery scheme.

Mr. OSE. OK. Let me revert then to the three helicopters that are in Colombia right now, the Blackhawks.

General MCCAFFREY. There are actually 28 Blackhawks there.

Mr. OSE. There are three that are being used by the, I can't remember, the military and national police, that lack the armor or at least lacked the armor which had to be custom built for installation. Have those three helicopters received the custom armory they need to fly into the despeje?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, they are not going to fly into the despeje. They would be used by the CNP probably to operate against opium production and up in the Andean Ridge, up in the

northeast. We will provide an answer for the record. I have got a note that says two out of the three do. But let me just provide it for the record so you get exact data.

Mr. OSE. All right. Two other questions if I might. I would like to look downstream and figure what I am being asked to spend versus what the likely outcomes are if I don't spend the money. This might be relatively unfair, but I am going to ask it anyway. Could you speculate on the future in Colombia as it relates to the drug threat to the United States if we don't do this.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I think, Mr. Congressman, you make one point that we have got to take into account. This is not North Korea. This is not Myanmar. This is not far off Afghanistan. The drug production in Afghanistan is unbelievable. They are the No. 1 heroin producing nation on the face of the Earth. And that heroin is causing incredible damage in Western Europe and Russia and the Ukraine and other places.

But these people, the Colombians, are a 3 hour flight from Miami, and a half million have fled already. And you know maybe a million of these poor people have lost their homes. And drug production has gone up 140 percent. And violence is endemic. And they are a very important economic partner to us. And the fact that they are a democracy is vitally important to us. We don't want a narco-state right on our doorsteps of the Gulf Coast and south Florida.

So I think it is vitally important that we stand with their democratic leadership in the coming years. And oh, by the way, there is a spillover effect. This is directly affecting Panama. There are more than 1,000 FARC guerrillas up in the Darien now. And the next thing we know, the paramilitary will follow, and the only losers will be the campesinos, in this case the Panamanians. They are across the border in safe areas in Ecuador. They are hijacking aircraft out of Venezuela. They are kidnapping ranchers. This is a regional threat to our Latin American neighbors and a direct threat to the United States.

Mr. OSE. I am trying to make sure I understand from where the direct threat originates. And when I hear you saying it is coming from the narco-terrorists who are supporting either the FARC or the paramilitary units.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I think the threat is the drugs. It is 520 metric tons of cocaine and 6 metric tons of heroin. And it contributes to mayhem in American society: Health costs, social costs, economic costs, criminal justice system. 52,000 dead a year. We had 48,000 dead in 7 years of Vietnam. This is a huge deal for American society. And it is the drugs. And unfortunately, those drugs generate billions of dollars in profits. And that is causing destruction in democratic institutions throughout the hemisphere. That is a problem.

Mr. OSE. Last question if I might. Some would suggest that we need to split our effort, if you will, between say the paramilitary units, the FARC, teaching new cropping patterns, and what have you. What is the No. 1 priority in your estimation?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I think from a U.S. perspective, it has been quite straightforward. Our No. 1 objective is the reduction in

the supply of cocaine and heroin that is destroying the region and the American people. So that is where our focus is.

And the paramilitary as well as the FARC are heavily involved with that activity. ELN somewhat less so. ELN makes most of their money kidnapping people, chopping their ears off, selling them back this aircraft they have got; they are selling the people back one at a time. But a bunch of the ELN are, of course, also involved in drugs. That is the problem, the money that comes out of the cocaine and heroin producing regions of Colombia.

Now, our principal responsibility ought to be to reduce the consumption of drugs. That is actually the central piece of this national drug control strategy. That is why we sent a \$19.2 billion, fiscal year 2001 budget, over here. For the first time in our country's history, Donna Shalala has got \$3.8 billion in drug treatment money in there. So we are putting our mouth and our money behind that strategy. But this piece of it we argue has to also be done. We have got to stand with Colombia, Peru and Bolivia.

Mr. MICA. Thank you. Mr. Barr.

Mr. BARR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Certainly it comes as no surprise to any of us in this room that we are facing a situation today, with Colombia being, by far, the largest coca cultivation country in the world and on the brink of political and financial disaster, and this has been happening over the last several years.

Given the power of the groups that the Colombians are fighting, the FARC, the ELN, and perhaps other groups as well, and given the history of dealing with armed groups, that both our Nation has as well as other nations both in that region and in other parts of the world, in particular I have in mind recent United States military operations against Mr. Milosevic. We didn't negotiate with him, and not surprisingly we beat him. President Fujimori in Peru doesn't negotiate with the guerrillas and the drug traffickers in his country, and not surprisingly he beats them. The Government in Bolivia does not negotiate with drug traffickers and guerrillas in their country, and not surprisingly they beat them.

Also, unfortunately, but not surprisingly, in Colombia, efforts to negotiate and appease the guerrillas and the narcotraffickers have not been successful.

Are there not some lessons here, General McCaffrey? Is there any reason for anybody to be optimistic that attempting to negotiate with these people or to appease them or to simply make a show of force will bring them to the negotiating table in any meaningful way?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, Mr. Congressman, I am unalterably in favor in every case of trying to talk, not fight. In every instance, if there is some way you can get out of using military power and police power, you ought to do it.

Now, I think your point, though, has an underlying assumption that can you just talk, or do we need to strengthen the capabilities of the state, police, and the armed forces to the judicial system so that prosecutors can act so that there is a prison system that works? If those pieces of it aren't there, clearly there can't be successful negotiations.

But I would also, if I may, suggest that these decisions fundamentally have to be made by the Colombians. And we can wish

them well, perhaps advise them. But these should not be U.S.—a U.S. calculus on how to balance the economy, the peace process, and the guerillas.

Mr. BARR. Why do we take such a hands off approach vis-a-vis Colombia when we don't in other parts of the world? This administration has been very eager to jump the gun and dictate policy in other parts of the world. I am not saying that is good or bad. But why is it they are so hesitant and say we can't do anything here when we have in other parts of the world and when the type of action that I think you and I and others know actually works against these guerillas, and that is very clear, strong, consistent, aggressive military might against them. Why don't we tell them that? I don't understand why we can't tie our assistance to certain types of policies that we know work that demonstrably have worked in neighboring countries. Why such a hands off approach in Colombia in our own backyard when we are more than willing to jump in with all sorts of military might and dig at a time policy in other parts of the world?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I think we are very heavily involved. I think his plan we sent over, the \$1.6 billion, is fundamentally dependent upon some very strong action by the Colombians, the Peruvians, the Bolivians. We are not hands off. We have got enormous United States Embassies, and a very strong robust team in all three of these Andean Ridge nations.

I think we think they are headed in the right direction, but they lack adequate energy and resources for the police in the armed forces, alternative economic—

Mr. BARR. Energy is a matter of will.

General MCCAFFREY. I really—to be blunt, Mr. Congressman, I think their political will, their courage, is not lacking.

Mr. BARR. Well, it certainly isn't on the part of General Serrano.

General MCCAFFREY. Remember, there is 240,000 troops down there, police and armed forces. There is a lot more than General Serrano. We wouldn't want to focus on a person. This is a 36 million person nation under internal attack, fueled by drug money. I am not really disagreeing with your point, I'm just saying the negotiations are always better than fighting if you can make it work. And in this case, I don't see any way that the United States can substitute our own calculus for Colombian thinking.

Mr. BARR. But it's not just our calculus, it's the calculus that's worked demonstrably very well in Peru and Bolivia. Why can't we say, look, if we are going to make this aid available to you, and hopefully the State Department will finally get the message that the law of this land is the law of this land and do what they have been told to do, presuming that happens, and I know that is a big presumption to make, if we send the assistance down there, and yet the Colombian Government continues to try and appease the FARC and to negotiate with them while losing territory and continuing to lose men, aren't we defeating ourselves and almost guaranteeing the failure of our effort? Why don't we tie that assistance to some very tough negotiations and mandates to the Colombians if we are going to be partners in this effort?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, with the exception of the despeje, which is part of the negotiation process, there has been no time out

given by the Colombian Government to the criminal organizations. The counternarcotics battalion was trained and did deploy and is now conducting combat operations against the FARC fronts in the coca growing regions as we sit here. Those helicopters are headed down to Larendia. There is armored cab units being moved into place.

So there is no question their strategy is to try and regain government control in the south, reinsert the police, use alternative economic development, and eliminate coca and opium production. To be blunt, I think it will work if we stay with them over time.

Mr. BARR. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. Last for just a couple of minutes, Mr. Mark Green, Congressman Green from Wisconsin has requested questioning.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for extending the courtesy to appear briefly.

General McCaffrey, I represent northeastern Wisconsin. Within northeastern Wisconsin is the Menominee Nation and Menominee County. One of my constituents, Washina Wataalk, was tragically murdered in Colombia. Late last year, the House of Representatives passed a resolution demanding extradition of those responsible. Unfortunately, of course, we all heard just recently the President in Colombia essentially deny granting us extradition.

What is it that I can say to my constituents back in northeastern Wisconsin that will give them some reason for hope of justice in this matter?

General McCAFFREY. Well, I think the brutal murder of those three people was a tragedy. And from both a classified and public source reporting on it, it showed the essential savage nature of the FARC units that are involved. These people are posing no threats to them. They were innocent lives that were tragically and brutally thrown away.

I will be in Colombia next Tuesday. I will certainly learn more about it and be glad to communicate back to you. I think the public statement of President Pastrana was that they should be prosecuted under Colombian criminal law.

Mr. GREEN. If I can just follow up, and follow up on what my colleague, Congressman Barr, has been saying about putting some conditions, expressing some sense of U.S. policy with the money that we send down there. Certainly I think it would be appropriate to do so with respect to extradition treaties and how those are implemented. Again, this House passed overwhelmingly I think, with perhaps one or two negative votes, a demand for extradition. So I would certainly suggest to you that that should be a very high priority. And as this House considers the package that has been put together, I certainly hope to make that an important issue in the debate.

General McCAFFREY. I understand. I think about the extradition, and to be honest, I have been astonished at the political courage of the Colombians, political and physical courage. They have revised the law. President Pastrana from the start said he would stand behind extradition. We have extradited the first Colombian citizen for a drug-related crime. We are going after all the 30 Millennium Operation suspects. And they are paying the price for it

already. This has already resulted in three major bomb blasts. So this is not a theoretical proposition.

At the same time, I would urge us, though, when it comes to extradition that we let the Attorney Generals and such go on as a legal process and not as a political one. We have got to preserve the rule of law dealing with evidence and extradition.

Mr. GREEN. I guess I would just add to that. I understand what you are saying. On the other hand, these were United States citizens who were killed down there, and we are forced to rely upon the Government of Colombia in implementing this aggressive plan.

General McCaffrey. Sure.

Mr. GREEN. Certainly that is part of it, our ability to rely upon them must be justified by action. So again I understand what you are saying. But, inevitably, this becomes part of the political arena. And I appreciate your comments and your attention.

Mr. MICA. Well, I thank you for coming. And I also want to thank General McCaffrey for coming and being such a patient witness today to hear viewpoints of Members of Congress.

General, this is only a sampling of those who wanted to attend today and participate. I am sure there will be more hearings and discussion hopefully in the next few weeks. Hopefully we can move this package together rapidly. I think everyone wants to see something done. I think the results of this package may determine how many more kids die on our streets. And it is of great importance and concern to all the Members of Congress. So we thank you for your efforts to help put this together. We look forward to working with you.

And there being no further questions at this time, although we will leave the record open, we will submit those and leave the record open for 2 weeks. Thank you, sir.

General McCaffrey. Yes, sir.

Mr. MICA. I would like to call our second panel this afternoon. The second panel consists of four witnesses. First is General Charles Wilhelm, Commander of U.S. Southern Command. Second is Mr. William Ledwith. He is the Director of International Operations of the Drug Enforcement Administration. The third witness is Ms. Ana Maria Salazar. She is Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Drug Policy and Support. The fourth witness is Ambassador Peter Romero. He is the Assistant Secretary for Latin America with the Department of State.

As you may know, this panel is an investigations and oversight panel of the House of Representatives. We do swear in our witnesses. Also, if you have lengthy statements or additional material you would like submitted other than what you are presenting verbally, we will be glad to do that. We would like to try to get some limit on time. But we will try not to be too strict given the importance of this. If we can have all of the witnesses stand please and be sworn.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. MICA. The witnesses answered in the affirmative. I would like to welcome back all of these witnesses. First, we are going to hear from General Charles Wilhelm, Commander of the U.S. Southern Command. Pleased to have you here and also to hear your testimony at this time. You are recognized, sir.

STATEMENTS OF GENERAL CHARLES WILHELM, COMMANDER, U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND; WILLIAM LEDWITH, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS, DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION; ANA MARIA SALAZAR, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR DRUG POLICY AND SUPPORT; AND AMBASSADOR PETER ROMERO, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LATIN AMERICA, DEPARTMENT OF STATE;

General WILHELM. Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the subcommittee, I welcome this opportunity to appear before you to discuss the crisis in Colombia and the things we are doing to help Colombia and its neighbors confront and defeat the threats posed by narcotics traffickers.

Mr. Chairman, Congressman Barr, I had a prepared opening statement. It was a bit lengthy, and I think most of that ground has already been covered.

Mr. MICA. Without objection, then, we will make that part of the record. Thank you. You are recognized.

General WILHELM. Thank you, sir. My distinguished colleagues on this panel are well qualified to address a broad range of policy and programmatic issues related to the crisis in the Andean region. I will focus my opening comments at the operational level, concentrating on the counterdrug assistance that Southern Command provided to Colombian security forces during the past year and the future initiatives that we contemplate if supplemental funding is approved.

Mr. Chairman, during the first week of December, I had the opportunity to go to the Pentagon and to brief Secretary Cohen and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on what I termed the way ahead in Colombia.

In structuring that briefing, I broke it down into three component parts. The first part I described as action plan 1999, the second part action plan 2000, and the third part action plan 2001 and beyond. I think for the purposes of our hearing this morning, if I briefly describe what we have accomplished and what we hope to accomplish with our colleagues in Colombia during this three-phase plan, it will provide an adequate foundation for the discussion to follow.

First of all, action plan 1999: these are initiatives that are complete. During 1999, we trained 931 members of the Colombian Army and effectively stood up the first Colombian counterdrug battalion. That battalion obtained its initial operational capability on December 15th of last year.

In tandem with that initiative, we created a Colombian Joint Intelligence Center which was co-located with the counterdrug battalion at the base at Tres Esquinas. This Colombian Joint Intelligence Center contains members of both the armed forces and the Colombia National Police, and we have three United States representatives there who will continue to provide instruction and technical advice and assistance as the Joint Intelligence Center carries out its mission of providing fused intelligence and target folders to the Colombian—the first of the Colombian counterdrug battalions and later the two remaining battalions and the brigade headquarters, which will constitute the Colombian Counterdrug Brigade.

Also, during the past year, we joined forces with our colleagues at INL at State Department, most notably Mr. Randy Beers, and we put the first elements of an aviation battalion in place.

Today, there are 18 UH-1N helicopters in Colombia which will provide tactical mobility initially for the first counterdrug battalion and subsequently after being augmented by up to 15 more UH-1Ns for the entire Counterdrug Brigade.

So that takes me to action plan 2000. Now I should footnote my comments about action plan 1999 by stating that the funding for this was really carved out of existing programs at Southern Command, at State Department, and at DEP&S, which Mrs. Salazar represents today. It was a process really of reprioritization of other initiatives. But the funds were identified, were made available. All those organizations have been created. And, in fact, they are operating today.

Action plan 2000 is dependent on the passage of a supplemental funding package. The key aspects of plan 2000 include the creation of the second and third battalions, which will round out the Counterdrug Brigade. We will also train a brigade headquarters. And we will provide a significant range of support to the Colombian armed forces and other elements of the security forces in Colombia to carry out interdiction activities which are essential for the achievement of our campaign objectives.

The year 2001 and beyond is less certain at this time. We have contracted MPRI, Military Professional Research Institute, to conduct an analysis and study of Colombia's armed forces and to develop an operational concept, to force structures and doctrines for Colombia's security forces beyond the CD brigade. That would take us into the out years.

All of these measures support a campaign plan that we have developed to better integrate our counterdrug efforts, not just in Colombia, but throughout the Andean Ridge and, for that matter, on up through Central America and through the nations of the Caribbean that are in the region that we refer to collectively as the transit zone. This plan has been developed in three phases.

Phase 1 we term regionalization and stabilization. This is a 2-year program which is designed to give the nations in the region the capabilities that they need to successfully oppose the drug threat.

Phase two we term decisive operations. During phase two, which would also be about 2 years in duration, we would anticipate that the nations of the region would begin to deliver blows to the drug trafficking apparatus that would render it ineffective.

Then from year 5 on, we would enter a sustainment phase during which the nations of the region would adapt to the changing patterns of narcotics trafficking which we have seen before and would essentially become self-sufficient in confronting these threats.

So in terms of a long-range strategy and something that really almost always occurs in these dialogs, that in essence is our exit strategy from this struggle.

I would like to conclude my opening remarks by identifying one area that I think merits additional consideration on our parts. I am

very much in favor of a Colombia centric plan to confront this challenge, but not a Colombia exclusive plan.

Mr. Chairman, you and Congressman Barr and other members of the panel have already mentioned that there are other stakeholders in there, the surrounding nations. The supplemental as it is currently framed does contain support for Bolivia and Peru, though, quite candidly, I think not in the amounts that are necessary for them to sustain the success that they have achieved.

There has also been suggestions that funding be provided for Venezuela, Ecuador, Brazil, and Panama. I subscribe fully to that because, in every sense, this cannot be described as a unilateral or a bilateral undertaking. I think, by every definition, it is a regional problem that commands a regional solution. As we look at the effects of drugs, I think there can be a reasonable suggestion that this is also a hemispheric and a global problem as we look at the transit routes being taken by drugs as they head to Europe and other parts of the world.

Sir, I look forward to your questions during the Q and A period that follows.

[The prepared statement of General Wilhelm follows:]

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY UNTIL RELEASED BY THE HOUSE GOVERNMENT REFORM
COMMITTEE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY, AND HUMAN RESOURCES

STATEMENT OF
GENERAL CHARLES E. WILHELM, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
COMMANDER IN CHIEF, UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY AND HUMAN RESOURCES
15 FEBRUARY 2000

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY UNTIL RELEASED BY THE HOUSE GOVERNMENT REFORM
COMMITTEE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY, AND HUMAN RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you to discuss the narcotics threat in Colombia and the danger it poses to Colombia's neighbors and to the U.S. I will describe and assess the drug trafficking threat and its impact on the U.S. and the region; the adequacy, type, and level of our counterdrug (CD) support to Colombia; and our strategy and long-range plan for CD assistance to Colombia. Our proposal for supporting Plan Colombia provides \$1.6 billion in Fiscal Years 2000 and 2001 and will enable Colombia to implement its strategic plan and seize the initiative in its war against drug trafficking.

**GROWING MENACE AND THE RAMIFICATIONS OF COLOMBIAN COCAINE AND HEROIN
TRAFFICKING TO THE UNITED STATES****Regional Destabilization**

The drug threat to Colombia is real, immediate, and growing. It is a corrosive force without precedent, relentlessly eroding the foundations of Colombia's democracy, corrupting her public institutions, poisoning her youth, ruining her economy, and disrupting the social order. Colombia must lead the fight against the drug trafficking, but needs our commitment of financial aid, operational planning, and intelligence assistance.

Colombia's problems are not contained by her borders, but are spilling over into neighboring countries. The spillover disrupts life along the border in Venezuela and is severely straining relations between the two countries. Venezuela has approximately 10,000 troops deployed along the border to prevent intrusions, particularly by the National Liberation Army (ELN) guerrillas. Ecuador and Peru also deploy forces along their borders with Colombia to deter the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), paramilitary forces, and drug traffickers from unwanted incursions. FARC and

drug trafficker incursions into the Amazon region prompted the Brazilian Army to reinforce military garrisons along the Colombian border and spurred the government to continue development of the very expensive (\$1.4 billion) and controversial Amazon Surveillance System (SIVAM).

Lacking an army and the resources for an effective border police, Panama is experiencing difficulty in controlling its border with Colombia. FARC and paramilitary forces routinely enter Panama with impunity to traffic in drugs and arms and to terrorize and extort Panamanian locals.

Assessment of the Colombian Heroin and Cocaine Industry

Colombia is the world's largest producer of Cocaine due, in large part, to the Colombian Government's limited internal control. This weakness allowed traffickers to increase coca production in 1998 by approximately 24 percent over 1997 and we expect a further increase for 1999. Despite aerial spraying of over 38,000 acres in Colombia, potential cocaine production for 1998 may have exceeded 435 metric tons, with a U.S. street value of approximately \$5.4 billion. Production in 1999 increased by 20 percent over 1998. Despite aerial spraying of over 38,000 acres in Colombia, potential cocaine production for 1999 may have exceeded 520 metric tons, with a U.S. street value of approximately \$6.2 billion.

Using air, sea, and overland routes, drug traffickers attempted to move an estimated 521 metric tons of cocaine from the Source Zone in 1999. Multi-national CD efforts interdicted approximately 131 metric tons, but up to an estimated 381 metric tons, with a U.S. street value of approximately \$4.6 billion, evaded our interdiction efforts and entered the Transit Zone, potentially destined for the U.S.

Colombia has also become a major center for heroin production, and now ranks third among the world's heroin producers. Estimated production potential for 1998 was six metric tons annually.

Challenges

Colombia has been torn by internal conflict since 1946 and has faced a continuous insurgency since the early 1960s. Despite GOC efforts to foster a viable peace process, the FARC and ELN persist in their aggressive attacks against the nation's infrastructure, military and police forces, and civilians. There were at least 160 such attacks during the 6-month period from July to December of 1999, highlighted by major assaults at Jurado, Puerto Inirida, and Gutierrez. Paramilitary violence and massacres of civilians also continue. Paramilitary incursions into Panama against FARC sympathizers have also occurred. A successful peace process will remain elusive without a firm U.S. and international commitment to the Government of Colombia.

The Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs) are sophisticated and have verifiable links to the FARC, ELN, and paramilitary organizations. Over half of FARC fronts and one-fourth of ELN fronts receive support from, and provide protection to DTOs. Drug money makes up a major portion of the FARC's war chest and is the FARC's primary source for financing forces, combat operations and weapons purchases. Most paramilitary groups also protect or receive support from DTOs.

Required Intelligence Support to assist the Colombian CD Effort

The success and effectiveness of CD efforts hinge on timely, accurate, predictive, and actionable intelligence. Proposed funding in the supplemental bill for U.S. military airborne intelligence assets will allow Southern Command to provide critical intelligence on drug smuggling activities in the Source and Transit Zones in Colombia.

We have significant Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) deficiencies in the Source Zone, which prevent us from providing the timely and actionable tactical intelligence necessary to counter increasingly

diversified and mobile drug trafficking operations. ISR shortfalls inhibit essential collection on the capabilities, intentions, and activities of drug traffickers and degrade the effectiveness of force protection and CD operations.

Correcting some parts of this problem is inexpensive. U.S. assistance -- including increased information sharing, detection and monitoring, equipment and training -- requires only a change in policies and procedures, entailing little added cost to the U.S. taxpayer. Increased intelligence sharing with Colombia's Armed Forces should improve performance against drug traffickers.

ADEQUACY, TYPE AND LEVEL OF SUPPORT TO THE COLOMBIAN CD EFFORT

During the past year, we have provided funding, equipment, training, facility improvement, and technology support to enhance the Colombians' capability to fight drug trafficking in their country. We have focused our support on their ground, air, and riverine programs.

Support to Ground Programs

We have helped the Colombian Army (COLAR) organize, train, and equip their first Counternarcotics Battalion (CN BN), which became operational December 15, 1999. Manned by over 900 COLAR soldiers and based with the Joint Task Force (JTF)-South headquarters in Tres Esquinas, the CN BN consists of a headquarters company, and three line infantry companies. The battalion completed an extensive three-phased training program conducted by U.S. Special Forces at a cost of \$3.9 million and received \$3.5 million worth of individual field equipment, unit equipment, and medical supplies to enable stand-alone operations.

For tactical mobility, the Department of State provided the battalion 18 refurbished UH-1N helicopters (and accompanying spare parts). Based at

Tolemeida and Florencia, the helicopters are manned by 25 contract pilots and 14 mission ready Colombian crews trained in the U.S. Follow-on support equipment (armament and portable hangars) is also being provided. To keep the aircraft operational, we have budgeted \$2.1 million of monthly Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funding for the Colombian military. Planning is underway to establish, train, and equip two additional CN Battalions and a COLAR CN Brigade headquarters staff in the near future.

To provide the CN Battalion fused, tactical intelligence, we have helped the GOC establish a Colombian Joint Intelligence Center (COJIC) which became operational on December 22, 1999, to support military, police and JTF-South CD operations. The COJIC produces real-time targeting information, terrain and weather analysis, force protection vulnerability assessments, and intelligence estimates and assessments. USSOUTHCOM approved COJIC funding of \$4.9 million for construction of the facility, the required networked computer, communications and administrative material, upgrade of base infrastructure, and sustainment costs through mid June 2000. To enhance intelligence support to the CN Battalion and JTF-South, three U.S. subject matter experts are deployed to the COJIC through June 2000 to observe and assist the COLAR and Colombian National Police manning the facility. To facilitate the increased operational capabilities programmed for Tres Esquinas, we have funded significant upgrades to the base. These upgrades are underway and include extension of the existing aircraft runway and construction of a ramp. To enhance force protection, we are spending over \$600,000 to correct security deficiencies noted during earlier assessments.

Support to Air Programs

Southern Command and the inter-agency developed a three-phased CD Air Interdiction Plan to enhance current GOC capabilities. This plan will maximize host nation success through a focused, phased air interdiction

operation against drug smuggling aircraft in Colombia. Operations will integrate Relocatable Over-the-Horizon Radar (ROTHR), U.S. tracker and detection aircraft, and Colombian air force and national police aircraft for mission success. Training to implement this plan will begin this month, followed by 120 days of focused air interdiction operations.

Support to Riverine Programs

We have continued to support the Colombian riverine program with much needed boat maintenance spares, armored flotation vests, and night vision devices. This equipment has allowed the Colombians to increase the number of Riverine combat elements to 25 (of a projected 45), with seven advanced riverine bases. Funding is approved for Fiscal Year 2000 for the delivery of eight 25-foot patrol boats, additional spare parts, night vision devices, and radio/navigation equipment to allow for expanded coverage of waterways. Training support continues at an accelerated pace with five U.S. Marine Corps and two Special Operations Command training deployments planned for this year.

STRATEGY AND LONG RANGE PLAN TO ASSIST COLOMBIA WITH ITS CD EFFORTS

Personal Assessment

As I stated earlier, as Colombia's problems spill over into neighboring countries, they threaten the regional stability that is essential to the growth and sustainment of strong democracies and free market economies throughout the region. Drug trafficking is a major contributing factor to Colombia's internal problems. A key to success in achieving regional stability is to support CD efforts through a strategy that considers the regional impact of Colombia's multi-faceted internal conflict.

Two national policy directives guide our counterdrug way ahead: the Presidential Decision Directive (PDD-14) and the National Drug Control Strategy (NDCS) Goals Four and Five. This guidance clearly identifies the importance of effective interdiction and the need to break the source of the supply of drugs. The NDCS identifies two salient milestones for Southern Command and the entire Interagency: a reduction of 10 percent in the Transit Zone and 15 percent in the Source Zone by 2002; and a reduction of 20 percent in the Transit Zone and 30 percent in the Source Zone by 2007. The relevant burden falls primarily on the Government of Colombia --and our job will be to prepare them to conduct regional CD operations.:

While our efforts for the foreseeable future center around a Colombia-focused strategy, we also maintain significant efforts in neighboring nations such as Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela to train their counterdrug forces to conduct current operations against production and transportation of illicit drugs in those nations. Continued U.S. support of these efforts is crucial to long-term success in the region since spillover of the problem from Colombia is a distinct possibility once Colombia's CD forces achieve success.

CD Campaign Plan

Southern Command, as part of the Interagency team, has developed a three-phased regional CD Campaign Plan that supports the goals, objectives, and intent of the NDCS and PDD-14. While continuing interdiction efforts in the Transit Zone during all three phases, the focus of Phase I will be a prioritized effort to assist Partner Nations in developing CD capabilities. This requires the U.S. to help organize, train, and where necessary, equip the Partner Nations to be able to conduct air, riverine, and ground operations against the drug traffickers.

Phase II is regional decisive operations where all the Partner Nations conduct a series of offensive operations to neutralize all aspects of the illicit drug trade by isolating drug production areas from their markets and by extending police presence into the drug production areas.

Phase III is the sustainment phase which allows Partner Nations to adapt to the constantly evolving drug trafficker attempts to outmaneuver the Partner Nations' military and law enforcement forces.

Importance of the Forward Operating Locations (FOLs)

To realize the full benefits of our CD Campaign Plan, our CD assets must conduct Source Zone operational support. FOLs provide the required operational support for conducting sustained operations throughout the entire Source Zone. Conducting critical ISR missions from the FOLs will enhance the coupling of U.S. detection and monitoring assets with partner nation interceptors.

The FOL in Manta, Ecuador is my number one theater architecture priority. Manta is crucial to attaining deep Source Zone air coverage with Airborne Early Warning aircraft, and it is the only FOL that enables us to achieve full coverage of Peru and Colombia and nearly all of Bolivia. We concluded a long-term access agreement last November and are now able to operate three medium-size aircraft (e.g., P-3 and C-130) from Manta under visual flight rules during daylight hours. All weather, 24-hour operations will begin this April, following completion of necessary improvements to satisfy mandated safety requirements. The Manta FOL military construction in the proposed supplemental bill will fund infrastructure improvements required for KC-135 and E-3 aircraft, giving us the ability to conduct unconstrained Detection, Monitoring, and Tracking operations.

The FOLs at Aruba and Curacao, funded in the Fiscal Year 2001 request, are essential for us to conduct efficient, rapid response detection and

monitoring operations in the northern Source Zone, to include the Guajira Peninsula and Venezuelan border region; as well as a large part of the Transit Zone. Ambassador Brown recently completed additional talks with The Hague. We expect signing of long-term agreements with the Dutch Government for the continued use of Aruba and Curacao on or about the 1st of March. Aruba is our hub of operations for Customs Service P-3 and C-550 Citation aircraft. Once construction is complete, Aruba will be able to support all medium type CD aircraft.

Curacao is currently capable of supporting all types of CD aircraft, but available ramp space and lodging limit operations to one large, two medium and six small aircraft. Completed military construction will enable the FOL to accommodate two large, four medium, and six small aircraft, such as the F-16 and C-550.

An FOL in Central America is essential to our theater architecture in light of our departure from Panama. This FOL would ensure air coverage in the Eastern Pacific and Central America to keep pressure on the Transit Zone as we build enhanced CD capabilities in the Source Zone.

Operations in Support of "Plan Colombia"

Partnership nation cooperation and "will to succeed" are crucial to execution of the Southern Command Strategy. The Pastrana Administration continually demonstrates a commitment to resolve the problems in Colombia. Colombia developed "Plan Colombia" to regain the confidence of its citizenry and restore the basic norms of a peaceful society. The plan has a national focus and covers the wide array of problems the Government of Colombia faces, from social and economic to military and judicial. Southern Command's role is to provide support as part of the interagency team.

Plan Colombia contains specific measures for strengthening human rights policies; Southern Command has supported Colombia's human rights programs

through training conferences and distribution of Human Rights handbooks. Colombian troops continually receive human rights instruction and learn to recognize abuses and how to report them. Plan Colombia also stresses the importance of earlier prosecution of human rights abuses. The US Military fully supports the vigorous prosecution of human rights offenses and recognizes the importance of cooperation between the civilian and military judicial systems to ensure such prosecutions.

The Office of the Secretary of Defense, Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict hired a contractor to perform an assessment of the Colombian Military and recommend ways to professionalize and modernize the Armed Forces. The report will lead to the development of a Colombian National Security Strategy, provide a level of detail sufficient to plan and program resource requirements, and enable the Armed Forces to operate and sustain CD forces effectively.

The proposed supplemental appropriations allocated to improved CD capabilities will advance Colombia's preparations for transitioning to Phase II of our regional CD strategy. It also will balance the capabilities of the Colombian military with those of the Colombian National Police. Colombia will then have the capability to ensure the necessary security for conducting CD operations.

CONCLUSION

I have now served at U.S. Southern Command for over 28 months. Shortly after assuming command and making my initial assessment of security conditions in my Area of Responsibility (AOR), I asserted that Colombia was the most threatened nation in the AOR. Even though I continue to stand behind that assessment, I am cautiously optimistic about Colombia's future. My optimism stems from several convictions, two of which I would like to share. First, I have been in and out of Colombia for more than a decade, and

the leadership team that now guides Colombia's security forces is the best I have seen. In Generals Tapias, Mora, Velasco, and Serrano and Admiral Garcia, the armed forces and the national police are now, I believe, in the hands of those most capable of resolving Colombia's difficult and demanding CD problem. Second, Colombia has made gains on the battlefield. The results of the FARC's country-wide offensive during 1999 indicate that Colombia's security forces are capable of defeating FARC insurgents and defending Colombia's national territories. I attribute their successes first and foremost to competent, aggressive leadership at both tactical and operational levels. Other important factors are improved intelligence preparation of the battlefield; better cooperation between the armed forces and national police; improved air-ground coordination; and more effective command and control. I predict these favorable trends will continue. While I share the widely held opinion that the ultimate solution to Colombia's internal problems lies in negotiations, I am convinced that success on the battlefield provides the leverage that is a precondition for meaningful and productive negotiations.

We at Southern Command are genuinely grateful to the members of the committee for your continued interest and support.

Mr. MICA. Thank you. And we will suspend questions until we hear from all the panelists.

The next witness is Mr. William Ledwith, and he is Director of International Operations with the DEA. Thank you. You are welcome.

Mr. LEDWETH. Good afternoon, Chairman Mica and members of the subcommittee. It is a pleasure for me to appear here today and testify in the narcotics crisis in Colombia.

We in DEA believe that the international trafficking organizations based in Colombia who smuggle illegal drugs into our country pose a formidable challenge to the national security of the United States.

DEA is proud to play a key role in the United States Government's long range strategy to assist Colombia in their counterdrug effort.

There is a wide range of witnesses here today who can, taken together, give you a broad picture of the current situation in Colombia. I am here to comment on the law enforcement aspects of dealing with the international drug trafficking organizations operating in Colombia today.

DEA's mission in Colombia, as in other foreign postings, is to target the most powerful international drug syndicates that operate around the world, supplying drugs to American communities and employing thousands of individuals to transport and distribute their drugs.

The international drug syndicates headquartered in Colombia and operating through Mexico and the Caribbean control both the sources and the flow of drugs into the United States. Virtually all of the heroin produced in Colombia is destined for the United States market. In fact, Colombia has, over the past 5 years, become the leading sort of heroin in the United States. Recent DEA statistical data indicates as much as 75 percent of the heroin seized and analyzed by Federal authorities in the United States is of Colombian origin. Over half of the cocaine entering the United States continues to come from Colombia through Mexico and across United States border points of entry.

Colombian drug trafficking groups are no longer the monolithic organizations they were over most of the past two decades. Experienced traffickers who have been active for years but who had worked in the shadow of the Cali drug lords have proven adept at seizing opportunities to increase their role in the drug trade. In addition to trafficking their own cocaine, the organizations operating out of Colombia supply almost all of the cocaine to the Mexican crime syndicates. The Mexican organizations purchase cocaine as well as accepting cocaine in payment for services from Colombian trafficking groups.

This change in the manner in which business is conducted is also driven by the new trafficking groups arising in Colombia but have chosen to return to the Caribbean in order to move their cocaine to the United States.

The Colombians have franchised to criminals from other countries a portion of the mid-level wholesale cocaine and heroin trade on the East Coast of the United States. The Colombian groups remain, however, in control of the sources of supply. These subordi-

nates operating in the United States, and not the Colombians, are now the ones subject to arrest, while the top level Colombians control the organization with increasingly encrypted telephone calls.

Colombia has always been the world's No. 1 producer of finished cocaine hydrochloride. Colombia now also has the dubious honor of also being the world's largest producer of cocaine base. Over the past several years, Colombian cocaine cultivation and cocaine production have been increasing dramatically.

Colombian traffickers continue to become more self-sufficient by increasing cocaine base production within Colombia itself to offset the decline in base previously brought in from Peru and Bolivia. There continues to be deep concern in DEA as in the rest of the administration and in the Congress about the connection between the FARC and other groups in Colombia and the drug trade.

The presence of the insurgence in Colombia's eastern lowlands and southern rain forest, the country's primary cultivation and cocaine processing regions, hinders the Colombian Government's ability to conduct counterdrug operations. The frequent ground fire sustained by Colombian National Police eradication aircraft operating in insurgent and occupied areas shows the extent to which some insurgent units will go to protect the economic interests of their local constituency.

Some insurgent units raise funds through extortion or by protecting laboratory operations. In return for cash payments, or possibly in exchange for weapons the insurgents protect cocaine laboratories in southern Colombia.

The most recent DEA reporting indicates that some FARC units in southern Colombia are indeed directly involved in drug trafficking activities, such as controlling local cocaine base markets.

Some insurgent units have assisted drug trafficking groups in transporting and storing cocaine and marijuana within Colombia. In particular, some insurgent units protect clandestine air strips in southern Colombia.

The Colombian National Police continue to pursue significant drug investigations in cooperation with the DEA. On October 13, 1999, the Colombian National Police, the Colombian Prosecutor General's office, DEA, the United States Attorney's Office, and the Department of Justice Criminal Division carried out Operation Millennium, a long-term complex investigation targeting the inner workings of several of the most important international drug trafficking organizations operating in Colombia and Mexico. This operation resulted in the indictment and arrest of one of the former leaders of the Medellin drug cartel along with the indictment of 30 other significant defendants from Colombia.

The United States has requested extradition of these 31 defendants. If that extradition is completed, this operation will be one of the most successful and significant drug enforcement events since the elimination of the Medellin cartel.

DEA will continue to direct assets and resources at the command and control structures of the major drug trafficking organizations operating throughout Colombia. All DEA programs in one form or another will focus on the identification and immobilization of major drug trafficking organizations.

To further augment these objectives, programs such as the Andean initiative, sensitive investigative units, and the intelligence collection programs will be the primary support for DEA's enforcement efforts.

These units will be encouraged to work simultaneously with DEA domestic offices in the United States in coordinated transnational investigations, targeting all aspects of these organizations so as to maximize both the effect and the return in our investment.

To conclude, we can and should continue to identify and build cases against the leaders of the new criminal groups from Colombia. A growing number of initiatives hold particular promise for success. The special program of vetted units funded by the Congress under the vetted unit initiative will make it possible to continue to conduct high level drug investigations in the Colombian region without fear of compromise. This is by far a most important investigative tool.

We intend to carry out even more of the cutting edge, sophisticated investigations like Millennium as part of a joint DOJ Criminal Division, DEA, and Colombia National Police bilateral case initiative. Such operations benefit from the closest possible cooperation from the DEA and Colombia National Police. These operations will effectively demonstrate that even the highest level traffickers based in foreign countries cannot manage drug operations inside the United States with impunity.

DEA supports Plan Colombia. DEA will continue to work closely with specially trained and vetted Colombian law enforcement units, other Colombian law enforcement agencies, and Colombian prosecutors to initiate joint investigations.

Colombia faces dramatic challenges to the rule of law, many of which are directly related to drug trafficking. Plan Colombia addresses many of these elements. The support to multilateral investigations, counterdrug units, and money laundering sections of the Justice initiative portion of Plan Colombia can support DEA, and Colombia National Police, DOS and Colombian prosecutors' efforts to fight drug trafficking in Colombia.

Other sections of the Justice initiative for Plan Colombia can provide more indirect support for DEA, Colombia National Police, DOS, and Colombian prosecutors' efforts to investigate major Colombian drug trafficking organizations. These sections include support to money laundering, asset forfeiture, training for police prosecutors and judges, security for victims and witnesses, prison assistance, and procedural and legislative reforms to the Colombian legal system.

Thank you for the opportunities to testify before the subcommittee today. I am happy to respond to any questions you may have.

Mr. MICA. Thank you. Again, we will suspend questions and now hear from Ana Maria Salazar, who is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Drug Policy and Support. You are recognized.

Ms. SALAZAR. Thank you. I am pleased to have the opportunity to testify once again before this committee. And I would like to convey to you that Secretary Cohen is not only aware of some of the concerns that have been expressed in this committee, but he has also been in conversations with the Colombian Government. He has

met with President Pastrana and met various times with the minister of defense.

I want to say that the Department is committed to the congressionally mandated counterdrug mission. And the Department has been performing this mission with distinction for more than a decade.

I would like to make my remarks short. If you will allow me, I would like to submit to the record a written statement.

Mr. MICA. Without objection, that material is made part of the record.

Ms. SALAZAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe it would be helpful for me to start out by enumerating the principles that guide our support to Colombia.

Our legal authorities limit our assistance to the following areas, provision of nonlethal equipment, counterdrug training, counterdrug information sharing, and minor engineering projects.

Second, U.S. military forces have not and will not participate directly in counternarcotics operations in the field.

Third, United States forces have not and will not become involved in the Colombian Government's counterinsurgency conflict. Furthermore, the Government of Colombia has not solicited our assistance in their counterinsurgency efforts.

Last, we monitor the activity of our DOD, Department of Defense, presence in Colombia very carefully. We are confident that we can continue to provide counternarcotics assistance as we have been doing for the past 10 years without being drawn into this conflict.

Now, in response to the Plan Colombia, I—the programs that the Department of Defense will be responsible for executing were developed by the CINC and his team and our interagency partners, including DEA and the Intelligence Community.

And more importantly, the Department of Defense packet part of the supplemental was in response to what the Colombians asked us for. The Department of Defense programs in the supplemental are not new. They are enhancements to the mandated counterdrug responsibilities in the region.

Now, General Wilhelm gave you a summary of the different programs that the Department of Defense is not only sponsoring or supporting this moment in Colombia, but would hope to support if the supplemental was passed. Instead of me going through what these programs are, I would just like to add two more comments that, to some of the descriptions of the programs provided by General Wilhelm.

I would just like to emphasize that, as we undertake the training of these battalions, we will not have a substantial increase in our footprint; that is, our military presence in Colombia.

Another comment I would like to make, that we plan to enhance existing intelligence collection efforts in parts in base to some of the requests we have received from General Wilhelm, but also based on the requests we have received from the Colombians. We believe that is an essential element for ensuring the success of these programs.

We feel that the supplemental is a balanced and executable plan. However, we do know that there are challenges, and I would like to enumerate some of these challenges that we foresee.

Military reform. First, the Colombian military is not optimally structured to conduct sustained counterdrug operations. And I believe General Wilhelm mentioned some of the issues that he has encountered and some of the problems that we plan to do and what we plan to do in order to support them.

Second, human rights. We have expressed to the Colombian government the importance of human rights, the practices and procedures the United States has put in place, such as vetting every single person that receives training from the United States Government is one example. Another example is United States soldiers who train their Colombian counterparts who serve as examples, which we also believe have made a difference.

Also important I believe is President Pastrana's reforms that he has indicated such as the overhaul of the military justice system, and General Tapias' interest in going after high level officials within the Colombian Army who he believes or there is some indications that they have participated in human rights violations. Nonetheless, we must remain vigilant. There is also room for improvement.

Last, I want to make a comment about the counterdrug versus the counterinsurgency issues. As I alluded to before, the Department of Defense will not step over the line that divides counterdrug from counterinsurgency. We have safeguards in place to assure that our existing policy remains inviolate. These safeguards include extensive reviews of where United States forces will be deployed for training as well as end use monitoring regime, which includes looking after as to how the assets we provide Colombia will be used.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the Department of Defense fully supports the supplemental request to support Plan Colombia. We believe this package represents a sound, responsive, and timely assistance. President Pastrana asked for our help to control the flow of illegal drugs coming into the United States. It is time to move forward. And I hope that with your support we can do this soon.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to your comments.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Salazar follows:]

ANA MARIA SALAZAR

**DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR
DRUG ENFORCEMENT POLICY AND SUPPORT**

**UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY,
AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

February 15, 2000

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

I am pleased to have the opportunity to testify before this Subcommittee to discuss the Department of Defense's perspective on the growing Colombian drug threat as well as our integrated programs designed to assist the Government of Colombia in its efforts to address this scourge.

As you are aware, drug abuse is an undeniable threat to our national security that is measured in thousands of lives lost and costing our country billions of dollars annually. Reducing the supply of drugs on our streets is an integral component of our National Drug Control Strategy and the Department of Defense (DoD) plays a key supporting role in creating the opportunity for law enforcement agencies, both our own and those of foreign nations, to interdict the flow of drugs into our country. DoD is committed to this counterdrug mission. The programs I will outline today were developed in conjunction with US Southern Command, our interagency partners and the Government of Colombia, and form the core of a sound, responsive,

and timely assistance package that will significantly enhance Colombia's ability to conduct effective counterdrug operations.

Over the past two years Colombia, specifically the area east of the Andes, has become the center of the cocaine trade, largely as a result of successful interdiction and eradication efforts in Peru and Bolivia. The remoteness of eastern Colombia and the lack of government control in large areas of this region has precluded Colombian interdiction operations to the point that the expansion of coca growing areas, especially in the Putumayo Department, has progressed virtually unchecked. Most of the world's coca is now grown in Colombia and over eighty percent of the cocaine consumed in the US is manufactured in Colombia. The United States, the nation with the greatest cocaine demand, currently consumes over 200 metric tons annually from the Andean region.

Source Zone Programs

To disrupt illegal cocaine cultivation and production throughout the source zone, DoD, working with host nations and our interagency partners, has developed and selectively implemented a threat based, intelligence driven, counterdrug interdiction strategy which has focused on air, riverine/coastal, and ground programs. DoD has worked closely with source zone nations to improve their organic air interdiction capability by funding upgrades to their aircraft that conduct counterdrug missions. To support the detection and monitoring (D&M) of airborne traffickers, the Department has fielded Relocatable Over-the-Horizon Radars (ROTHR), and deployed ground based radars along with airborne tracker aircraft equipped with air-to-air radars.

Our counterdrug riverine and littoral efforts have provided equipment and training support to source zone nations, thereby facilitating effective operations along the vast river networks of the Amazon basin, a major supply route for precursor production chemicals. Finally, DoD's ground interdiction assistance has concentrated on training selected military units, consisting of human rights-vetted personnel, in the light infantry tactics they require to support law enforcement interdiction and eradication operations. These source zone programs have been enhanced through the development of intelligence and command and control networks. These efforts, in conjunction with law enforcement and eradication programs, have proven to be successful in both Peru and Bolivia, however, the conditions necessary to implement a coordinated response throughout the Colombian cultivation and cocaine production regions have not been met – until now.

Plan Colombia

Colombian President Andres Pastrana has developed a comprehensive and integrated approach to address Colombia's current problems. This plan, known as "Plan Colombia," would strengthen the Colombian economy and democracy while fighting narcotics trafficking. Further, this plan demonstrates that Colombia is moving forward aggressively, exercising its political will to address, and ultimately solve, domestic problems that have persisted for decades. The US has a vital material interest in the success of this plan. We must now step forward with the Government of Colombia by enhancing our current strategy, based on proven source zone interdiction programs. This effort is responsive to *Plan Colombia* and consistent with current US policy.

Colombian Supplemental Source Zone Enhancements

The proposed fiscal year 2000 supplemental request will provide the resources necessary to promote essential facets of the Department's assistance to Colombian interdiction efforts. We feel that the supplemental is a balanced and executable plan -- not without challenges which I will address later -- that is necessary to attack the strategically vulnerable aerial cocaine transportation network while expanding ground interdiction and eradication operations into the densest coca cultivation areas of the Putumayo region. Let me outline for you how this supplemental funding would enhance each of our baseline counterdrug programs in Colombia in support of our overall source zone strategy.

Air Interdiction

Colombia requires aircraft that can track drug traffickers engaged in aerial smuggling. The supplemental will fund the installation of air-to-air radars in two Colombian aircraft. These radars will provide the Colombian Air Force the organic ability to conduct terminal aerial intercepts of drug smugglers. Aerial intercepts are intricate operations and require adequate ground based coordination. Therefore, the supplemental will also fund the upgrade of the Colombian Air Force radar command and control center as well as additional ground based radars to assist in detecting and sorting aircraft operating in eastern Colombia. Critical to this air interdiction effort are supplemental initiatives, under State Department authority, that will upgrade Colombian Air Force counterdrug aircraft for the air intercept mission. The

supplemental also requests funding for US Customs Service airborne early warning aircraft upgrades to ensure that these crucial platforms will continue to be available for the source zone interdiction mission.

Basing airborne D&M aircraft, as well as aerial intelligence collection platforms, close to the historical airborne smuggling routes is of the utmost importance to the successful implementation of the integrated strategy in Colombia. For this reason, funding for the forward operating location (FOL) at Manta, Ecuador, is included in the supplemental. General Wilhelm will expound on the operational requirements; however, I want to ensure that you understand that the Department views the completion of the site upgrades to the Manta FOL as a critical component of the overall source zone effort.

Ground Interdiction

The supplemental funding focuses extensive resources on improving Colombia's counterdrug ground interdiction programs. The Department has completed training of a counterdrug battalion that is now operational in the Putumayo region. The supplemental will support the training and equipping of two additional counterdrug battalions that will be operational by the end of this calendar year. Funding, if appropriated, will also be used to develop a suitable counterdrug brigade headquarters to oversee the operation of the three counterdrug battalions.

The Colombian National Police (CNP) will be conducting counterdrug interdiction and eradication missions in remote regions of the country where the coca growing fields are located. Therefore, the counterdrug battalions will require adequate airlift to move troops to support the CNP. The required helicopter lift is provided for under State Department authority, however, DoD will use proposed supplemental funding to establish the necessary Colombian Army aviation support infrastructure. Enhanced counterdrug intelligence collection efforts are also required to develop and plan counterdrug operations. Consequently, the supplemental will provide sufficient funding in this area to further enhance the intelligence programs that already serve as a foundation for our source zone strategy.

All these programs that I just outlined build on our current strategy – no change in DoD policy is required to execute the programs funded by this supplemental. There is nothing new here for DoD. However, there will be challenges to confront in the course of our efforts to attack the center of the cocaine industry in eastern Colombia. It will not be easy, but it is worth the effort. Let me share with you my concerns.

DoD Concerns

Colombian Military Organization

First, the Colombian military, by their own admission, is not optimally structured and organized to execute sustained counterdrug operations. They are heavy on “tail” and short on “tooth.” They need to better coordinate operations between the services and with the CNP. The

military has limitations based on resources, training practices, lack of joint planning and operations. The restructuring of the military is essential if Colombia is to have continuing operational success against the drug threat. The Colombian military needs help and we plan to use a small portion of supplemental funding towards this end.

Human Rights

I am also concerned, as are many others in Congress, about human rights. The practices and procedures that the US government has put in place, often at the behest of concerned members of Congress, and the example set by the small number of our troops training Colombian forces has had an impact, as have President Pastrana's reforms. This is a success story. While we must remain vigilant, and there is undoubtedly room for improvement, I am concerned that if extensive conditional clauses are included in the supplemental appropriations language, that we could inhibit or mitigate the overall effectiveness of US assistance to Colombian. We need to work together, Congress and the Administration, to address this concern. I am also alarmed by the reported dramatic increase in human rights violations attributed to both the paramilitaries and insurgents – this is symptomatic of Colombia's crisis in general and, as I see it, a call for action. The Colombian government needs the resources and training to address this problem and the supplemental represents a significant contribution on the part of the US.

Counterdrug vs. Counter Insurgency

Lastly, let me address the "targets" of this supplemental package, and our source zone strategy as a whole. The targets are the narco-traffickers, those individuals and organizations that are involved in the cultivation of coca and the subsequent production and transportation of cocaine to the US. The Colombian military will use the equipment and training that is provided by this supplemental request, in conjunction with the assistance that has already been delivered, to secure perimeters around CNP objectives -- coca fields and cocaine labs -- so that the CNP can safely conduct interdiction and eradication operations. Only those armed elements that forcibly inhibit or confront these joint military and CNP operations will be engaged, be they narco-traffickers, insurgent organizations, or paramilitaries.

I know that many are concerned that this aid package represents a step "over the line," an encroachment into the realm of counterinsurgency in the name of counterdrug. It is not. The Department has not, and will not, cross that line. While I do not have the time to elaborate on all of the restrictions, constraints, and reviews that are involved in the approval of the deployment of US military personnel on counterdrug missions, in Colombia and elsewhere, it suffices to say that it is comprehensive. I personally look not only at who is deploying and what they are doing, but at the specific locations to which they are going. Furthermore, each and every deployment order states, in no uncertain terms, that DoD personnel are not to accompany host nation personnel on operational missions. This will not change. As I have said, this supplemental does not require a change in US policy. Is there risk to US personnel providing counterdrug support?

Yes there is. Is the risk increased as a result of the programs being enhanced by the supplemental? The answer is no.

The Department of Defense enthusiastically supports this supplemental. US Southern Command and my office participated extensively in its formulation. It integrates fully our source zone strategy, affording the opportunity to enhance those counterdrug programs that have proven successful in Peru and Bolivia. President Pastrana has asked for international support to address an internal problem that has international dimensions -- fueled in part by our country's demand for cocaine. It is time to move forward and, I hope, with congressional support, that we can do so soon.

Mr. MICA. Thank you. Our last witness on this panel is Ambassador Peter Romero, Assistance Secretary of State for Latin America. You are welcome, sir.

Mr. ROMERO. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, with your indulgence, I had prepared a statement and I would like to submit it for the record.

Mr. MICA. Without objection, the entire statement will be made part of the record.

Mr. ROMERO. What I would like to do with your indulgence, is to talk a little bit about three issues that were touched upon but not really delved into by the committee as the panel started and even before and with Barry McCaffrey.

First of all, let me say, just to give you some political context to the politics of negotiations with the FARC and others in Colombia, President Pastrana was in a dead heat back in 1998 with his adversary running for the Presidency, a guy by the name of Horacio Serpa. And he decided that what the country really wanted more than anything else was peace. And he leaned into the peace issue, talked about how to get it done, made contacts with the guerrilla groups, and won those elections where he was trailing by 6 percent, and came out ahead by about 6 percent. He visited the FARC headquarters, did some other dramatic gestures, and said that peace was going to be his highest priority.

Now, he was inaugurated in August 1998, and it is February of the year 2000. And there is unmistakable evidence that the FARC didn't necessarily share his optimism about the peace talks. Quite to the contrary, their strategy from the very beginning was to talk and fight, with the emphasis on the latter as opposed to the former. And 18 months or so later, we are just now beginning to see some fruit from all of the hopes of the Colombian people.

A couple months ago, the Colombians put about 10 million people out of a population of about 36 million in the street in support of peace. There have been a number of other demonstrations. Let me just sum them up by saying that there is overwhelming and widespread support for continued negotiations with all of the irregular forces down there.

For our purposes and for the purposes of the Colombian Government, that does not mean that they can't talk and fight at the same time. It is obvious that the FARC guerrillas have adopted that strategy. I think the Colombian Government very much knows that that is what they need to do.

In terms of the push into the south and to the area called Putamayo, if I might beg your indulgence, this is the area right around where the highlighter is. And this is an area east of the Andes and the plains and jungles. This whole area, encompassing about 60 percent of the land mass of Colombia only has about 8 percent of the population. And most of that 8 percent is located in this Putamayo area. It is a population of about 263,000 people, mostly rural. 31,000—or 65,000 directly get their income from coca growing. And 60 percent of the economy down there is derived from illicit crops such as coca.

It is going to be difficult. There were mass demonstrations in the summer of 1996 when the government tried to stop the introduction of precursor chemicals into the region. There is absolutely no

doubt that the guerrillas animated the general population to disrupt the police deployments to the area.

So that is the main reason why our Plan Colombia package emphasizes the military. But the emphasis that is on the military does not end there. It incorporates the police. It incorporates civilian agencies. PLANTE, the alternative development agency, will go in to provide for alternative crops. There will be microcredits. There will be human rights observers down there. They will hold local elections. There will be all of the things that are essential to the democratic process at the grassroots.

If the \$145 million that we have identified in our support for Plan Colombia is not enough, it is only because, in the initial stages, the emphasis has to be on winning this area back under the control of the Colombian Government.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Romero follows:]

**Statement by Ambassador Peter F. Romero
Bureau of Western Hemispheric Affairs
Department of State
Before the House Committee on Government
Reform,
Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, &
Human Resources
Colombia: Are We Sitting On our Assets?
February 15, 2000**

About six months ago, President Pastrana announced Plan Colombia, a 7.5 billion dollar program to overcome his country's inter-locking national challenges. President Pastrana said Colombia would provide four billion dollars of its scarce resources to the Plan, and he called on the international community to provide the remaining 3.5 billion dollars. President Pastrana's Plan focuses on five key areas: advancing the peace process; improving the economy; combating narcotics; reforming the judicial system and promoting human rights; and supporting democratization and social development.

Most of us agree, I believe, that it is in America's interest to support Plan Colombia. I want to sketch out today why and how we have structured the U.S. assistance package. The following considerations shaped the package:

-- We wanted to support those needs of Colombia's that coincide with our own interests in combating drug trafficking, protecting human rights, and promoting good governance;

-- We wanted to help the GOC address key needs that it could not readily finance by itself; and

-- We wanted to fund GOC programs of interest to us that were unlikely to receive support from other international donors.

President Pastrana's four-year tenure offers the international community a golden opportunity to help Colombia resolve its problems. We should not squander the opportunity. President Pastrana's commitment to achieve peace is indisputable. He has also demonstrated his willingness to root out narcotics trafficking while remaining firmly committed to democratic values and principles.

Dealing with our own national narcotics problem must include helping Colombia dismantle the drug networks operating on its soil. The bulk of the cocaine, and an increasing percentage of heroin, consumed in the United States comes from Colombia. We have all seen how these drugs have poisoned entire American communities, shattering families and destroying lives.

Colombia has also paid a high price. Narcotics have corrupted its institutions, tainting even the presidency of former President Samper. Today, President Pastrana is battling to wrest control from narco interests large swaths of Colombia that remain beyond the GOC's control, and are incubators of lawlessness, violence and narco-corruption. Increasingly, powerfully armed left-wing guerrillas and right-wing militias are fighting each other for control of prime coca and opium poppy producing terrain.

Our counternarcotics package for Colombia was designed with the benefit of knowing what has worked in Bolivia and Peru. With USG assistance, both countries have been able to reduce dramatically coca production. This was achieved through successful efforts to re-establish government control and bring government services to former drug producing safehavens. Both Bolivia and Peru combined vigorous eradication and interdiction efforts with incentives for small farmers to switch to legal crops. We aim to help Colombia accomplish a similar record of success.

Colombia must reestablish its authority over narcotics producing "sanctuaries." Bogota cannot successfully resolve its many socio-economic problems, instill respect for human rights or achieve peace while these "sanctuaries" flourish and while illegal armed groups in them earn hundreds of millions of dollars from the drug trade. Colombia must

break the power of these narco-financed groups, whether they are left-wing guerrillas or right-wing militias. Any comprehensive solution to Colombia's problems must include the re-establishment of government authority over these lawless areas.

To achieve this, we propose to give the GOC the air mobility to reach deep into these lawless zones and establish a secure environment for GOC officials and NGOs to extend basic services to these long deprived areas. We will provide assistance to help small farmers move from growing illegal crops to legal sources of income. We will also provide assistance to strengthen local governments and promote human rights. Please note that in addition to our very strong counterdrug package, we have included approximately \$271 million dollars to promote structural reforms in the administration of justice, human rights and democratization sectors and to assist internally displaced persons.

In the interest of being able to provide specific answers to your questions, I have decided to keep my opening presentation short. I'm open to your questions.

Mr. MICA. Thank you. I appreciate all of our witnesses' statements. Let me get right into some questions.

Ms. Salazar, one of my concerns is that it doesn't appear that supporting this anti-narcotics effort has been either a priority of the administration or DOD. Let me have this chart here. I requested a GAO independent study of what is taking place and got these results back just a month ago, as you know, and we held a hearing on this.

But this shows SouthCom requesting—these are the requests here in the tall order, and the red was actually what was delivered. You actually see a decrease in what is being provided to SouthCom in this effort. What is happening?

Ms. SALAZAR. During my, and I appreciate the opportunity I had to testify about this approximately 2 weeks ago. And what—and, there is a number of issues here. We are very conscious, the Department of Defense is very, very conscious of the CINC's request for more intelligence asset support and also detection and monitoring support. And as we had stated before, a number of these assets are used not only in counterdrug missions for the Americas but are used in other missions around the world.

Mr. MICA. So they are being diverted to other nations around the world.

Ms. SALAZAR. And as we had explained in the prior instance, we are talking about missions to Kosovo or Iraq. Now, with that said, sir, I mean, there has been a number of us within the Department that, and I am probably one of the loudest voices, that we have fought quite vehemently and underlied the need to provide the CINC this type of support.

But when you have these other types of missions which are the main priority for the Department of Defense coming on board, it is difficult, and I find myself putting myself in the Secretary's shoes and having to make the decisions and Generals and the Joint Staff and how they have to make these decisions with relatively very few assets in trying to allocate those assets in the best way possible.

Mr. MICA. Well, you know, as a Member of Congress, I am concerned. I cited 15,973 Americans lost their lives in the most recent statistics I have due to drug related causes. The General corrected all of us and said 52,000. Did I hear him correct? I think you heard that. How many Americans died in Kosovo, Ms. Salazar?

Ms. SALAZAR. I couldn't give you the numbers.

Mr. MICA. Were there any civilian casualties even before we went in?

But, you know, the situation just got out of hand. And we have tried repeatedly, I have been on this panel and in this committee since 1993, and you could almost predict what was going to happen.

To the package, Mr. Ledwith, are there any vetted units that you spoke about the need for in this package?

Mr. LEDWETH. Are there vetted units asked for in that package, sir?

Mr. MICA. Yes.

General MCCAFFREY. No, sir, there are not.

Mr. MICA. And you think that is a key element that we need at least from the enforcement side?

General MCCAFFREY. Our experience with vetted units, sir, is they have allowed us to work in investigations at the very, very highest level without fear of compromise. Operation Millennium comes to mind. We would not have been able to conduct that operation without the tremendous input of the Department of Justice, the Colombia National Police, the DEA, and of course the vetted units.

Mr. MICA. General Wilhelm, in the report that I requested, can you brief me, during the holidays, you said we can only detect "15 percent of the activity 15 percent of the time." And with our loss of the base in Panama today, what is our capability to detect drugs coming into the country?

General WILHELM. Mr. Chairman, that was a correct recital of what I told you during our meeting in Miami over the holidays. On any given day, we can cover about 15 percent of the area 15 percent of the time. You may recall that I mentioned that, to a very large extent, that is more a statement about the size of the area than it is the sufficiency of resources.

Mr. MICA. But given the loss of Panama as a base and operating or forward operating location, what is our capability now say compared to a year ago?

General WILHELM. It is much reduced, sir. We closed the runway at Howard on May 1st of last year. Prior to that time, during any given year, we operated 21 different kinds of aircraft in the counterdrug struggle and conducted about 2,000 missions a year.

To replace Howard, as you know, sir, we have developed the concept of the forward operating locations that General McCaffrey spoke about. Right now, we have the capacity at the FOLs, Curacao, Aruba, and Manta, Ecuador to run about a third of the missions that we ran out of Howard. The key point there is the need for expedited funding so that we can develop the capacities and the capabilities of those FOLs, so we can restore the capabilities that we had prior to the Howard closing.

As I know you are aware, Mr. Chairman, there is \$38.6 million in the supplemental during fiscal year 2000 to do the horizontal construction at Manta, Ecuador, and I really need to underscore the importance of Manta. For Manta, we did sign the long-term 10-year agreement, which was of concern to the Congress. That took place on January 18th. Manta is the one site that provides coverage of Peru, all of Colombia, and most of Bolivia. So when we are talking about the deep Source Zone where the majority of cultivation takes place, where we have the majority of the laboratories, that is precisely the region we can access for Manta. That part of the supplemental is crucial to us, sir.

Mr. MICA. Manta is the base in Ecuador that needs the most work; is that correct?

General WILHELM. That is correct, sir.

Mr. MICA. Can you point that out on the map?

General WILHELM. It's right about here. Thanks, Pete.

Mr. ROMERO. Taking a page out of your book, Charlie.

General WILHELM. On the coast.

Mr. MICA. Thank you. We have seen in the last few weeks the FARC now going to Europe and looking to negotiate. Now, I cannot believe that the only reason they are going there is for peace pur-

poses on their own. But I think that even the sheer threat of this enormous aid package has them inclined to negotiate before some of this arrives. Is that correct, Mr. Ambassador?

Mr. ROMERO. Mr. Chairman, if you peel away FARC rhetoric about our package, which basically says things like this will only militarize the situation, prolong the war, et cetera, and you look at what has happened over the last couple of weeks, you get a very clear sense that the aid package is having the desired effect.

I went down to Colombia with the Secretary a couple of weeks ago, and it was no mistake that when she went down there a few days after the aid package, our intention to go to you all for such package was announced here in Washington. The supreme leader of the FARC came out with a statement basically saying that there is just a few little minor details, but they are ready to crank up the negotiations seriously.

I think that there is a causal effect. They did go to Sweden and Norway, and I'm told that they had a meeting at the Vatican today. I think all of that is a direct result of the fact that they see the writing on the wall.

Mr. MICA. Plus, we have one unit—the situation has been a disaster as far as military incursions and operations against the FARC until just a few weeks ago when our one trained battalion finally was deployed, and I understand that was successful. So I think they see the handwriting on the wall.

Finally, Ms. Salazar, I would like on my desk by the close of business next week the location of every Blackhawk helicopter that both the DOD and our reserve force have because we're going to figure out some way to get some assets down there sooner rather than later.

With that, I yield to the ranking member.

Mrs. MINK. Thank you very much.

Mr. Ledwith, did I hear you correctly when—in response to the chairman's question about vetted units, that there was no addition in this plan to augment these programs that have been so successful?

Mr. LEDWITH. There is no specific line item that I am aware of at this time. We have had significant resources over the last few years, both by the administration and by Congress, to allow us to establish the vetted unit program. We've been able to expand it to many countries utilizing the congressional funding, and my understanding is there is not any specific language as to more vetted units in this bill.

Mrs. MINK. In your opinion, would that be one way of strengthening the Colombian law enforcement agencies in doing a more comprehensive job in reaching out and getting all of these drug traffickers?

Mr. LEDWITH. We have found the vetted unit program throughout the region—and I speak regionally because it's regional issue—we have found the vetted unit program to allow us to target the highest levels of organizational structures and to work without fear of compromise. So, yes, the vetted program is a tremendous investigative tool, and it must be taken regionally, of course, because if the operations in Colombia impact on the—

Mrs. MINK. How successful have they been up to now in Colombia?

Mr. LEDWITH. Our vetted unit program has resulted in the most major investigative successes enjoyed with the Colombian National Police.

Mrs. MINK. Why not would a program like this be increased and given additional resources if they have been successful, if indeed one of the five points in the plan in Colombia is a drug strategy, counterdrug strategy?

Mr. LEDWITH. I can't answer that directly. I would say that we have had a significant infusion of resources in the last few years that have enabled us to project vetted units, at least eight vetted units in each of the countries in that region.

Mrs. MINK. But the whole justification for the Colombian plan is that, notwithstanding what we have done up to now, is that there are these increased production and increased trafficking from Colombia into the United States. So clearly something more than what currently is in fact in place needs to be done in order for us to make a significant impact on this increased trafficking.

Mr. LEDWITH. I think anything that can be done to assist the Colombians in this effort is worthwhile, ma'am.

Mrs. MINK. In your testimony, Mr. Ledwith, on page 7 you talk about the FARC units in southern Colombia and you note there remains, however, no information that any FARC or ELN units have established international transportation, wholesale distribution or drug-money-laundering networks in the United States. Would you expand on that sentence?

Mr. LEDWITH. It is a very dynamic situation. We're watching it very closely. As of this date, we have no definitive evidence that the FARC has expanded their activities outside of Colombia is what I am saying in that comment. They are very much involved in drug trafficking in a variety of levels within Colombia, but at this point we do not have definitive proof that they have taken those activities outside of Colombia.

Mrs. MINK. Then you go on in that same paragraph to say northern and central Colombia continues to be the primary base of operations for paramilitary groups. Recent reporting indicates paramilitary groups have become more active in southern Colombia. You want to expand on that?

Mr. LEDWITH. We are also greatly concerned about the activities of the paramilitary organization, the human rights violations and a variety of concerns. So we watch them very closely. I meant to imply that we are not solely focused on the FARC.

Mrs. MINK. And then you go on to explain that they're not significantly involved in poppy cultivation and marijuana but that, in the last paragraph you say, several paramilitary groups also raise funds through extortion or by protecting laboratory operations in northern and central Colombia. The Carlos Castano organization, possibly other paramilitary groups, appear to be directly involved in processing cocaine. Will you comment on that further?

Mr. LEDWITH. Yes. I would be saying that there is not a definitive institutional involvement, but there are limited circumstances in which there is a more direct managerial role, and that particular incident is one I would be referring to.

Mrs. MINK. Which paramilitary groups are involved in drug trade?

Mr. LEDWITH. I would be happy to respond to you, ma'am, in a more private opportunity, if we may, with that information.

Mrs. MINK. The reason for my inquiry here is that we did submit five questions to the DEA for response after the August hearing, and we have not yet received a reply. So I was going to interject those same questions into the record so I might get an understanding that those questions which were submitted to you in August would in fact be responded to me here in the record, for the record or to my office directly. I would certainly appreciate it.

Mr. LEDWITH. I'm very sorry to hear you were not given an appropriate response. I can assure you that you will be.

[The information referred to follows:]

**RESPONSE TO CONGRESSIONAL FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS REGARDING
COLOMBIA**

**HOUSE GOVERNMENT REFORM COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY AND HUMAN
RESOURCES**

**1. WITH THE EXPANDING ROLE OF THE COLOMBIAN ARMY IN COUNTER
NARCOTICS OPERATIONS, HOW DO YOU SEE DEA'S ROLE CHANGING?**

The Colombian Military's expanded role in counter narcotics will certainly provide the Colombian National Police more security in the investigation of those organizations controlling the manufacture of cocaine hydrochloride southeast of the Andes Mountains.

The DEA however, does not anticipate any major changes in what we do in Colombia. We will continue to work primarily with the Colombian National Police and Colombian Prosecutors and other Colombian organizations to disrupt and dismantle major Colombian drug trafficking organizations wherever they operate in Colombia.

**2. YOUR DEA SPECIAL AGENTS ASSIGNED TO THE U.S. EMBASSY IN
COLOMBIA WORK VERY CLOSELY WITH THE COLOMBIAN NATIONAL
POLICE. DO YOU FEEL THAT THEY ARE SAFE WHEN THEY FLY IN 1960S
ERA HELICOPTERS OUT TO REMOTE LOCATIONS TO INVESTIGATE
OPERATIONS?**

The safety of our DEA Special Agents and the Colombian National Police officers with whom we work is of paramount importance in all counter drug operations. There is no reason to believe the helicopters flown by the Colombian National Police are unsafe or we would not allow our Special Agents to travel in them.

**3. IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS NOW, THE DEA HAS HAD SIX SPECIAL
AGENTS KILLED IN SOUTH AMERICA. THAT'S A LARGE PRICE TO PAY TO
TRY TO STOP ILLEGAL NARCOTICS IN THE SOURCE ZONE. DO YOU THINK
THE RISK IS WORTH THE DANGERS YOUR SPECIAL AGENTS FACE IN
PLACES LIKE COLOMBIA, PERU AND BOLIVIA?**

The DEA's most precious assets overseas are the DEA Special Agents and other DEA personnel assigned to foreign offices. There is no investigation worth the lives of the five DEA Special Agents killed in an airplane crash in Peru and the one Special Agent murdered while off-duty in Colombia.

Investigating major international drug traffickers is inherently dangerous. Yet DEA Special Agents continuously place their lives in danger, when necessary, to make the United States a safer country. The willingness of DEA personnel to make this type of

commitment to the citizens of the United States is indicated by the continuous surplus of applicants for our overseas positions.

4. WHAT IS YOUR ASSESSMENT OF THE VETTED UNITS PROGRAM WITH THE COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE? IS MORE ASSISTANCE NEEDED?

The vetted unit program is the result of tremendous support to the DEA from the U.S. Congress and the Administration. This support provided significant resources for the establishment of the program. The vetted unit program with the Colombian National Police and the Colombian Prosecutor's office is our most successful international program and a model for future vetted units in other countries.

Successful operations such as Operation Millennium, Operation Atlantico, and the investigation of Jorge Asprilla would not have been successful without the small, well-trained and well-equipped units working without fear of compromise. The vetted unit program is proving itself equally successful in countries such as Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Thailand and Pakistan. The DEA is considering requesting Congressional authorization to expand the vetted unit program throughout Latin America and in selected other countries to support investigations targeting the leadership of international drug trafficking organizations.

Drug traffickers always have increasing resources; can take advantage of new and emerging technology such as encrypted communications; and have the operational flexibility to react quickly to changes in law enforcement patterns. The DEA, the Department of Justice, the Colombian National Police, the Colombian Prosecutors and our other foreign counterparts will face serious challenges in the future as we investigate increasingly powerful and well financed transnational criminal organizations. It will require a serious commitment on the part of all of us to continue to meet these challenges.

5. IN YOUR ESTIMATION, WHAT DID OPERATION MILLENNIUM ACCOMPLISH?

Operation Millennium was the most significant drug investigation since the dismantling of the Medellin and Cali Cartels. Operation Millennium resulted in the arrest to date of 31 major Colombian drug traffickers who had significant influence over the flow of cocaine from Colombia through Mexico to the United States.

Operation Millennium is the best example to date of a successful joint cooperative investigation initiated by a vetted unit and vetted prosecutors and supported by the DEA and the Department of Justice. Operation Millennium underscored the effectiveness of using evidence obtained legally in a foreign country to initiate investigations and grand jury proceedings in the U.S.

Operation Millennium opened the door for the extradition to the U.S. of 31 major Colombian drug traffickers. Operation Millennium is the most successful example to

date of the efforts by the Department of Justice and the DEA, working with foreign counterparts, to obtain criminal drug charges against major drug traffickers in the U.S.

Operation Millennium allowed investigators an unprecedented window into the inner workings of Colombian drug trafficking at its highest levels.

6. CAN ANOTHER OPERATION MILLENNIUM BE CONDUCTED WITH AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE THE U.S. HAS OFFERED?

The DEA and the Colombian National Police will always work aggressively to combat the drug trafficking threat to Colombia and the U.S. We will continue to work to meet the immense challenges posed by the drug traffickers during Operation Millennium. Challenges such as the use of encrypted communications and unlimited resources had to be addressed to ensure the successful conclusion of this investigation.

Drug traffickers in Colombia and other countries can react quickly to law enforcement pressure, making it difficult for us to continue to combat the challenge. Drug traffickers are quick to take advantage of new and emerging technology such as encrypted communications.

The challenges we will face to initiate more operations of the caliber of Millennium will be enormous. Meeting these challenges will require a significant commitment from all of us.

7. YOU SERVED IN COLOMBIA, WHAT IS YOUR PROFESSIONAL OPINION OF THE OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES OF GENERAL SERRANO'S NATIONAL POLICE ?

Under the command of General Rosso Jose Serrano, the Colombian National Police has enjoyed noteworthy recognition as an extremely effective law enforcement institution. I had the pleasure of serving in Colombia for several years during the heyday of Medellin Cartel leader Pablo Escobar-Gaviria. Despite the death of many Colombian National Police officers during Escobar's reign of narcoterrorism, the Colombian National Police's dedication, professionalism and commitment to integrity resulted in the dismantling of the Medellin Cartel and the cessation of the random terror that threatened the lives of so many.

The Colombian National Police immediately moved to dismantle the command and control infrastructure of the Cali Cartel. During the summer of 1995, the Colombian National Police aggressively pursued and arrested Miguel and Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela, the leaders of what was then considered the most significant criminal organization in history.

The Colombian National Police introduced strategic and fundamental changes in their operations. These changes made the Colombian National Police the most modern and

efficient law enforcement institution in South America and one of the most respected institutions in the international law enforcement community.

Several years ago, the Colombian National Police built a \$20 million dollar intelligence center, Centro de Inteligencia, on the outskirts of Bogota. This center has been described as the most modern, cost effective and efficient intelligence headquarters among all of Colombia's security forces. The center is staffed by young, energetic and highly respected Colombian National Police officers, many hand selected by General Serrano himself. The DEA Bogota Country Office and the Colombian National Police vetted units interact daily with the various elements of the Centro de Inteligencia in the investigation of major Colombian drug trafficking organizations.

Over the last year, several major accomplishments highlight the operational capabilities of the Colombian National Police.

- In early 1999, the Colombian National Police played a major role in dismantling the Cali/Buenaventura based Jorge Asprilla-Perea organization. This organization controlled movement of all the cocaine through the port of Buenaventura, Colombia.
- During the summer of 1999, Gustavo Gomez-Maya and several members of his organization were arrested. This organization was shipping multi-ton loads of cocaine to the United States and Europe.
- In October 1999, the Colombian National Police was directly responsible for the successful culmination of Operation Millennium. Operation Millennium was the most successful investigation in Colombia since the arrests of the leaders of the Cali Cartel.

Over 40 Colombian nationals are now being held pending extradition to the U.S. The Colombian National Police was directly involved in all the investigations which led to these extradition requests

The Colombian National Police continue to develop new and innovative methodologies to combat the drug trafficking threat that has affected the social infrastructure of both our countries. Enforcement programs such as the Sensitive Investigations Units, aircraft enforcement, the heroin investigations task force and chemical control supported by aggressive intelligence collection programs have provided outstanding examples of the Colombian National Police's tactical and strategic attack on the drug industry in Colombia and elsewhere.

During 2000, the Colombian National Police will continue to apply available resources to further develop its arsenal of effective law enforcement strategies in partnership with the DEA and the international law enforcement community.

The DEA considers the Colombian National Police a leader in innovative and modern law enforcement for the future and among the best drug law enforcement agencies in the world.

8. SINCE THIS COLOMBIAN AID PACKAGE HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO THE U.S. CONGRESS, HAVE YOU IDENTIFIED ANY DEVELOPING THREATS FROM COLOMBIAN NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS THAT WOULD REQUIRE MORE ASSISTANCE TO GO TO THE COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE?

Threats against DEA and other U.S. Government personnel working in Colombia, although not common, do occur. It is the policy of the DEA and the U.S. Embassy to work closely with the Colombian National Police to investigate these threats and provide security for U.S. Government personnel or facilities as necessary. The Colombian National Police willingly provide this type of support to the U.S. Government even though it requires them to provide resources and manpower which are already committed to other areas.

The DEA anticipates that when the support proposed in Plan Colombia is a reality, there will most certainly be an increased threat against U.S. Government personnel or U.S. interests throughout Colombia. The DEA also believes that as extradition of Colombian Nationals and the development of more joint international cooperative investigations continues, there will be more threats against U.S. Government personnel and interests as well as Colombian law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, witnesses and politicians supportive of these efforts.

The U.S. Government will continue to rely on the Colombian National Police to play a major role in providing protection to U.S. Government personnel and interests in both rural and urban areas. As these new threats develop, the Colombian National Police will be forced to utilize already severely taxed resources and manpower to provide the security necessary to protect U.S. Government personnel and interests in Colombia.

Mr. MICA. If may I followup, can you testify before us that there is any right wing paramilitary efforts being supported by drug trafficking?

Mr. LEDWITH. We have information that would indicate that certain paramilitary elements are deriving income from extortion of drug trafficking activities, yes, sir.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

Mrs. MINK. I'm not through, but I'll yield my time. I'll take my second round.

Mr. MICA. Our vice chairman then, Mr. Barr.

Mr. BARR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

If I could ask Mr. Macklin to put up two pictures, if you could put them both up, maybe hold the other one.

We talk about negotiating with terrorists, and it's sort of a theoretical discussion that we've had. My view is you negotiate with terrorists and you lose, and I think that's the experience of people that have tried that.

These two pictures are Jorge Briceno Suarez, alias Mono Jojoy, chief military officer of the FARC, and No. 2 is Henri Castillanos, alias Remanya, Eastern Bloc commandante for FARC. Would any of the four of you like to sit down with these gentlemen and think you would be successful in negotiating with them? I didn't think so.

With regard to our loss of operational capability out of Howard Air Force Base and the other facilities we maintained until recently in Panama, how long has it been that we have known that the capability that previously we maintained at Howard, for example, would be lost in 1999? Was this something that popped up in 1999 or had we known for quite some time that we would lose that capability?

General WILHELM. Congressman Barr, I will take that question.

As you know, the decision to close the facilities at Howard came at the end of an extended series of negotiations with the Panamanians which were really oriented toward preserving a post-2000 presence in Panama. Quite frankly, when I assumed command of Southern Command in September 1997, I did so with about a 95 percent expectation that in the year 2000 I'd have somewhere between 2,500 and 3,500 troops on the ground, that that 8,500 foot runway would be open and that we would be conducting the counterdrug operations, the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support missions that I discussed previously from Howard.

As we all know, I was wrong. The negotiations did not pan out, and we were left very much short-sheeted. We had a lot to do, not much time to do it in, and, of course, we had international negotiations.

Mr. BARR. In what agency of our government was the decision made not to make any contingency plans whatsoever to have that capability sustained somewhere else?

Basically, it seems what happened is we had these negotiations, and they didn't go anywhere. And we could argue, I suppose, over why they didn't go anywhere, but apparently we had no contingency plans whatsoever. Where was the decision in our government made to have no contingency plans? And now we're basically playing catch-up, trying to both maintain some sort of capability with

regard to monitoring the air routes, at the same time as we're engaged in ongoing negotiations with the very basics of how to construct and maintain and pay for those facilities. Was this the Department of State that made the decision to not have contingency plans, was it Defense, DEA, or was it the military?

General WILHELM. Congressman Barr, again, if I could, let me just answer for my part of the U.S. Government, U.S. Southern Command. We did begin to frame contingency plans long before the negotiations were terminated with Panama; and, in fact, we did an inspection of the region. We made an assessment based on geography, range, operational reach, capabilities of existing air fields and probability of successful negotiations as to where—

Mr. BARR. If the military did its job, and I certainly believe that's accurate, where was the decision made not to implement any of that? Was that a policy decision that the Secretary of State made or the Secretary of Defense or the President?

General WILHELM. Sir, I'll lead off, and then pass perhaps down to Ambassador Romero. From my point of view, sir, we actually started the ball rolling to identify and to start getting dialogs going on a bilateral basis with the Netherlands for Curacao and Aruba and with Ecuador for Manta before the talks were terminated with Panama. I met personally with President Mahuad in Ecuador. I met with President Fujimori in Peru because we had a couple of candidate sites there, and I met with the Governor General in the Netherlands Antilles and with the commander of the Netherlands forces in the Antilles.

I'd have to pass it on to Ambassador Romero to comment on the Washington side of that.

Mr. ROMERO. Well, first of all, I think if you're talking about Howard Air Force Base you're talking about an installation whose geography and infrastructure was just about as optimum as it gets in terms of counternarcotics flights in the region, and I think Charlie will support me on that. I don't think that there was a hiccup between the time that we essentially decided that there was no way ahead with respect to the Panamanians and the time that we actually launched people into the field to start talking to those governments where we thought forward operating locations in the alternative would work.

First of all, we got interim agreements almost immediately on those three locales. We nailed down a permanent agreement with the Ecuadorians in, I think, record time, and we are scheduled to sign the agreements with the Netherlands Antilles, with Curacao and Aruba within the next 2½ weeks. We still need another one in Central America because the flow, I'm told, is moving west into the Pacific, and there needs to be better coverage in that area north of Colombia and up on the western side of the isthmus.

It's architecture that we're putting together, but then there's a lot of shortfalls in terms of installations and infrastructure that General Wilhelm was talking about that we will need to put together. It's just not automatically down there in the places where we need them.

Mr. BARR. I know it's clearly not automatically down there, but it seems to me that there are a few instances in the history of our

relations with other countries where we have not had more forewarning of something that was going to happen.

This treaty was signed in the late 1970's, and knowing these countries, as you all do, having engaged in many, many negotiations with other countries with regard to base rights and landing rights and so forth, you all know that it takes a long time. It just seems to me that looking, as the General has said, that even with all of the 1997, 1998 assets available, SOUTHCOM will be able to cover 15 percent of key trafficking routes 15 percent of the time, a very, very small percentage of coverage.

And yet we're still trying to negotiate—it's my understanding we don't even have, as the General stated in his written testimony, all-weather, 24-hour operations. Those aren't even set to begin for several months. And I'm mystified as to there seems to be a huge gap here between an anticipated event that we've known for 20 years was going to come, even though there was a possibility at some point in time that we might have been able to negotiate a continued presence in Panama, that was just a contingency, and here we are with virtually no capability at all right now except for very small coverage. I'm just astounded that we have this huge gap there.

Will we have additional time, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. MICA. Yes, I think we're going to go around.

Mr. BARR. OK. I would like the record to reflect when I requested of the four panelists if any of them would like to sit down and negotiate with these two men with any degree of likelihood of success that nobody raised their hand.

Mr. MICA. I might just say that at this point one of the problems we have in Manta, I understand the runway is in such bad shape some of the key aircraft can't use it. In Aruba, we have limited take-off capability, particularly now in the tourist seasons when those planes get priority.

Ms. Schakowsky.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to apologize to the panel that I was not able to hear your testimony. If my questions have already been answered, just refer me to your testimony, and I will move on.

It's my understanding, General—correct me if I'm wrong—that over 200 U.S. military personnel are in Colombia on any given day right now on intelligence training and radar missions; is that correct?

General WILHELM. No, ma'am, not entirely. This is a fluid number. It depends on what we happen to be doing on a given day. It can go from a low of 80 to a high of about 220. I think a good daily average over the last year as we have been involved in training these new Colombian army units has been in the range of about 150 to 180. I think that's a good ballpark average.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I wanted to ask then how the U.S. military presence will change as a result of this stepped-up program, if at all?

General WILHELM. I think it will change in some subtle ways, and I have recommended that it change in some subtle ways. We have a pretty ambitious training program for the year 2000, assuming that the supplemental is approved, but honestly I believe

that we can achieve most of what we need to do at the force levels that we've had during the past year. We'll train two battalions, with just a minor overlap, just to make it specific.

We conducted this training in three phases. During the first two phases we used about 57 soldiers each time from the 7th Special Forces Group. The third phase, which involved integration training, was a little bit more complex, and we went up to about 65 with some additional specialists who were conducting intelligence and other training. I suspect we're going to stay in the ballpark during the year 2000. The area that I would like to see some adjustments is in our management capabilities.

If this supplemental is approved, the military group that works for me in Bogota right now and supports Ambassador Kamman and the country team I believe will be far too thin to really do the management tasks that will confront it. Also, we have a colonel right now who is very well qualified, but I believe that our interests would be very well served by putting a general officer on the ground in Colombia. He provides seniority, probably access to some meetings and conferences where I think our participation would be indicated. I think we're just going to need more depth to do the job the way it needs to be done.

General McCaffrey, during his testimony, commented about the need to develop an integrated interagency mechanism, here in Washington, to oversee the same task. They will be asking the questions. I need enough people with the right seniority and the right skills to provide the answers from Colombia. Not a big upsurge, but some increase in numbers and some increase in seniority.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you.

I wanted to ask a couple of questions about the human rights performance of the Pastrana government and of the security forces.

You know, we could put up a lot of pictures of unsavory people in Colombia, and I'm sure that none of them would be the kind of individuals that we would want to sit down with. Nonetheless, we are engaged in a struggle to find, at some point, a solution that would stabilize the Government of Colombia, and I'm concerned about the poor performance according to the State Department that the Pastrana government has on human rights.

I know that we have the Leahy amendment which says that the security forces cannot receive U.S. counternarcotics aid if there's credible evidence of gross human rights violations. But the State Department has found that three of the six army brigades that operate in the major drug trafficking areas have not taken effective measures to bring soldiers responsible for gross human rights violations to justice.

So I'm asking, and I'm not sure to whom, maybe you, Ambassador, what you would recommend that the Colombian Government do to root out the soldiers that are believed to have engaged in these human rights violations?

Mr. ROMERO. As someone who was pretty low on the totem pole back in the early 1980's and involved in Central America, I have to tell you that had President Reagan gotten the response from the Salvadoran Government that we are getting from the Pastrana government vis-a-vis human rights, President Reagan would have

been kicking up his heels. President Pastrana has cashiered four generals. He has removed about two dozen colonels and majors, some of them are under indictment, others are still being investigated.

We, for our part, are implementing faithfully to the Leahy amendment. Those units that you were talking about, if they don't pass muster they will not get U.S. assistance, whether it be materiel or training.

The counternarcotics unit that Charlie is standing up have all of their officers vetted for human rights to ensure that they haven't engaged in gross violations of human rights. This is not something that we only insist upon; this is something that President Pastrana insists upon. That's not to say that there are no human rights violations or, more accurately, that there aren't connections between some officers and paramilitary groups—there are—but I think that President Pastrana has done a good job and continues to be committed to rooting out those bad officers and getting rid of them.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Are you satisfied that progress has been made on upgrading the penal code? You say four generals. I know about three in the information I have.

Mr. ROMERO. I have got the fourth one here that I can give you.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. That they're not currently under investigation for their role in human rights abuse and they aren't going to be brought to trial, that there's 500 outstanding arrest warrants issued by the Attorney General's office against paramilitary groups and, as you know, have the security forces really act decisively regarding those outstanding warrants.

The penal code—I understand that some of the provisions—a provision that crimes against dignity could not be tried in a military court system or was removed so that jurisdiction over cases of human rights violations will be conducted on the current practice on a case-by-case basis, and some of the most important, in some of our views, provisions were not in the penal code. Are they making the progress that is satisfying to you?

Mr. ROMERO. I don't think any of us are satisfied, but I have to tell you that I think if there had been this much progress back in 1980 in El Salvador that war would have been a whole lot shorter. We are firmly convinced that when you have gross violations of human rights, you're only politicizing the countryside and forcing kids to sign up with one side or the other. And I think that President Pastrana, when you look that he's been in office for 18 months and what he's been able to implement within that armed force it's pretty spectacular. Are we satisfied? We're not satisfied.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Do you feel that built into the aid that we're giving there are enough accountability measures so that at every step of the way that we can go back and assess compliance with standards of human dignity?

Mr. ROMERO. The Leahy amendment in its practice provides that there has to be followup and there has to be accountability, and only then will we be able to certify that a unit, even in this particular case, who has had officers who committed gross violations, that they have taken the steps necessary to correct it and to punish those responsible. And, in this case, if they don't take those meas-

ures, then we'll be pressing the Colombian Government, and we'll be cutting off aid to that unit.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

Mr. Souder, as soon as you get settled, we're pleased to recognize you.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

I have, if I could—and I'm sorry I got tied up with arguably one of the most important groups in your district, that is broadcasting people from the TV and radio, and I wanted to come back over. But if I could followup on a couple of the questions that I had raised earlier, maybe start with General Wilhelm—it's good to see you again—as well as Ms. Salazar who, in Santiago, went through some of our discussions before as we argued about helicopters and a number of other things.

I raised the question and I would like to hear an official response on some of the concerns I raised about the military units.

Because, in the Defense Department, they come up with these new antinarotics groups, there is a concern about whether they're going to use draftees, about whether they're going to be high school graduates and about whether there's going to be pay such that it becomes an elite division. Defense Secretary Ramirez told me that was their goal, and they were moving in that direction. But, as I understand it, draftees only have to serve 1 year, and we're talking about having to train pilots, we're talking about people who need long-term commitments. What specific guarantees do we have on behalf of the taxpayers of the United States that if we try to build a new unit that this is in fact going to be a fully vetted, well-trained, long-term, committed people who will be able to operate the helicopters and the equipment?

General WILHELM. Congressman Souder, I will lead off on that, if it's all right, sir.

First of all, there has really been a high degree of selectivity as to who is in these units, starting with individual vetting of the officers in the first counterdrug battalion. This battalion was really formed of soldiers who came from two sources. One were professional career soldiers who volunteered to become members of the counterdrug battalion. The second were a limited number of conscripts who changed their status and became professional soldiers and accepted a longer term of service.

And I know you're aware, sir, that there are two pay scales in the Colombian military. The professional soldier is paid at one level and the conscript at another. So those conscripts who volunteered to join the CD battalion and to become professional soldiers then immediately went to the higher pay level.

Education in and of itself, with the exception of one category of soldiers, isn't treated quite the same in Colombia as it is in the United States. To my knowledge, sir, there is really no specific criteria on enlistment for high school graduates in the Colombian Army. The exception are the Bachilleres.

Mr. SOUDER. May I ask you a followup question to that? My understanding is if you have a high school degree you can't be sent to a combat zone without your approval.

General WILHELM. These are the Bachilleres, sir. Somewhere between 35 and 40,000, depending on who you talk about, who, based on their education level, sign a contract but they're immediately exempted from combat duties.

You may recall, sir, during one of our first meetings when Minister Rodrigo Lloreda was still the minister of defense that was really the cardinal vector in his reform of the armed forces program. He wanted to do away with the Bachilleres. Defense Minister Luis Ramirez, who has replaced Minister Lloreda, has continued on that track. He is supported fully by General Tapias and by General Mora, the commander of the army. They are still very much committed to ending the Bachilleres program.

What they contemplate, sir, is to reduce the overall end-strength of the army, not a one-for-one conversion of Bachilleres to professional soldiers, but something less than that. But then whatever revenues are saved can be devoted to modernization and to including—or to improving force capabilities.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

Ms. Salazar, did you have anything to add?

Ms. SALAZAR. I really don't have any other comment to add except that another area we're looking at is kind of responding to some of your concern, is that with any type of program like this, one of the things we look at is also trying to make sure that we develop the Colombians, in this case Colombian's capability, to train trainers who then would have the responsibility of being able to support the training capacity that this unit would have as some of these people are moving out, just out of normal attrition. We have to expect there's going to be movement of these people. That's an important aspect of the program.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Ledwith, we're pleased that we finally have started some of the extradition process which has been bogged down for a long time in Colombia. What would you say was the critical thing that moved that forward?

Mr. LEDWITH. I think the process is going forward at an appropriate rate right now. We have some 40 extradition requests pending with the Government of Colombia. The Government of Colombia has been dealing with them in a very forthright nature.

We have seen the first Colombian citizen expedited here some time ago. Jaime La HERNOSA was brought here to face heroin trafficking charges in New York.

I think we're proceeding in the appropriate direction at this time, sir. I think we also need to allow the judicial process to work its way through the Colombian system while we do this.

Mr. SOUDER. If I could make one other brief comment, and General Wilhelm, if you want to comment I invite you to do so, that General McCaffrey had made a statement. In fact, he made it multiple times, which I agree with in fundamental principle, that we need to respect the Colombian Government's systems and that, as we debate the national police and the Defense Department, we need to respect the fact that they would like to buildup the Defense Department.

There's no question that there are both personal and political rivalries inside Colombia about how to approach this. But I think it's important that we don't overstate that as we get into this package.

Because, the fact is, I'm very proud from the time I talked to you—I'm proud of how you behaved in throwing yourself into this job to try to help Colombia buildup their military and try to save this country. Because if we can save it, we have some hope of licking the drug problem here. If we lose it, we are in deep trouble.

And you understood firsthand that you were going to go down there and help them, but the truth is, as we develop the package and as you have told me personally, as did General Clark and General McCaffrey before that, their military is very backward, and they're developing that. But I'm saying as far as what they need and how to attack this, command and control is a word we've talked about, and there are different systems.

The important variable of that is in talking with their government—and I fully support trying to get a package if in fact we can—is they depend a lot on our input as to what that package was, and for us to act like the mix of the package was only their choice rather than us inputting; it was a mix, and we can continue to mix it.

Furthermore, the Europeans have chosen in their package not to help the military. They want to do all the alternative development stuff. So, that means our package is skewed toward the military side.

And I also heard General McCaffrey say that the Colombian Government wants to take care of the national police, us putting the dollars into the military. It's nice if they want Blackhawks. I mean, I'm supportive of Blackhawks, too. But the truth is—I want to make that clear—that we want to figure out, too, and have an input into the mix. And we have a right as the U.S. Government, since we're representing taxpayers and their dollars, to input into that mix, too. And while we need to be sensitive to their internal structures and not say buildup the national police solely when they're asking for defense, it doesn't mean that we don't have some discretion in our package to talk about that. Nor does it mean that their package was solely developed by them without input from our Defense Department, our State Department, and others.

And I felt it was important to say that for the record, and if I have made any misstatements on that or any clarifications that you want to add, you can do so.

General WILHELM. Congressman Souder, I think that is a good and very valid statement.

I tried to get out of the mode of talking about their package and the package that we developed and talk about our package, more of a consultative approach to what Colombia's needs are.

Sir, it's true that the performance of their armed forces left a great deal to be desired, certainly from about mid-1998 back to about 1995 or thereabouts. I probably wouldn't say they were backward. They suffered a real loss of credibility. Part of it was their own doing. A lot of it was due to the human rights violations which Ms. Schakowsky discussed, which plagued the armed forces; and indeed in 1993 the armed forces were really charged with about 53 percent of the human rights violations.

Today, the breakout is about 70 percent to the paramilitaries, over 25 percent to the guerrillas, and somewhere between 3 and 5

percent to the military, which is a way of saying they cleaned up their act.

They're proud of that. But I would tell you, if Fernando Tapias, the commander of the armed forces, were sitting here, he would contradict me. He would say, "no, I'm not proud of it"; 3 percent is 3 percent too many. I've known him for a long time, and I think he really means that.

Sir, your other statement about the relationship between the military and the national police I think does deserve perhaps a little bit broader airing. As we've gone through the process of developing this expanded assistance package, I, for one, have never suggested that one thin dime be diverted from the support to the national police. There are a lot of admirers of General Jose Serrano in this room, and I'm one of them. I believe that we should continue to make an investment in a blue chip stock which the Colombian National Police have been.

My contention, and the one we talked about at the very outset, sir, was that I was afraid that Colombia's security forces had gotten out of balance. The Colombian National Police had a capability at this level, the armed forces at this level, and to really win the struggle therein, I felt they needed to be brought into balance. I really believed that that's what the supplemental, as it's currently framed, will do or start to do, and I've really pushed with both General Serrano and General Tapias that this really should not be competitive. They should seek to be complementary, one to the other. They're classmates. Personally, they get along well, and I think they have their two institutions moving on a positive and productive track.

Mr. SOUDER. I thank the chairman.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

Just to wind up a couple of questions, we'll go through here and see if anyone has any remaining.

Mr. Ledwith, it's been testified that 75 percent approximately of the heroin coming into the United States according to your signature analysis comes from Colombia; is that correct?

Mr. LEDWITH. As much as.

Mr. MICA. As much as. What percentage of cocaine today—60, 70 percent probably?

Mr. LEDWITH. At the very least, sir.

Mr. MICA. At the very least. So this doesn't appear to be rocket science to see where this stuff is coming from that's ending up on our streets.

We also heard testimony from the drug czar and from our summit last week that 75 percent of the heroin in the world is produced in Afghanistan, which pretty much narrows down the hard narcotic sources. With that in mind, Mr. Romero, the only—now this war is a little bit like Jell-O, you push it down one place, it pops up another. Is there anything in the administration's plan to support the U.N. antinarcotics effort?

Mr. ROMERO. I can't really speak to that effort. I do know that there is a normal budget for that.

Mr. MICA. You have money in there for Peru and Bolivia. We know it might pop up back there. We also know, since the surveillance is down, coca production is slightly up, which the General

told me about when I was in Miami during the holidays, so we know when we let up it pops up, but there's nothing in there for the U.N. right now. We don't have any program in Afghanistan. Only the U.N. program that we support through the UNODCP, Office of Drug Control Policy, supports that effort.

Now I don't think we can pass this package without supporting that U.N. effort. I'm pretty far to the conservative side, but we just conducted that seminar with our U.N. partners, our European union partners, and we know that where 75 percent of the supply is coming from in the entire world and 75 percent of it is coming into the United States. We cannot pass this package, Mr. Romero and others in the administration, without some funds not only for Peru and Bolivia; 100 percent of the cocaine is produced in those three countries, right? OK. And there's not too many places that have the altitude or capability of production.

Mr. ROMERO. If I might just add, I'm happy to tell you that there is money—

Mr. MICA. How much?

Mr. ROMERO [continuing]. For UNDP in the existing budget.

Mr. MICA. No, I'm talking about in the supplemental.

Mr. ROMERO. I do know that they are working the microherbicide issue in Colombia but—

Mr. MICA. We don't even want to get into that, because we know we can use chemical and other treatment to do away with the drugs, and the administration has a horrible record on that, which I think the money is still sitting there, and I don't think they have done a darn thing yet.

Mr. ROMERO. But to answer your question on the regional, there is a lot of regional money in this package.

Mr. MICA. That is going to pop up, and they will get it from someplace else. So we need to support that effort.

Finally, I read with dismay that they're putting a price tag, the Mexican traffickers, on our border agents. DEA has a \$200,000 price tag or something which was reported in the media on our border agents. If they touch a hair on our border agents what do we have in store for them as far as U.S. retaliation? Do we have a price tag on these guys, the drug traffickers?

Mr. LEDWITH. Well, there certainly is a reward program, but we are keenly aware of the risks that the brave men and women of all of law enforcement face working overseas and along the border. We're concerned about developing intelligence that there are traffickers putting prices on the heads of law enforcement officials along the border.

Mr. MICA. Is that going to be a priority of yours and can we also pay rewards to get these guys if they go after our guys?

Mr. LEDWITH. Sir, the safety of the men and women working for DEA and in all law enforcement, the military, is of paramount issue to us. That would be our first priority, sir.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

Mrs. Mink.

Mrs. MINK. I just have one final question to Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Ms. Salazar.

In your final page of your testimony you again reiterate the departmental policy regarding deployment of U.S. military personnel

in counterdrug missions, and you state that the plan that we're debating here today will not require any change in policy because existing policy will carry over, and you said the supplemental does not require a change in U.S. policy. Is there a risk to U.S. personnel providing counterdrug support? You responded, yes, there is. And the final question, is the risk increased as a result of the programs being enhanced by the supplemental; and your answer was no. Could you explain that no answer?

Ms. SALAZAR. Yes. I guess in part the reason for that comment was twofold. On the one hand—and I guess you know we had one very clear example that affected us in the last 8 months. Any United States personnel, or anyone who's involved in counter-narcotics activities and law enforcement activities, has a very dangerous business, and—but, with that said, we have had programs in Colombia for the last 10 years, and we have done, I believe, a very effective job in making sure that force protection issues of those, not only of DOD personnel, but also of the law enforcement personnel and the embassy personnel that's down there, are adequately supported and responded to.

Now, the reason why I made that statement is because, as General Wilhelm had stated, we don't foresee an increased number of our footprints in Colombia. So in so much that we continue to provide and enhance our current programs, which is what the supplemental does, we don't foresee any change in policy, although we will continue to be very, very concerned and make sure that we support the DOD personnel that is in Colombia at this point.

I know, General Wilhelm, the issue of force protection has been of prime concern to you.

General WILHELM. Yes. Mr. Ledwith stated the position of the Department of Defense is essentially identical with that of the Department of Justice. There is no higher priority than the protection of our people on the ground.

Congresswoman Mink, I was in Tres Esquinas last week, and in fact I spent a good portion of my time there really walking the ground and going over each and every element of the force protection plan. We are creating a critical mass, I will tell you that. The facilities are growing. We're going to be moving aircraft in there.

By doing that, are we creating a target? As a military person I would tell you, yes, we are. To compensate for the development of that target we really need to improve the status of the physical measures and the procedural measures to secure the force. So we're doing all of that.

For example, just one number, 15,000 rolls of concertina barb wire, the whole cantonment is circled with triple strand right now. They had built one concrete bunker to support the command post. I said, wrong answer; build three because you don't have the capacity that you need. We're pushing the defense out beyond that. I have instructed them to build revetments for the aircraft. So we're going to have to keep our eye on the ball. There's no question about it.

As these facilities grow in size, they grow in attractiveness as targets. We won't allow the U.S. presence to get out of control, but there are other issues. It's our credibility and the support that we've provided to Colombia.

I know Pete Romero remembers well a couple of disastrous attacks in El Salvador which really undermined the confidence in what we are doing. We cannot and will not let that happen in Colombia.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Barr.

Mr. BARR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, where are the Blackhawks going to go? To what units and services will those be given or are we leaving that up to the Colombians?

General WILHELM. No, sir. Again, this has been a consultative thing. There are an awful lot of Blackhawks here.

Let me see if I can walk real quickly through the military array of airplanes just so that we're all proceeding from a common baseline.

When this whole enterprise started, the army had seven Blackhawks. The air force had 18. Recently, the Colombians themselves, executed the unused portion of a former FMS case and got five additional Blackhawks, which went to the air force. Those airplanes are being armed for armed escort missions. The Colombians on their own hook, with their own financing, are buying 14 airplanes, Blackhawks, which are to be delivered during the year 2000, during this calendar year. Sikorsky says they can do that. Seven of those airplanes will go to the air force to be armed as escorts. Seven will go to the army as troop transports.

Then the supplemental package of 30 additional Blackhawks, which our last liaison with Sikorsky said 14 months after funds are committed we will start a delivery stream initially with one aircraft, and then their planning estimate was two aircraft per month thereafter. So they could fill out the buy by the early part of the year 2002.

As General McCaffrey stated, sir, I think we can sort of confuse ourselves a little bit when we get overly focused on the airplane. It may not be the long pole in the tent. The air crew may be the long pole in the tent.

And I do want to make one thing clear about a progression of aviation capabilities. We have 18 UH-1Ns, twin engine Hueys, on the ground right now; and we plan to provide 15 more next year, for a total of 33. Those are interim aircraft. When the 30 Blackhawks are delivered, the UH-1Ns will be removed from the inventory. Those are State Department assets. I suspect they will come back to INL.

Our attempt then is to transition the pilots that we are training for the UH-1Ns to the Blackhawks. Transition training is a lot different from starting from scratch. So we will use the services of the Spanish helicopter battalion at Fort Rucker, AL, which does train on the Blackhawk helicopter, and it really won't take 18 months to train a pilot. If he can in fact fly a UH-1N, a much shorter period will be required to transition him to the Blackhawk. So this thing may not be as long as it sounded.

Mr. BARR. But eventually Blackhawks will be in both the air force and the army inventories?

General WILHELM. That is correct, sir, and the national police.

Mr. BARR. How many will be going to the CNP?

General WILHELM. Sir, I'd have to defer to State on that. Our target for the armed forces is 44. Let me round that one out. Pete.

Mr. ROMERO. I'm told six.

Mr. BARR. Is there any hesitancy in these Blackhawks going to the three services—in effect, the army, the air force and the national police—in some mix?

Mr. ROMERO. In a different mix than what we've just told you?

Mr. BARR. No, either that mix or some permutation of it.

Mr. ROMERO. I think this is predicated on planning, counter-narcotics battalions and that sort of thing, and I'm not enough of an expert to tell you there should be or could be more here.

Mr. BARR. I'm talking from a policy standpoint.

Mr. ROMERO. No.

General WILHELM. I would agree with that, sir. I think this correctly reflects aviation roles in missions as they're viewed in the Colombian armed forces. Transport is an army mission; armed support is an air force mission; and then, of course, the CNP operates in a law enforcement role. But from a policy standpoint for us, I don't see any implications.

Mr. BARR. We heard earlier and we've heard a lot, General, about the training that the Colombian army has received and is receiving. I presume that we can all agree that we want to see the services down there, particularly the army and the CNP, to operate jointly and understand each other and have joint missions and so forth. Why then hasn't the CNP received the same training we're providing to the army? Wouldn't it be in our best interest to make sure that they're both on the same wavelength and on the same level?

General WILHELM. Sir, the answer to that question is sort of a yes-and-no answer. We trained the first counterdrug battalion in three phases. The first phase was one of their maneuver companies and their specialty platoons, reconnaissance, medical and mortar, their indirect fire capability. The second phase was the remaining two maneuver companies and the headquarters. The third phase was an integration phase, and during that phase the Colombian National Police did provide policemen from the counternarcotics units who did train with the first battalion.

Quite frankly, sir, the cops didn't need the training in the first two phases. A lot of that was individual training and basic field craft required by the soldiers. The policemen already had their specialty training. So I agreed with the Colombians, with General Serrano and General Tapias, that the right time for integration was phase three.

Congressman Mica has mentioned, though—it's been quiet on purpose; we didn't ballyhoo this—the first battalion has been out of garrison twice now, a single-company operation, a two-company operation, in each case with Colombian National Police participation. They've taken down labs, identified transit points, captured base, precursor chemicals, and they've plotted active coca fields which are now targeted for eradication. So, quietly, they got out of garrison. It was a shakedown cruise of sorts, but it was real-world operations. The target folders that they were using were developed in the Colombian Joint Intelligence Center by a combination of soldiers and policemen.

Mr. BARR. OK. So both from an operational standpoint as well and this is basically to all of you, from a policy standpoint, there will be appropriate training provided so that both the army and the CNP receive adequate training; and for joint operations, which we obviously encourage, they will be on the same level eventually?

General WILHELM. Absolutely sir, and really that is one of the cardinal principles in the training we're conducting. We want these forces to be entirely interoperable. We have got a couple of warts right now—

Mr. BARR. When you say "we", that means DOD and State and DEA—everybody?

General WILHELM. DOD, State, DEA, Justice and, importantly, the Colombian Armed Forces and the Colombian National Police. I mentioned we've got a couple of potholes to fill. We ran into some problems with communications interoperability, and we had dissimilar families of radios that had legacy systems that the police and the army had. We're bringing that together now, and we'll solve that very soon. They will be using the Tatteran system that's been bought from Israel.

Mr. BARR. Thank you.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

Mr. Souder, any final questions?

Mr. SOUDER. Yes, I have a couple.

Mr. Ledwith, earlier General McCaffrey—and, in general, it kind of seems to be a pitch right now that we found all this new information about the amount of cocaine coming out of Colombia and that we have revised our past statistics as to the amount of cocaine. Was the DEA surprised?

Mr. LEDWITH. No, sir.

Mr. SOUDER. So you kind of felt that this problem had been building for the last few years?

Mr. LEDWITH. Yes, sir.

Mr. SOUDER. The reason I wondered is because every time I had gone down to Colombia, I had heard that it had been transferring, and both the DEA and others had been telling us. And I wonder, do you have any—want to make any public comments for the record why you feel all of a sudden we are having this big surprise?

Mr. LEDWITH. Well, sir, what—quite honestly, what needed to be done was the scientific work to back up the theory. There was a theory prevalent, as you're probably well aware of, that the math simply didn't work on the amount of seizures versus the availability. This raised certain concerns.

We energized a process by which we tried to evaluate this, and the basis for it is locked in scientific evidence that, in essence, that we conduct similar laboratory operations and we utilize local methods and local practices and make cocaine. From this we make a determination as to the amount of cocaine that can be produced from specific crops, specific areas utilizing certain chemicals and profits that are currently available. And this process is still under way so that the final scientific evidence will not come out till April or May, but clearly the initial indications are that the Colombians have adopted certain methods to the production of cocaine that allow them to exceed the production potential that had been previously decided on.

Mr. SOUDER. I thank you.

I have a theory as well, and my theory is this, that not General McCaffrey, not General Wilhelm or anybody, his predecessors at SOUTHCOM or, for that matter, internarcotics at the State Department, but the theory was that the administration was focused on other parts of the world. We have had kids dying in Indiana because of stuff coming from Colombia for a long time, and it wasn't too hard for our local law enforcement to figure out on the street we were getting increased Colombian heroin and increased Colombian cocaine. That the question is, if we have thousands of Americans dying because of drug abuse, why weren't these scientific methods used earlier unless there was an overarching concern, which is what I believe has happened, to our war on narcotics?

About the Balkans, as we went with now Speaker Hastert over into the Saudi Arabia and Operation Southern Watch and Northern Watch, we heard from the commanders there that they don't believe they need to be spending that many dollars on what they're doing. They know whenever Iraq goes up in the air and they know when they come down, and when we go up that we're spending millions and even billions of dollars annually over there and in the Balkans diverting from this, and we wanted to kind of look the other way.

And that now, all of a sudden, we realize we're about to potentially lose Colombia, and everybody is focusing, and it's time to get our resources together. I'm glad everybody is on board, but pardon some of us for being a little skeptical about—not about the people who have been involved in it, but about the overarching priority.

Now, Ambassador Romero, I have a couple of questions for you. One is that I think—and I want to make it clear, I think General Serrano and the Colombian National Police are heroes. I think it is the right approach what they're taking in the military, the defense minister and others, and I support that.

But I also want to take as much as possible at face value the statements that say we're not going to undermine what indeed are the units that are already vetted, that have had a track record, that have public support.

General Serrano's book right now on the drug wars is the No. 1 book in Colombia, outselling Marquez and any other author there. So we have a national hero. We have a process. But my understanding is that on Friday we were told there will be no Buffalo transport planes for the CNP because the State Department didn't feel it wasn't necessary even though it was in our report language that 15, not 25, Super Hueys—we appropriated for 25 and only 15 are going, and that our latest report shows that 6 of the 25 CNP pilot school slots went to the Army. Now, why wouldn't we increase the number of slots? Why would we take CNP slots?

And I wondered in fact to some degree this does seem like a zero sum game, that I'm for building up the defense ministry efforts on antinarcotics but not if we can't get what even we've already said we wanted to get to CNP, and now pilot slots are taken.

Mr. ROMERO. Congressman Souder, I am not responsible for running the operations on our counternarcotics program down in Colombia; and I think it is unfortunate that Randy Beers, who is in

Colombia today, and is not here to answer that question, but I will certainly take it back to him.

Let me just mention one thing and that is that, even before any idea of a supplemental or anything came to mind, we had been pushing the military and the police to collaborate. This is something that Charlie Wilhelm has been working on for a couple of years. We at State mention it every time we're there.

There's been good progress, but not enough. There needs to be a whole lot more. They need to put aside their rivalries and their traditions and that sort of thing and work together, and hopefully they will under Plan Colombia.

One last thing is that you can only do what the Colombian Government is ready to accept. And I think before June of this past year the Colombian Government was not ready to accept that they needed to make a bold move and to integrate their efforts and integrate their forces and reach out to the international community, and to do a comprehensive integrated plan like they put together and like we support.

Finally they have come around to that, and better late than never.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Chairman, if I could ask one more.

Mr. MICA. One more final question.

Mr. SOUDER. Funny you should bring that up, because that was the other question that I wanted to ask you.

If your—and I apologize for missing your formal statement; all I have here in front of me is the draft statement which may have had some changes. But you refer to Colombia must reestablish its authority over narcotics-producing sanctuaries. In your written testimony, you don't mention the FARC per se. Partly what President Pastrana has done, in my opinion is, he's followed Christ's admonition: He's turned his cheek and he's turned his cheek and he's negotiated with the FARC and he's negotiated with the FARC.

Do you believe it's possible to reestablish its authority over narcotics-producing sanctuaries without defeating the FARC in those areas?

Mr. ROMERO. Well, I would hope that at some point in time the FARC would see the writing on the wall and decide that this is the best time to negotiate before the tide starts to turn and the government starts to reestablish a presence or, in many cases, establish for the first time a presence in many of these areas. That I think is the hope of President Pastrana and the Colombian people, but it remains to be seen.

Mr. SOUDER. Do you believe, if they don't see the light, they should be defeated? Are they inextricably intertwined with the narcotics protection?

Mr. ROMERO. I think that that provides about 50 percent of their financing. The other 50 percent comes from kidnapping and extortion and that sort of thing, war taxes that they exert, even on Venezuelans who happen to live on the Venezuelan side of the border.

I think that the program is designed to take away primary sources of income at the same time that we cut back not only on production, but also put a lot of emphasis—we haven't really discussed this—on interdiction. I think if all of those pieces work with regaining the control of their territory, not just militarily but using

the police, using the civilian entities to come in behind them, I think it can work. But it is not going to happen tomorrow. This is a long-term commitment.

Mr. SOUDER. So you think it is, to some degree, more of a lobbying effort than a military effort to defeat them?

Mr. ROMERO. To defeat them militarily would require probably four—structures and mobility and all of the things that we're talking about, probably several years to do.

Mr. SOUDER. So do you disagree that only 3 percent of the public support the FARC?

Mr. ROMERO. I agree with that. I don't think there's any more. I think 3 percent is probably exaggerated. But you're talking about a land mass that they operate in that is huge, with no infrastructure. It is not like you can get in the cop car, drive down the street and find the culprits. These are people whose main way of transportation is through river networks and are in a land mass that is absolutely huge.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. SOUDER. I want to thank him for his comments. And I also want to say that I don't believe there's anybody more genuinely committed to trying to negotiate than President Pastrana; and it hasn't been working very well, and we need to show some force.

Mr. MICA. I have one final question. Mr. Gilman has left, but he asked if I could ask this to Ambassador Romero.

Could you please tell this subcommittee if nondrug-related offenses are covered by the United States extradition treaty with Colombia? For example, is murder and kidnapping included in the treaty as extraditable offenses? Could you comment on this?

Mr. ROMERO. I would have to go back and look at the extradition treaty. It is fairly new.

But I do know in the case of this—in the latest case of statements made by President Pastrana, I think there is a clause in the Colombia constitution which prohibits extradition of Colombian nationals for crimes committed in Colombia. Now, I don't know whether—

Mr. MICA. I have a copy of the extradition treaty, and murder—assault with intent to commit murder is included in that. But I wish you would elaborate for the record. And we'll provide without objection a copy of this, provided by Mr. Gilman into the record, and we'll wait for your response.

I thank the panel. This is an extremely important topic. You all play key roles in making certain that whatever package is approved by Congress is effective and does what we intend. As you see, there's some difference of opinion, but I think everybody is trying to get to the same point. And we thank you for your participation.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Chairman, if I could, I have no more questions for the panel. I know they have been very patient and so have you.

I still have some concerns over what seems to be a strong preference for training for the military as opposed to the CMP, based on some information that we have received. Could we do some followup letters to the witnesses perhaps?

Mr. MICA. Absolutely. And I also anticipate, not next week, but the week after, to ask or subpoena Mr. Pickering and Mr. Beers and—

Mrs. MINK. Robert White.

Mr. MICA [continuing]. And a witness from the minority, former Ambassador Robert White to appear before this subcommittee, so we can get firsthand information about what's going on there, and additional background that you're requesting.

Mr. BARR. Thank you.

Mr. MICA. I thank each of you, again, for your participation and working with this panel. You're excused at this time.

I'll call our third and final panel. Our third panel consists of three witnesses. The first is Ambassador Morris Busby. He's the former United States Ambassador to Colombia, and he's now president of BGI International. The second witness is Ambassador Ted McNamara. And Ambassador McNamara was the former United States Ambassador, also to Colombia, and he's now with the Council of the Americas. The third witness this afternoon is Mr. Lawrence Meriage, and he is vice president of Occidental Oil and Gas Corp.

We have all three of our witnesses I believe here. And once again this is an investigations and oversight subcommittee of the Committee on Government Reform. It is our custom to swear in our witnesses. We also would ask that any lengthy statements or material, by request, be added to the record.

If you would please stand and be sworn, gentlemen. Raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mrs. MINK. Mr. Chairman, may I just extend a special welcome to Ambassador Morris Busby, to this subcommittee. And the reason for my particular pleasure in extending this individual welcome is that Ambassador Busby and I worked together in the State Department in the Office of Ocean and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs—very much apart from what we're discussing today.

But it is really a pleasure to have this opportunity, Ambassador Busby, to welcome you specially.

Mr. MICA. I said, knowing both of you, that's scary. But I was just kidding.

Thank you for welcoming the Ambassador, and I'm going to recognize him first. He's been before our panel before. We appreciate his insight and knowledge about Colombia and about our antinarcotics effort in that region.

Ambassador, you're welcome again and recognized.

STATEMENTS OF MORRIS BUSBY, FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO COLOMBIA AND PRESIDENT, B.G.I. INTERNATIONAL; TED McNAMARA, FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO COLOMBIA, COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAS; AND LAWRENCE MERIAGE, VICE PRESIDENT, OCCIDENTAL PETROLEUM CORP.

Mr. BUSBY. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much, and if you'll allow me, Congresswoman Mink, thank you very much for your kind words. One of the things that I was most looking forward to when I was invited to testify here today was the opportunity to say

hello to you. It was a great pleasure to work with you during those years.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you and the committee for the opportunity to appear here today. As you know personally, I have very strong feelings about Colombia. You and I and Congressman Souder and others traveled to Colombia together. I have always been inspired by the enormous bravery of the Colombian people as they've struggled against the violence that has engulfed their country. It is a very special honor for me now, as a private citizen, to offer you my opinions.

Colombia policy has been a difficult proposition for the United States for the last two decades. Although the country has always been violent, the emergence of large-scale narcotics trafficking has complicated our relationship enormously. Colombia should occupy a high priority in our foreign policy and national security thinking. Unfortunately, that's not always been the case, and it is only recently that the administration seems to have awakened to the real dangers facing Colombia and the attendant risk to United States interests.

Over the last 5 to 6 years the security situation in Colombia has dramatically worsened. The United States and Colombia engaged for much of this period in an unfortunate political skirmish brought on by the Presidency of Ernesto Samper. President Pastrana inherited a terrible situation, which has not improved. The guerilla groups are stronger than they have ever been and the government seems to have lost the confidence of the people. More importantly, the Colombian military and police are being challenged directly by the FARC and the ELN with mixed results, which is a major shift in power from years past.

Three years ago yesterday I had the honor to testify before this committee on the same subject. At that time, I urged the administration to support Colombian counternarcotics in spite of our distaste for Mr. Samper. I also warned that if we failed to recognize the role of the so-called "insurgent groups" in the drug problem, we would fail in our counternarcotics efforts.

Sadly, the situation in Colombia is worse than ever. The FARC and the ELN are stronger and better financed than they have ever been.

Although the situation on the ground has worsened, the policy dilemma for the United States is no different. The guerillas are an integral part of the drug problem in Colombia, and it's naive to think we can divorce the two issues. There will never be a cessation of drugs coming out of Colombia so long as the insurgency is viable. You can't solve the counternarcotics problem in isolation.

I appear here today to once again support increased levels of aid and assistance to the Government of Colombia. It's clearly in the United States' interest to help Colombia avoid a slide into instability and chaos.

Please don't misunderstand or think that I am here advocating war. I am a vigorous proponent of a negotiated solution to the conflict in Colombia. A successful negotiation is the only realistic and moral outcome to this tragic conflict. But until both sides have a genuine interest and need for a negotiated solution, or until one

side is so overwhelmingly strong as to force negotiations, the war is going to go on.

What is needed in Colombia now is a significant change in the actual situation on the ground. Only then can real negotiations take place. The package of aid currently before Congress could cause that change to take place.

However, I would like to sound some cautionary notes which temper my support for the administration's package. For years, the issues of drugs and guerrillas in Colombia have been so inter-related as to be virtually indistinguishable. The FARC and ELN are an integral part of the narcotics problem. So long as we refuse to recognize that fact, our counternarcotics efforts will fail. This has been self-evident for some years, even though through several administrations and Congresses we have pretended otherwise.

We have been able to delink the policy issues surrounding drugs and guerrillas for two reasons. First, the Colombian Government was capable of keeping the guerrilla problem under control and coca production was largely outside Colombia. Second, we didn't want to admit that we were involved in a situation that had overtones of Vietnam and El Salvador. To do so would have reopened the painful debates of the past, and in those circumstances, we didn't need to do that. The deteriorating situation in Colombia now dictates that we help that beleaguered government, but we should be clear as to what we're doing.

I am very much in favor of bolstering the infrastructure of the Colombian military police and judicial system in order to reverse the downward slide in the security situation and force the guerrillas to the negotiating table. But this aid package is not going to stop the flow of drugs from Colombia to the United States in the near term, and we shouldn't pretend that it will. Rather, it will help stabilize the situation so that counterdrug efforts can again become effective.

We must avoid the kind of divisive debates that we had in the past. I urge the Congress and the administration to establish some agreed-upon measures of effectiveness. Everybody should understand clearly what the desired outcome of this assistance is meant to be. Not to do so will invite continual debate and misunderstanding as we go forward.

Mr. Chairman, I have studied Plan Colombia. I don't want to be harsh, but it seems to be more a justification for receiving aid from the United States and others than a real prescription for success. I have known President Pastrana and many of his advisers for a decade, and I have the greatest admiration for them personally. However, I am not impressed with the manner in which the Government of Colombia has handled the situation, in particular the negotiations with the FARC and the ELN.

Real negotiating leverage comes from power, political capital, and intellectual toughness. It seems to me that the Colombian Government has squandered its negotiating advantage in a futile attempt to simply get negotiations going and without having a real strategy in place.

I think it will be important for Congress and the administration to carefully monitor how this aid is used to ensure that it is not wasted in supporting a peace process that is haphazard.

I have long believed that a bipartisan approach is necessary if we are ever to successfully assault the problem of narcotics. I also strongly believe that the only lasting and true solution to our drug problem is to raise a generation of Americans who do not have this terrible taste for drugs. Until that day arrives, we must continue to fight drug demand in this country while simultaneously attacking drugs at the source.

I consider increased aid to Colombia as a central part of any successful source country strategy in Latin America.

Mr. Chairman, you asked my opinion as to what we are facing in Colombia. With my previous remarks as a prologue, I'll tell you that I am not encouraged. The FARC is a complex blend of terrorists, ideologues, drug lords, and kidnappers that draw support and manpower from poor farmers as well as hardened criminals. I see no evidence that the FARC leadership is seriously interested in a negotiated solution, nor do I believe the United States and Colombia clearly understand what the insurgents really want, if anything. In my worst moments, I wonder whether the Colombian peace process is really just political theater.

Mr. Chairman, we're facing a very dangerous and explosive crisis in our hemisphere, which if not given policy priority and handled proactively and with intelligence, could degenerate with tragic consequences for the Colombian people and for our interests in this region. I strongly urge the Congress to approve a substantial package of assistance to Colombia. I strongly urge this committee and the Congress at large to exercise strenuous and intensive oversight of Colombia policy. And I strongly urge that you act quickly because I fear that we are losing one of our best allies in the hemisphere.

Mr. Chairman I want to thank you once again for the opportunity to appear here today. I'll be more than happy to answer your questions and those of your colleagues.

Mr. MICA. Thank you. We'll withhold questions until we have heard from the other two panelists.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Busby follows:]

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MORRIS D. BUSBY
Before the House Sub-Committee on National Security,
International Affairs and Criminal Justice

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you and the committee for the opportunity to appear here today. As you know personally Mr. Chairman, I have very strong feelings about Colombia. I have always been inspired by the enormous bravery of the Colombian people as they have struggled against the violence that has engulfed their country. It is a special honor for me to offer my opinions about what we face in Colombia.

Colombia policy has been a difficult proposition for the United States for the last two decades. Although the country has always been violent, the emergence of large-scale narcotics trafficking has complicated our relationship enormously.

Colombia should occupy a high priority in our foreign policy and national-security thinking. Unfortunately that has not always been the case and it is only recently that this administration seems to have awakened to the real dangers facing Colombia and the attendant risks to United States interests.

Over the last five to six years, the security situation in Colombia has dramatically worsened. The United States and Colombia engaged for much of this period in an unfortunate political skirmish brought on by the presidency of Ernesto Samper. President Pastrana inherited a terrible situation, which has not improved. The guerilla groups are stronger than they have ever been, and the government seems to have lost the confidence of the people. More importantly, the Colombian military and police are being challenged directly by the FARC and ELN, with mixed results. This is a major shift in power from years past.

Three years ago yesterday I testified before this very committee on the same subject. At that time, I urged that the administration support Colombian counter-narcotics in spite of our distaste for Mr. Samper. I also warned that if we failed to recognize the role of the so-called insurgent groups in the drug problem, we would fail in our counter-narcotics efforts. Sadly, the situation in Colombia is worse than ever. The FARC and ELN are stronger and better financed than they have ever been.

Although the situation on the ground has worsened, the policy dilemma for the United States is no different. The guerillas are an integral part of the drug problem in Colombia and it is naïve to think we can divorce the two issues. There will never be a cessation of drugs coming out of Colombia so long as the insurgency is viable. You cannot solve the counter narcotics problem in isolation.

I appear here today to once more strongly support increased levels of aid and assistance to the government of Colombia. It is clearly in the United States interest to help Colombia avoid a slide into instability and chaos.

Please do not misunderstand or think that I am here advocating war. I am a vigorous proponent of a negotiated solution to the conflict in Colombia. A successful negotiation is the only realistic and moral outcome to this tragic conflict. But until both sides have a genuine interest and need for a negotiated solution, or until one side is so overwhelmingly strong as to force negotiations, the war will go on.

What is needed in Colombia is a significant change in the actual situation on the ground. Only then can real negotiations take place. The package of aid currently before the Congress could cause that change to take place.

However, I would like to sound some cautionary notes, which temper my support for the administration's package.

For years the issues of drugs and guerrillas in Colombia have been so interrelated as to be virtually indistinguishable. The FARC and ELN are an integral part of the narcotics problem. So long as we refuse to recognize that fact our counter-narcotics efforts are doomed to fail. This has been self-evident for some years yet through several administrations and Congresses we have pretended otherwise.

We have been able to de-link the policy issues surrounding drugs and guerrillas for two reasons. First, the Colombian government was capable of keeping the guerilla problem under control and coca production was largely outside Colombia. Second, we did not want to admit that we were involved in a situation that had overtones of Vietnam and El Salvador. To do so would have re-opened the painful debates of the past, and in the last analysis we did not need to do so.

The deteriorating situation in Colombia now dictates that we help that beleaguered government, but we should be clear as to what we are doing. I am very much in favor of bolstering the infrastructure of the Colombian military, police and judicial system in order to reverse the downward slide in the security situation, and force the guerrillas to the negotiating table. But this aid package is not going to stop the flow of drugs from Colombia to the United States in the near term and we should not pretend that it will. Rather it will help stabilize the situation so that counter-drug efforts can again be effective.

We must avoid the kind of divisive debates we have had in the past. I urge the Congress and the administration to establish some agreed upon measures of effectiveness. Everyone should understand clearly what the desired outcome of this assistance is meant to be. Not to do so will invite continual debate and misunderstanding as we go forward.

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Real negotiating leverage comes from power, political capital and intellectual toughness. It seems to me that the Colombian government has squandered its negotiating advantage in a futile attempt simply to get negotiations going, and without having a real strategy in place. It will be important for the Congress and the administration to carefully monitor how this aid is used to ensure that it is not wasted supporting a peace process that is ill-conceived or haphazard.

I have long believed that a true bipartisan approach is necessary if we are ever to successfully assault the problem of narcotics. I also strongly believe that the only lasting and true solution to our drug problem is to raise a generation of Americans who do not have this terrible taste for drugs. Until that day arrives, we must continue to fight drug demand in this country while simultaneously attacking drugs at the source. I consider increased aid to Colombia as a central part of any successful source country strategy in Latin America.

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Mr. Chairman, we are facing a very dangerous and explosive crisis in our hemisphere, which if not given policy priority, and handled proactively and with intelligence, could degenerate with tragic consequences for the Colombian people and for our interests in this region. I strongly urge the Congress to approve a substantial package of assistance to Colombia. I strongly urge this committee and the Congress at large to exercise strenuous and intensive oversight of Colombia policy. Moreover, I strongly urge that you act quickly, for I fear that we are losing one of our best allies in this hemisphere.

I want to again thank you allowing me to appear here this morning. I would be more than happy to entertain questions if you or your colleagues so wish.

CONGRESSIONAL STATEMENT
OF THOMAS E. MCNAMARA, PRESIDENT,
THE COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAS
BEFORE
HOUSE SUB-COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG TRAFFICKING,
AND HUMAN RESOURCES

FEBRUARY 15, 2000

I am pleased to appear before this committee to speak in favor of a more robust United States policy of assistance to Colombia at a time of great need in that country. I was privileged to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Colombia from 1988 to 1991 during an earlier crisis. Indeed, that crisis was at least as severe a crisis as the current one. Then, Colombia faced a massive narco-terror campaign of bombings, assassinations, and kidnappings in the cities and the countryside. The campaign was designed to terrorize the government and population into submission to the malevolent dictates of the Medellín drug mafia. It failed; Colombia defeated that threat with U.S. assistance and democracy was preserved.

Before going to Bogota as Ambassador I was told by the U.S. "experts" on Colombia that the government would collapse in the face of the threat. I was advised to pack only for a few months stay, for I would be back in Washington before the end of 1988. I did not believe those dire predictions then, and I do not believe similar ones made today.

Colombia can confront the current narco-guerrilla threat. As in 1989, however, it will do so more successfully if it has the moral, political, and economic support of the United States and its other neighbors. We gave that support in 1989; we should do so, again, today. The media have given much attention to the strength of the guerrillas, and to their control of 40% of Colombia's territory. Let's be clear. The guerrillas are not close to taking power in Colombia. In fact, were it not for the great wealth accumulated from their criminal activities, the guerrillas would not be the threat that they are. The areas where they are dominant are areas where few Colombians live. In the country as a whole they have little popular support. Because of their wealth, and military strength, however, the threat is serious, and it must be faced before it becomes worse.

Colombia and all of its neighbors must face it, together. That includes the United States. This is, after all, our neighborhood, and we cannot move out of it. There are five main reasons why it is in the national interests of the U.S. to assist Colombia.

- First, however bad we may think the situation is in Colombia today, it will become significantly worse if the narcos and guerrillas increase their power base inside Colombia. A weak and deteriorating government in Colombia means increased instability and less cooperation in stemming the flow of drugs out of Colombia. This problem of narcotics trafficking in Colombia is a problem we

share with Colombia. We share it in two senses: we have our own very serious drug problem; and we have helped cause Colombia's problem through our insatiable appetite for drugs.

- Second, the problem has already spread beyond Colombia's borders. Traffickers and guerrillas smuggle drugs, guns, money, and other contraband, for example, to and from the guerrilla zones in the jungles bordering Panama. Increased Colombian violence and criminality already seriously affect the adjacent states of Panama, Venezuela, Brazil, Peru, and Ecuador. It is in U.S. interests to contain this instability before it becomes worse.
- Third, the guerrillas and other narcos are not Robin Hoods or Boy Scouts, and they certainly are not supporters of democracy. In Latin America Colombia has one of the longest and strongest democratic traditions in Latin America, and one of its strongest entrepreneurial classes. We should have no doubt that our national goals for strengthening democracy, human rights, and market economies in Latin America would suffer a serious setback if this major country on the rim of the Caribbean is further destabilized and weakened by violent, anti-democratic forces.
- Fourth, we cannot hope to maintain our leadership in this hemisphere without facing, together with our hemispheric neighbors, severe challenges such as in 1989, and such as this one. It is in our national interests to lead other states, through multilateral and bilateral efforts, to assist Colombia and others suffering from the curse of drug trafficking.
- Fifth, the U.S. government, the international financial institutions, and the private sector have invested in the country, which is one of our largest trading partners in the region. It should be strongly emphasized up front that helping Colombia to work out of the current economic depression is as important to U.S. interests as providing security assistance.

* * *

With respect to the guerrillas that have plagued Colombia for over half a century, I believe it is time to call a spade a spade. The destruction of the Medellin and Cali cartels (1990-95) removed the curtain behind which the guerrillas hid their narco-trafficking. It, also, opened up new narco opportunities for them. Since the drying up of Soviet and Cuban funding in the 1980s, the FARC and other guerrillas have increasingly raised money by relying on kidnapping, extortion, and narcotics trafficking, among other criminal activities. Colombia's guerrillas are heavily involved in narcotics. The FARC leadership traffics in drugs in Colombia; they "tax" other traffickers; they protect the industry from police and military raids. Meanwhile the FARC peasant troops and low-level officials cultivate and process cocaine for added income. According to their

Marxist logic and morality, drug trafficking is legitimate, since it weakens the enemy and supports the revolution.

Likewise, the extensive network of "paramilitary," or "self-defense" groups owes much to narcotrafficking. Many of these bands have been funded by trafficker organizations (and by legitimate rural farmers and ranchers) because of the military's inability to defend against the guerrillas in rural areas. The paramilitaries, also, engage in narcotrafficking and are deeply dependant on that income. If one adds to all this, the narco corruption of Colombia's legitimate institutions, it is apparent that narcotrafficking is at the base of much of the violence and corruption in the country. It is also apparent how complex are the relationships involved. In some areas the guerrillas and mafias cooperate, while in others, they fight each other.

This highlights another aspect that must be recognized. Most of the violence, corruption, and human rights crimes in Colombia stem from the weakness of the state, not its strength. The rise of the paramilitaries demonstrates this. Unlike in Central America, where governments organized, supplied, and supported the "paras," Colombian "paras" have become powerful because the military has been weak. They do not depend on government support; they are independently organized and supported. The judicial system is another example of a horribly weak institution whose failures have encouraged the "private justice" and "impunity" that result in human rights violations. The corruption and venality of the Congress is another example of a disgracefully weak institution.

* * *

To understand the situation in which the Pastrana government finds itself today, we need to look at what it inherited from government that preceded it. Today's economic depression is largely due to the disastrous economic policies of President Ernesto Samper, who left office 18 months ago. Although it was slow to initiate the necessary corrections, the Pastrana government now has a solid strategy for economic recovery. Pastrana has an energetic, well-qualified, economic team that is following a long, Colombian tradition of sound fiscal and monetary policy. The programs with the international financial institutions should bring back economic growth this year. Would that the prospects on the security front were as positive.

The weak security position that Pastrana inherited was, also, due to Samper's security mismanagement. Samper did not follow up the successful initiatives against the mafias and the guerrillas that his predecessors, Barco and Gaviria, undertook in the late 1980s and early 1990s. He spent all his energies struggling to stay in power after his corrupt campaign was exposed. A reinvigorated peace process was the keystone of Pastrana's election platform and got him more support from Washington than any Colombian president in memory. Similarly, he engendered great hopes among Colombians for peace. Unfortunately, the peace process has not fared as well as his economic efforts.

Under pressure from Washington, Pastrana announced a “three-legged” strategy for peace: strengthening the military, providing social welfare in rebel regions (Plan Colombia) and negotiations with the guerrillas. This was a reasonable strategy, but it was not implemented. The first leg has not received the priority it deserves. The second leg, Plan Colombia, is virtually moribund. Only the negotiations have received constant, but not always wise, attention and priority. A three-legged policy with one leg weak and a second one broken is a precarious base for peace. Given Colombia’s economic situation, repairing these two legs will require U.S. resources.

In addressing the question of military assistance the U.S. needs to understand that without a strong, professional, effective military in Colombia there will be no peace. The guerrillas will not negotiate, until they are convinced they will suffer military losses. Fortunately, the Colombian military is capable of modernizing itself and becoming an effective, disciplined force. Our assistance can make the difference. I stress that there should be no U.S. combatants in Colombia. I would oppose such a role – as would most Colombians. But, for success we must devote a significant amount of our assistance to the military and police forces, including their efforts against the guerrillas. Military aid should promote human rights, the rule of law, and reform of the military justice system.

In addressing the overall strategy the U.S. needs to place particular emphasis on the reestablishment of justice in Colombia. There can be no peace in a democracy without justice. And, there is no justice in Colombia. I would give a very high priority to the reform of the justice system. That is not something that we can just throw money at and be successful, but we can make great improvements. Indeed, I would consider it as a “fourth leg” in an overall strategy, giving it equal status with the other three.

* * *

Although there is no doubt of Pastrana’s commitment to peace, there is good reason to doubt the FARC’s. Pastrana’s every gesture has been met by FARC arrogance, intimidation, terror, military action or, at best, non-cooperation. The FARC leaders have evaluated the “objective conditions” (in the Marxist sense of that term) and concluded, correctly, that they are the stronger and can benefit from their new negotiating tactic, while continuing their usual guerrilla activities cost-free. In return for simply coming to the negotiating table they now dominate a large zone in eastern Colombia. They freely conduct military operations from it, and retreat into it when necessary. With no ceasefire the FARC freely operate, while insisting on more concessions from the government. This was an early mistake of the government. To get the FARC to the table, they gave too much, and got too little.

Yet, since neither side can gain military victory, any solution must be political. The Pastrana government, with two and a half years left, appears determined to press for

peace within that period. The FARC have a much longer perspective and can wait, while gathering in benefits that come their way. To make substantial progress towards peace there will have to be some policy adjustments. I will list several.

- Pastrana has set a goal of a full peace agreement during his term of office. Given guerrilla intransigence, this is not a realistic goal in the time remaining to him. To retain this goal will give the FARC more incentive to stall and place the pressure for “success” on Pastrana. A less ambitious goal will be a more successful one. If Pastrana can get agreement on part of the peace framework, he will have done Colombia and its hemispheric neighbors a great benefit.
- The domestic political base underpinning the government’s peace strategy is narrow and weak, even within Pastrana’s own party. And the guerrillas know it. Pastrana needs to broaden that support to include a wide spectrum from the country’s main political parties. There are many, now excluded, who could give additional strength and cohesion to his strategy. Pastrana should reach out to them. His negotiating team is weak, inward looking, and lacking in strategic vision. There will be little success without major changes in the team.
- The United States must state publicly that it understands that in Colombia fighting narco-traffickers means fighting guerrillas. This will give a great boost to the morale of the population, and force the guerrillas to negotiate in good faith.
- In the U.S. and in Colombia there is inadequate attention paid to the need for settlement of the paramilitary problem. It is time to rid Colombia of these criminal bands. The government needs to address this issue early. The U.S. can help because of its experience gained in the Central American negotiations. Some combination of prosecution, dissolution, and incorporation into a disciplined military structure should be seriously considered. Without a strategy for solving the paramilitary problem, there will be no settlement with the guerrillas, and no assurance that the government will regain control of rural areas.
- Colombia and the U.S. must involve the other neighboring states more than heretofore. Obviously, the states bordering Colombia have suffered from the instability in Colombia. They and some of the other large states in the region (Mexico, Argentina, etc.) will benefit from a successful peace process in Colombia. There is a need, inter alia, for a credible international verification and monitoring organization with an effective mandate in every area and zone of the country. It is especially important that it have wide Latin American participation.
- The economic depression that Colombia has gone through has further weakened the government. We should, at least, continue the Andean trade preferences for Colombia. Preferably, we should give Colombia the benefits of the Caribbean Basin Initiative. Neither of these two steps would cost the U.S. much (they are “off budget”), but they would be a great benefit to Colombia.

In sum, the U.S. needs to have a proactive policy of engagement toward Colombia as we enter the new century. Such a policy will strengthen legitimate democratic government in Bogota and give it the tools to force the guerrillas to negotiate, and to reduce the scourge of drugtrafficking. A four-part approach such as the one outlined here will, in my opinion, be the best approach for bringing peace to Colombia, for safeguarding its democratic institutions, and for protecting our economic and political national interests.

Mr. MICA. Next I'll recognize Ambassador Ted McNamara, who is now with the Council of the Americas, and a former Ambassador of the United States to Colombia.

Welcome, sir, and you're recognized.

Mr. MCNAMARA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will try and summarize the statement if I can.

Mr. MICA. We can put the entire statement in the record, without objection.

Mr. MCNAMARA. First of all, I'm very pleased to appear before this subcommittee to speak in favor of a more robust United States policy of assistance to Colombia at a time of great need in that country. I was privileged to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Colombia from 1988 to 1991 during an earlier crisis in Colombia. Indeed, that crisis was at least as severe as the crisis that we're facing today there.

Then, Colombia faced a massive narcoterror campaign of bombings, assassinations, kidnappings and both in the cities and in the countryside. The campaign was designed to terrorize the government and the population into submission to the malevolent dictates of the Medellin drug mafia. It failed. Colombia defeated the mafia in Medellin with United States assistance and democracy and democratic institutions were preserved.

Many people think today that it's impossible for Colombia to face up to the challenge it now faces. I didn't believe back then that it was impossible to face up to those challenges, and I don't believe today that we're in a crisis that is so dire that Colombia will fail. Colombia can confront the current narco-guerrilla threat, but as in 1989 it will do so much more successfully if it has the moral, political, economic and other support of the United States and of its neighbors.

This is not a bilateral problem. This is a regional and hemispheric problem. The media have given much attention to the strength of the guerrillas, to their control of 40 percent of Colombian territory, supposedly. But let's be clear. The guerrillas are not close to taking power in Colombia. In fact, if it were not for the great wealth accumulated from their criminal activities, the guerrillas would not be the threat that they are today. The areas they dominate, while large, have few Colombian citizens in them. The country, as a whole, gives them very little popular support, as we've heard earlier.

I won't go into the five reasons that I have listed in my statement, why I think it is in United States national interests to assist Colombia. Let me just say briefly that I think it is in our national interest because however bad the situation is now, if we don't assist Colombia, it's going to get worse.

Second, that Colombia's borders have already been transgressed by this crisis and it is no longer just a Colombian crisis, it is spilling over into the neighboring countries.

Third, we should not doubt that these guerrillas and the other narcos, with whom we're facing this crisis, have their own interests in mind and not the best interests of the United States.

The democratically elected Colombian Government is our friend and our ally in this effort. And we should be under no illusions that our national goals for strengthening democracy, human rights

and market economies in Latin America would suffer a serious setback if Colombia were to suffer continued instability.

Let me address the question of the guerrillas for just a moment. With respect to these guerrillas that have plagued Colombia for half a century, I believe it is time to call a spade a spade. The destruction of the Medellin and Cali cartels in the late 1980's and early 1990's removed a curtain behind which the guerrillas had hidden their narcotrafficking. It also opened up new narcotrafficking opportunities for them.

Since the drying up of Soviet and Cuban funding in the 1980's, the FARC and other guerrillas have increasingly raised money by relying on kidnapping, extortion and narcotrafficking, among other criminal activities. Colombia's guerrillas are heavily involved in narcotics. The FARC leadership traffics in drugs inside Colombia, they tax other traffickers, they protect the narcotics industry from the police and military raids. That means they're narcotraffickers. Meanwhile, the FARC peasant troops and low-level officials cultivate and process the cocaine for added personal income. And that, of course, also leads to the wealth and power of the FARC and the other guerrilla outfits. According to their Marxist logic, there's nothing wrong with it. It's perfectly legitimate since it weakens the enemy and supports the revolution.

Let me address briefly the paramilitaries which have received quite a bit of attention at this hearing. The extensive network of paramilitaries, or self-defense groups, owes much to narcotrafficking. Many of these bands were created and funded by narcotrafficking organizations as well as by legitimate farmers and ranchers who were concerned at the inability of the military to protect them from the guerrillas.

The paramilitaries also engage in narcotrafficking and are deeply dependent on that as a source of income. As a result, the combination of the guerrillas and the paramilitaries, you have two military organizations in the country which are richer, better equipped, and more capable of conducting military operations than the Colombian military itself. It's apparent that there's a very complex set of relationships involving these organizations. In some areas the narcotrafficking organizations cooperate with the guerrillas, and in other parts and in other areas of the country they fight them.

And this highlights another aspect of the situation in Colombia that we need to recognize. Most of the violence, corruption, and human rights crimes in Colombia stem from the weakness of the state, not from its excessive strength. The rise of the paramilitaries demonstrates this. Unlike in Central America where governments organized, supplied and supported the paras, or the paramilitaries, the Colombian paramilitaries have become powerful because the military has become weak. The paramilitaries do not depend upon the government for their source of materiel and for their support. They are independently organized and they are independently supported. They work sometimes with the government military officials in the regions, but for the most part they have their own agenda and go about their own activities.

Another example of weak government is the judicial system, which has been weak for many, many years and tried to improve it over the course of the last few years. There have been some im-

provements. But the impunity that most criminals in Colombia enjoy leads to a private justice that encourages things like paramilitary organizations to arise.

In the corruption and venality of the Congress of Colombia is another example of a disgracefully weak institution.

I think, as has been said here by many of the witnesses, that we have to understand that President Pastrana came into the Presidency in a very weak position. Economically, he was weak because his predecessor, President Samper, practiced disastrous economic policies. After a rather hesitant start, it looks like President Pastrana has put in place a very good team, a very solid economic program, and there is some hope for a very positive outcome in the course of the next year to 3 years on the economic front.

Unfortunately, on the security side, President Pastrana has also inherited a very difficult and weak position. The mismanagement during Samper years, the lack of attention to the proper funding of military, and even police activities during that period has led to a weakened position for the Colombian Government as it faces the narcotics traffickers and the narco-guerrillas.

Under pressure from Washington, President Pastrana announced a three-legged strategy for peace. One was strengthening the military, the second leg was providing a social welfare program called Plan Colombia, and the third was negotiating with the guerrillas. It was a reasonable strategy, but it was never implemented. The first leg has not received the priority it deserves; the second leg, Plan Colombia, is virtually moribund. Only the negotiations have received constant, but not always wise attention and priority.

A three-legged policy in which one leg is weak, the second one is broken, and the third one is somewhat hesitant is a precarious base on which to build a peace. Given Colombia's economic situation, repairing the two legs that are in dire need of repair will require United States resources. In addressing the question of military assistance, I think that the United States needs to understand once and for all that without a strong professional and effective military in Colombia there will be no peace in Colombia.

The guerrillas will not negotiate until they're convinced they will suffer military losses. Fortunately the Colombian military is capable of modernizing itself and becoming a disciplined force. It did modernize itself to some extent and it met the challenge in 1989 through about 1993 when Samper came on the scene.

Mr. MICA. Ambassador, if you could, begin to conclude because I want to give Mr. Meriage about 5 or 6 minutes.

Mr. MCNAMARA. Let me move then to the main points, I think, where we're going to have to see some adjustment by President Pastrana. Some of these were mentioned by Ambassador Busby.

First, I think that the idea of a full peace agreement during the Presidency of President Pastrana is not a realistic goal, and it will simply encourage the guerrillas not to negotiate. I think President Pastrana should attempt to advance the peace process, get a partial peace, if possible, and leave it to his predecessor to come to a final conclusion. There is not enough time in the 2½ years he has left to negotiate a full peace.

Second, the domestic political base which is the underpinning for the government's peace strategy is very narrow and very weak at

this point. Even within Pastrana's own party, that's the case. The guerrillas know it and that's one of the reasons why they're not negotiating. Pastrana needs to broaden his support to include a wide spectrum from the country's political parties. He can get that wide spectrum support, I believe, and it would give additional strength and cohesion to his strategy of negotiating with the guerrillas.

Pastrana needs to reach out to the others in the political spectrum. His negotiating team is weak, inward looking and lacking in strategic vision. It is not like his economic team which is very strong.

I think the United States needs to state publicly that it understands that in Colombia fighting narcotraffickers means fighting guerrillas. This would give a great boost to the morale of the population and force the guerrillas to negotiate in good faith.

Finally, I would say that we need to address the paramilitary problem soon. Americans and Colombians are going to have to face the fact that these criminal bands must be eliminated from Colombia. At the present time, there is very little attention paid to getting rid of the paramilitary groups.

And with that, I will say that I hope that we will be able to get a very substantial package of assistance together for Colombia, and I think that it will mark a turning point in Colombia's efforts to face this particular crisis.

Mr. MICA. Thank you, Ambassador. We only have about 4 or 5 minutes, maximum. What's your pleasure? You want to vote and come back.

Do we have two votes or one? Well, I hate to cut Mr. Meriage short. We have run over here. Well, I think we're going to have to go and come back. I'm sorry. I just don't see how we can do that. If you would stand in recess for 15 minutes, we'll vote. We have one—we'll be at the end of the first vote, and then vote and come back, and there may be some questions. So we'll stand in recess for approximately 15 minutes.

[Recess.]

Mr. MICA. If I could, I would like to call the subcommittee back to order. And we are on our third panel, on our third witness this afternoon. I know this has been a lengthy hearing, but it is an important hearing. And we wanted to hear the full testimony of our last witness, Mr. Lawrence Meriage. And he's Vice President of Occidental Oil and Gas Corp.

I apologize, sir, for the late hour, but as you can see, there is a tremendous amount of interest in this subject among Members of Congress and a great debate about one of the most important packages we'll be considering this year.

So, with that, I thank you for your patience again and you're recognized.

Mr. MERIAGE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to present a summary of my written testimony.

Mr. MICA. Without objection, that will be made part of the record.

Mr. MERIAGE. As the only private sector represented at these hearings today, I want to focus my remarks on four key points relating to United States-Colombia relations: first, the importance of United States economic interests in Colombia; second, how Colum-

bia's increasing narcotics production problem is undermining those interests; third, the importance of United States investment in Colombia in general and particularly in the energy sector; and finally, our thoughts on the aid package.

The United States-Colombia relationship is of great importance from an economic and commercial perspective. Colombia is the fifth largest economy in Latin America and our fifth largest trading partner in the region. United States exports reached nearly \$5 billion in 1998, accounting for nearly 32 percent of Colombia's total imports. This Andean nation is our 26th largest export market overall.

The United States also is the No. 1 foreign investor in Colombia.

Finally, Colombia is the eighth largest supplier of foreign crude oil to the United States with more than 330,000 barrels a day shipped to Gulf Coast refineries in Texas and Louisiana. This factor is an important part of the diversification of our energy supply away from the Middle East.

In the more than three decades Occidental has operated in Colombia, we have seen a steep rise in the number of armed subversive groups in the country. Much of the attention today and the testimony has been focused on what is going on in the south. In the north, where we operate adjacent to the Venezuelan border, the number of FARC and ELN units have risen dramatically, particularly in the last 5 years. At the same time in the same region there has been explosive growth in drug trafficking. These two developments are not unrelated.

Along the border regions of North Santander we have observed lush green terrain on the Venezuelan side and large charred areas on the Colombia side where native vegetation has been burned to clear the land for planting coca and poppies. The combination of drugs and guerrillas has resulted in a sharp increase in the level of violence in these regions.

Mr. Chairman, economic development and the creation of jobs in the legitimate economy are essential if Colombia is to break this cycle of drugs and violence. The economy is mired in its worse recession in recent history and one of the critical factors in the country's economic recovery is oil development which has been a linchpin of President Pastrana's plan for that recovery.

Between 1994 and 1998 Colombia's oil sector accounted for nearly 23 percent of total foreign investment in Colombia. In 1999 crude oil sales produced nearly \$3.2 billion in revenues, or 24 percent of the central government's total income; but known reserves of crude oil are being rapidly depleted, and without new oil discoveries, Colombia will become a net importer of oil by 2004, which would have a devastating impact on the country's balance of payments, particularly if you're looking at prices at the current level.

Because oil revenues are so important to the government, Colombia's oil infrastructure has been a prime target of terrorist tactics by Marxist guerrillas who control much of the remote countryside where oil is produced. For example, units of both the FARC and the ELN have attacked the government-owned pipeline that transports oil to the coast from the country's second largest oil field, Cano Limon, which we operate. The pipeline has been struck 700 times since operations began in 1985, 79 times in 1999 alone.

These attacks have caused cumulative losses totaling in excess of \$100 million.

Mr. Chairman, I share your view that the United States is confronting a crisis of dramatic proportions right in our own backyard. Indeed, we believe the very survival of Latin America's oldest democracy hangs in the balance. That's why we strongly support a substantial supplemental aid package for Colombia. Furthermore, we believe this package must be balanced between support for the police and the military. The 2,500 men of the Colombia National Police antinarcotics unit are badly outnumbered and outgunned by the guerrillas and paramilitaries, both of whom, as we have heard today, are supported by drug money.

If I might add just parenthetically there's been some discussion today about cooperation between the military and the police and the central components. We have seen this in the regions where we are operating at the present time. Indeed, before the police can come into the areas in which we are operating that are controlled by the guerrillas, the first thing that happens is that units of the armed forces are deployed and then the police are deployed subsequent to that.

For the counternarcotics activities of these police to be effective, they need the backing of the armed forces which have their own shortcomings because they lack mobility, modern equipment and intelligence gathering capabilities. The counternarcotics battle simply cannot be won without a stronger, better equipped and highly disciplined military force.

I know human rights practices by the Colombian army have been a central theme in this debate over United States aid and they have certainly surfaced during these hearings. President Pastrana has taken major steps to remedy this problem and our own sponsorship of human rights programs in the areas where we operate has been an important catalyst.

Finally, we are concerned that counternarcotics support in the aid package exclusively have target operations in the southern part of the country. I believe it is important not to overlook the worsening problem in the north along the Venezuelan border where an estimated 35 miles have been converted to drug cultivation in 1999 alone. Counternarcotics activities in the north not only will undermine the growing source of revenue for the enemies of civil society, but also will provide indirect support for the government's effort to stimulate economic growth in the region. Attacking the source of supply is not the only answer in addressing Colombia's drug problem, but it is an important part of a larger equation that must be solved.

Failure to act decisively now virtually assures that we will have to deal with a worsening regional problem in our hemisphere.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Meriage follows:]

Testimony of Lawrence P. Meriage
Vice President, Executive Services and Public Affairs
Occidental Oil and Gas Corporation
Before the House Government Reform Subcommittee on
Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources
Hearing on Colombia
February 15, 2000

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am honored to have the opportunity to testify before this distinguished subcommittee regarding the U.S. response to the crisis in Colombia. This is a subject of paramount importance to my company, Occidental Petroleum Corporation ("Oxy"), and one that I believe should be at the forefront of America's foreign policy agenda.

In my testimony today, I will present a private sector perspective on Colombia based on nearly three decades of business experience in the country. I will offer our observations highlighting the vital U.S. economic interests in Colombia and how those interests are being undermined by the dramatic rise in narcotics cultivation that is tied directly to the sharp increase in violence perpetrated by subversive groups operating throughout the country. I also want to call attention to the critical importance of foreign investment in Colombia's energy sector and, finally, to present our thoughts on the aid package submitted by the Administration.

Importance of Economic Ties with United States

Often overlooked in discussions regarding Colombia is the vital, strategic nature of the U.S.-Colombia relationship from an economic and commercial perspective. Colombia is the 5th largest economy in Latin America. Colombia also is the 5th largest trading partner of the United States in the region, with two-way trade in 1998 reaching nearly \$11 billion. The United States has long been Colombia's top supplier. The total value of U.S. exports to Colombia in 1998 was nearly \$5 billion, accounting for roughly 32 percent of Colombia's total imports. On a worldwide basis, this Andean nation ranks as our 26th largest export market. U.S. products sold in Colombia include telecommunications and computer equipment, energy components and auto parts. The U.S. is the number one foreign investor in Colombia, accounting for 28 percent of accumulated foreign direct investment in 1998 (not including petroleum).

Colombia also is the 8th largest supplier of foreign crude oil to the United States, with more than 330,000 barrels per day shipped primarily to Gulf coast refineries in Texas and Louisiana. Colombian oil is of a vital strategic importance to the United States because it reduces our dependence on oil imports from the volatile Middle East. Colombia's current oil production is 820,000 barrels per day, and the potential to add new production is very high because large areas of the country are unexplored.

Despite an increasingly difficult operating environment characterized by the escalation of the country's long-standing civil conflict, Colombia remains an attractive market for U.S. firms due to a combination of demographic, geographic and cultural factors. Colombia is strategically located at the northwest tip of South America with only a two-hour plane ride separating Miami from the Colombian port city of Cartagena. With

a shoreline that touches both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, the economic activity of this nation of more than 40 million inhabitants is as varied as its topography.

The capital city of Bogota is home to 6 million residents. Over 70 percent of the population live in urban areas, including more than 30 cities with populations in excess of 100,000. Medellin, a city of nearly 2 million in western Colombia, is a major industrial center that produces textiles, clothing, chemicals, plastics and printed materials. A large number of foreign multinationals have established manufacturing plants in Cali, the third largest city. Other cities with important industrial activity are Barranquilla, Cartagena, Bucaramanga and Pereira.

Occidental's Experience in Colombia – The Explosive Growth of Subversive Groups

Since the early 1980's, Occidental has operated the billion-barrel Caño Limon oil field in the northeastern part of the country in the Department of Arauca - adjacent to the Venezuelan border. Occidental's 1983 discovery of this giant field transformed Colombia from a net importer of crude oil into a major oil-exporting nation.

In the more than three decades Occidental has operated in Colombia, we have seen a steep rise in the number of subversive groups operating throughout the country – in both the North and the South. Since 1964, much of the Department of Arauca has been controlled by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN). As illustrated by Exhibits 1-18, the growth of both FARC and ELN units in this region has been especially pronounced since the mid-1990s.

Despite efforts by units of Colombia's armed forces to maintain security in the area surrounding Caño Limon production facilities, units of both the FARC and ELN have attacked the government operated 483-mile pipeline that transports oil from Caño Limon to the Caribbean port of Covenas over 700 times since operations began – 79 times in 1999 alone. These attacks have caused nearly \$100 million in losses (including lost production) and more than 1.7 million barrels have been lost. As the violence perpetrated by leftist groups has increased in geographic scope and intensity, the rise of competing paramilitary forces on the right over the last five years have raised the level of violence to new heights.

Alongside the rise of these subversive activities in the northern regions of the country, we have witnessed a parallel, exponential expansion of the cultivation, processing, and export of illegal narcotics – predominantly cocaine and heroin. In 1999, some 4 square miles in the Department of Arauca were planted with coca. In the neighboring Department of North Santander, where we are preparing to drill an important exploration well, the 1999 planting of more than 30 square miles of new coca plants represents an increase of approximately 300 percent over the previous year.

Occidental representatives, who have over-flown the border regions of North Santander, have observed lush, green terrain on the Venezuelan side and large charred areas on the Colombian side where native vegetation has been burned to clear land for the planting of coca and heroin poppies. The environmental degradation resulting from the slash and burn activities of Colombia's drug cartels, under the protection of the guerillas and paramilitaries, is significant.

Oil's Impact on Colombia's Economy

Armed assaults by leftist guerrillas on Colombia's oil infrastructure are intended to deprive the government of its principal source of foreign exchange – the revenue derived from oil exports. Such attacks not only weaken the government by undermining the national economy, but they also strip away vital resources that could be deployed in the fight against the subversive groups. In 1999, oil was Colombia's largest export, accounting for approximately 31 percent of the country's total exports and 24 percent of the central government's income.

There are other factors, however, that account for the attacks on oil projects. For example, Occidental's operations in Colombia represent more than just newfound government revenue (it is important to note that the Colombian government receives 85 percent of the net revenues generated by our Caño Limon project - including a 20 percent royalty on production at the wellhead distributed to local and regional jurisdictions). Both Caño Limon and planned drilling activities in the North Santander region have led to an increased police and military presence in areas where subversive elements previously operated with little or no restraints. In addition, our investments result directly in the creation of good jobs in the legitimate economy and provide ancillary benefits to the local population that contradict the rhetoric of the guerrilla groups regarding "exploitation by foreign multinationals." Here are a few examples.

When Occidental's exploration activities began in Colombia in 1981, the surrounding countryside was sparsely populated. There were no roads connecting the provincial capital (also named Arauca) with the rest of Colombia. Residents eked out a meager subsistence in tiny, isolated hamlets by cultivating corn, plantain and yucca, and by fishing in nearby rivers. Illiteracy, high infant mortality rates, infectious disease and poverty were endemic. The few existing schools, clinics and other public services were concentrated in the towns of Arauca, Saravena and Arauquita.

Occidental has played an important role in helping the area to overcome its economic and social isolation. In 1985, Occidental completed the first permanent road linking Arauca to other parts of Colombia. The company also connected the area to the country's electric system, and constructed a bridge across the Caño de Agua Limon River that eliminated a major obstacle that effectively prevented local people from selling their products in the regional and national marketplace. Occidental has paid over \$1 billion in royalties that have been distributed among the provincial and local governments.

Part of this income has been invested in building new roads, hospitals, schools and other public works projects. Occidental itself has built or renovated over 30 schools and provided materials and equipment for the establishment of a network of 12 regional health clinics. Since 1986, Occidental and its partners have provided roughly \$2 million annually to local communities to support sustainable initiatives in health, education and micro-enterprise development that will directly raise living standards by means that are not dependent on oil revenues.

The impact of oil development is perhaps of even greater importance to the country as a whole, particularly with respect to the implementation of "Plan Colombia" and the revival of the country's battered economy. Between 1994 and 1998, Colombia's oil sector accounted for nearly 23 percent of total foreign investment. The Colombia Petroleum Association estimates that crude oil sales produced nearly \$3.2 billion in

revenues for the central government in 1999 – more than double the revenue generated by coffee sales.

But known reserves of crude oil are being rapidly depleted. Unless new reserves are discovered, Colombia will become a net importer of oil by 2004 (See Exhibit 19). The importation of nearly 200,000 barrels per day at today's oil prices (\$25-28 per barrel) would have a devastating impact on the country's balance of payments and impede the government's efforts to stage a recovery from what is currently among the worst economic recessions the country's history.

It is for these reasons that our new exploration project in North Santander has received nearly universal support in Colombia – including the strong backing of President Pastrana. Only two groups are intent on blocking the project - leftist guerillas who seek to undermine the country's democratically elected government and several fringe non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the U.S. Both groups are united in their opposition to oil exploration and development.

The opposition of Marxist rebels is driven by their goal of toppling the Colombian government. They attack foreign oil interests, while couched in ideological terms related to excessive foreign involvement in Colombia's oil industry, in practical terms is bent on depriving the government of vital oil revenues. The guerillas know that oil projects in remote areas will lead to a stronger central government presence in parts of Colombia they have long dominated.

The opposition of these NGOs to this project is part of their global drive against the development and use of fossil. These groups have deliberately and irresponsibly misrepresented the facts in their campaign to halt this project, thereby serving as *de facto* allies of the subversive forces that are attacking oil installations, electric power stations and other legitimate businesses enterprises that are vital to Colombian civil society.

Indeed, these non-Colombian organizations have pursued their own narrow self-interests with total disregard for the harmful impact their actions have on the lives of 40 million Colombians. Moreover, their tactics have the effect of undermining efforts by President Pastrana's government to promote economic development that is a vital component of "Plan Colombia".

The guerillas and the U.S.-based radical NGOs are both engaged in the cynical manipulation of the small indigenous U'wa community in order to advance their own agendas. The undeniable truth is that the U'wa live in a guerilla infested area that has seen a spectacular increase in the production of illegal drugs bound for the U.S., and the community has been under intense pressure by the guerillas to oppose oil development anywhere in the region. These uncontested facts are well known in Colombia. Rather than acknowledge the truth, namely that the U'wa are in no position to speak openly about what is really happening, the NGOs continue to attack Occidental – not the guerillas and drug traffickers – for threatening the survival of the U'wa. The stridency of the NGO assaults on Occidental to the total exclusion of any reference to the region having a serious problem with guerillas and narcotics should at least raise some intriguing questions about the real agenda of the NGOs.

Economic development and the creation of jobs in the legitimate economy are essential if Colombia is to break the cycle of drugs and violence inflicted on Colombian victims by left-wing guerillas and right-wing paramilitaries – both of which are in partnership with the drug cartels. Drug trafficking is the engine of violence driving

Colombia down the road to ruin – not economic development of which oil exploration is a key component.

If Occidental's current attempts to explore for oil in North Santander succeed in finding up to 1.4 billion barrels of reserves, it would produce an estimated \$14 billion in new revenues for Colombia – including \$4.8 billion for the regional governments. A discovery also would lead to the creation of an estimated 400-500 high paying, long-term jobs for Colombian citizens (Occidental's current workforce, from top to bottom, is virtually all comprised of Colombians.) Moreover, it would provide the means to enhance the regional infrastructure including the building of new schools, health clinics, and water purification facilities, and provide new income generating opportunities to a broad array of local contractors and subcontractors, thereby boosting living standards throughout the region.

Without question, reviving the economy is absolutely fundamental in order to address the array of problems faced by Colombia today. Oil development is the foundation for this recovery. According to the *Financial Times*, approximately \$2 billion in oil investment has been "deferred" over the past decade due to guerilla attacks on production facilities and pipelines.

The U.S. Response to Colombia's Crisis

Mr. Chairman, I share your view that the United States is confronting a humanitarian crisis of dramatic proportions right in our own backyard. According to Colombia's Human Rights & Displacement Consulting Office (HRDCO), armed conflict brought on by both guerilla groups and paramilitary organizations have led to the displacement of an estimated 1.7 million Colombians since 1990. Sixty percent of the total (1.06 million) occurred just in the past 5 years. These numbers are well in excess of the displacements we witnessed in Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor. The international community has largely ignored this problem since the overwhelming majority of displaced persons remain in Colombia. This level of displacement has helped undermine Colombia's legitimate economy, resulting in heightened illiteracy rates (according to HRDCO, 77 percent of displaced school-age children do not return to school) and negatively impacting standards of living, land ownership, agricultural production and animal husbandry.

Moreover, subversive elements have targeted legitimate business enterprises for extortion. Our contractors are forced to pay a "war tax" or face the very real threat of having their equipment destroyed and their personnel attacked. Local workers at our facilities must pay "protection" money or place their personal safety and that of their families at risk. And these problems are becoming regional in nature, as subversive forces from Colombia routinely cross into Venezuela, Panama, Ecuador and Peru.

It is clear that urgent action must be taken. The "Plan Colombia" put forward by the Pastrana Administration presents a comprehensive strategy designed to address the range of challenges faced by Colombia. U.S. support of President Pastrana will be critical to the Plan's success, which is why we strongly support the provision of a substantial supplemental aid package.

Let me offer a few comments and observations on a possible aid package based on our experience in Colombia.

We have witnessed firsthand the tremendous successes of the Colombian National Police (CNP), and can offer nothing but high praise for the courage and dedication they have shown under the leadership of General Rosso José Serrano. But while the DANTI, the CNP's ant-narcotics unit, is a highly capable and professional organization, it is comprised of only 2,500 men. This unit cannot possibly be expected to confront guerilla forces whose estimated numbers exceed 20,000, as well as 6,000 paramilitaries, all of whom are heavily armed and well financed by drug money and other illegal activities.

If the police are to be effective in carrying out counter-narcotics activities, it is essential that they have the backing of Colombia's armed forces. But Colombia's military forces also have been disadvantaged in their efforts to engage the guerillas. They lack mobility, equipment, and perhaps most serious, they lack the intelligence gathering capabilities afforded to their better-funded adversaries. The counter-narcotics battle simply cannot be won without a stronger, better equipped and highly disciplined military force. We would urge members to ensure that whatever aid package emerges ensures a careful balance of support between the CNP and the military.

I believe we all share a common interest and concern regarding the observance of human rights practices by the Colombian military. From our vantage point, we have seen a dramatic shift in emphasis on human rights issues in Colombia, from the President on down through the ranks of the armed forces. President Pastrana has acknowledged that there had been problems involving some units and their commanders and he has taken the initiative to address the problem. Occidental has supported these initiatives by sponsoring workshops and symposiums on human rights and International Humanitarian Law in the northeast part of the country under the auspices of the International Red Cross and the Roman Catholic Church.

We understand that the package put forward by the Administration targets aid for counter-narcotics activities in the southern part of the country in the Putumayo region near the Ecuadorian border. We have two concerns relating to this approach. It does not address the explosion of coca cultivation that is occurring in other parts of the country, particularly the northern regions where the bulk of existing and prospective oil development takes place. Moreover, a massive concentration of force in the Putumayo region could ultimately lead narco-guerilla forces to move operations further south into Ecuador. Occidental also has operations in Ecuador some 40 kilometers from the Colombian border. Recent kidnappings near our area of operation in Ecuador have been attributed to the FARC.

It will be critical to ensure that the implementation of the strategy does not have the unintended consequence of heightening regional instability. Moreover, I would urge you to consider support of counter-narcotics operations in the northern regions as well as the south. This will help augment security for oil development operations, which, as noted earlier, are fundamental to the success of "Plan Colombia."

Mr. Chairman, I wish the Members of the subcommittee could meet some of the fine people we have working for us in Colombia. They and their families are the ones that will suffer most if we fail to support the Pastrana government and "Plan Colombia". The supplemental request – if approved – will benefit the United States as well, by giving the Pastrana government the tools needed give them a fighting chance to retake Colombia from the outlaws and the drug lords. Taking the drug war to its source is not the only answer in defeating what has become a serious national problem in the streets and homes

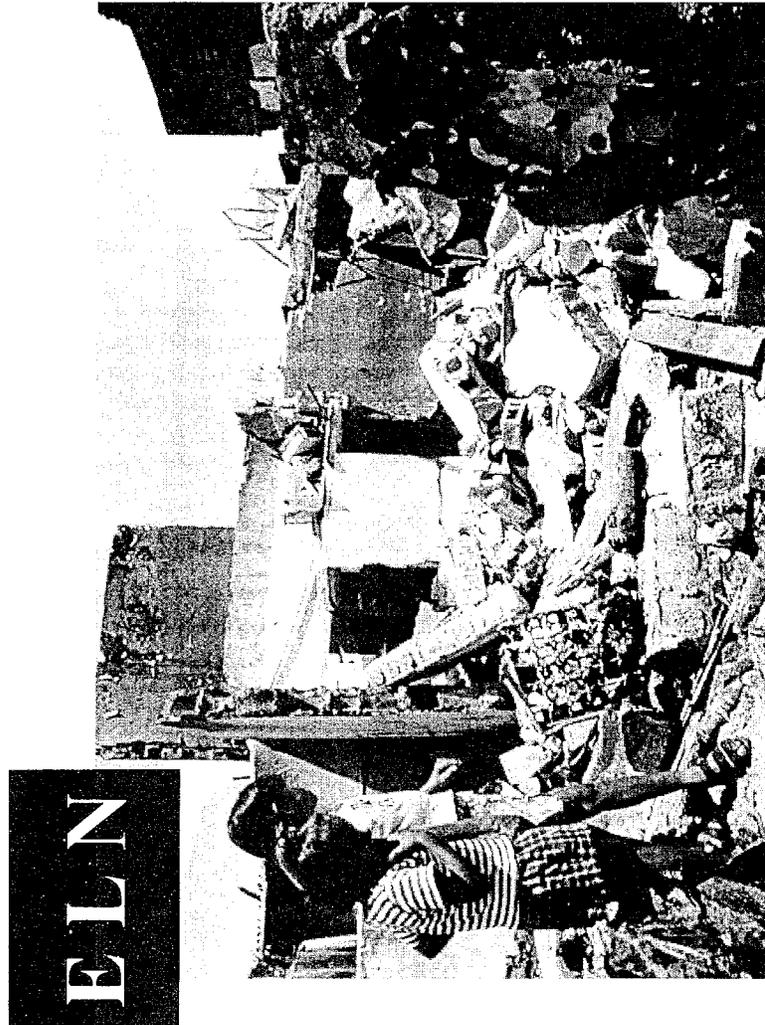
of America. But, it is one answer, and failure to act here and now will only worsen the situation.

Thank you.

Evolution of Subversive Groups in Colombia (1978-1999)



Evolution of Subversive Groups in Colombia (1978-1999)



ELN

Turbay Administration (1978-1982)



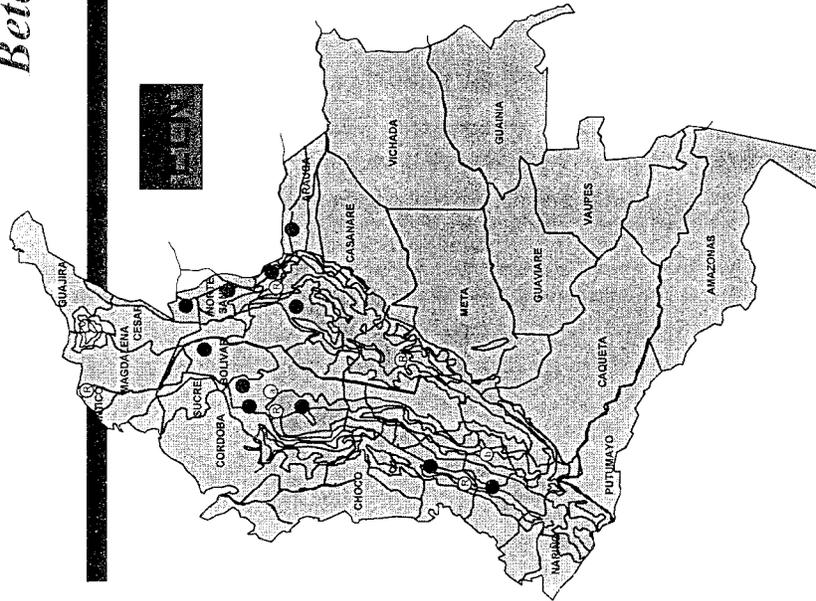
Existing Fronts

- Jose Antonio Galán
- Camilo Torres Restrepo
- Estructuras Urbanas
- U

1 Front Created

- Domingo Lain Saenz

Betancur Administration (1982-1986)



Existing Fronts

- Jose Antonio Galán
- Camilo Torres Restrepo
- Domingo Lain Saenz

15 Fronts Created

- Jose Solano Sepulveda
- Manuel Vasquez Castano
- Luis Carlos Cardenas
- Carlos A. Cacia
- Efraim Pabon Pabon
- Capitan Parmentio
- Companero Tomas
- Carlos Alirio Buitrago

Anori

Urban Commando La Gaitana

Regional - Oscar F. Rerrano

Regional - Luis F. Giraldo

Regional - Omayra Montoya

Regional - Diego C. Uribe

Regional - Miguel Enriquez

a

b

R

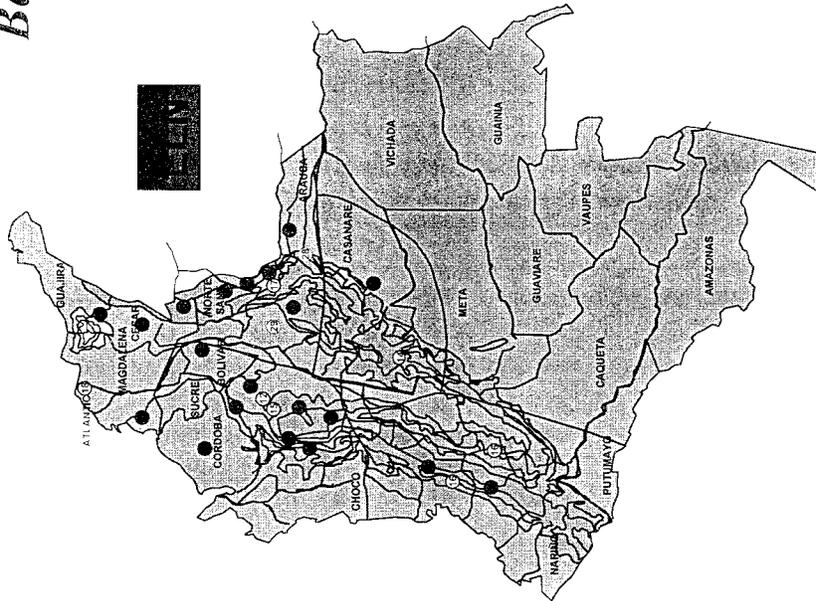
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Barco Administration (1986-1990)



18 Existing Fronts

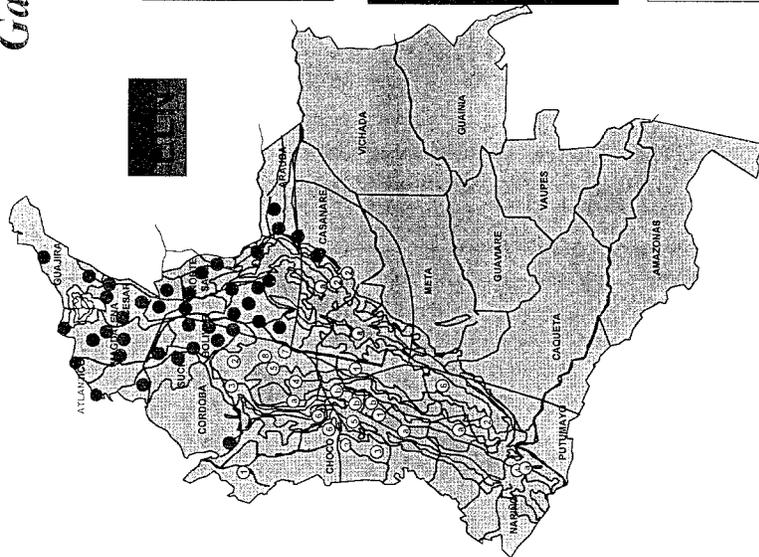
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- Jose Antonio Galán
- Camilo Torres Restrepo
- Domingo Lain Saenz
- Jose Solano Sepulveda
- Manuel Vasquez Castano
- Luis Carlos Cardenas
- Carlos A. Cacua
- Efraim Pabon Pabon
- Capitan Parmenio
- Companero Tomas
- Carlos Alirio Buitrago

- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- Anorí Company
- Urban Commando - La Gaitana
- Regional - Oscar F. Rerrano
- Regional - Luis F. Giraldo
- Regional - Omayra Montoya
- Regional - Diego C. Uribe
- Regional - Miguel Enriquez

11 Fronts Created

- 28
- 29
- 6th of December
- Ernesto Che Guevara
- Los Libertadores
- Martha E. Baron
- Jaime Bateman Cayon
- Jose M. Martinez Quiro
- Astolfo Gonzalez
- Claudia I. Escobar
- Manuel G. Chacon
- Simacota Company
- Urban Commando -
- Lorenzo Alcantuz

Gaviria Administration (1990-1994)



5 War Fronts

NORTHERN (11)

- Urban - Miguel Enriquez
- Urban - Kaled Gómez Padrón
- Urban - Compañero "Ricardo"
- Jose Solano Sepulveda
- Seis de Diciembre
- Jaime Bateman Cayón
- Jose M. Martínez Quiroz
- Alfredo Gomez
- Francisco Javier Castaño
- Manuel Hernandez "El Boche"
- Luciano Ariza

SOUTHERN (8)

- Urban - Onayra Montoya Henao
- Urban - Martha Elena Barrón
- Luis C. Cárdenas
- Manuel Vasquez Castaño
- Benkos Bioho
- Comuneros del Sur
- Columna Guevarista.
- La Gallana

CENTRAL (3)

- Urban - Oscar F. Serrano
- Bolcheviques del Libano
- Jose David Suarez

NORTHEASTERN (14)

- Urban - Diego Cristóbal Uribe
- Urban - Resistencia Yariques
- Simacota Company (Mobile Unit)
- Carlos Armando Cacia Guerrero
- Captain Parmento
- Efraim Pabón Pabón
- Domingo Lain Sáenz
- Claudia I. Escobar
- Manuel Gustavo Chacón
- Juan F. Porras
- Vasquez Bernal
- Camilo Torres Restrepo
- Captain Pomares (Mobile Unit)
- Jose Adonay Ardilla

REGIONAL COMMANDS (3)

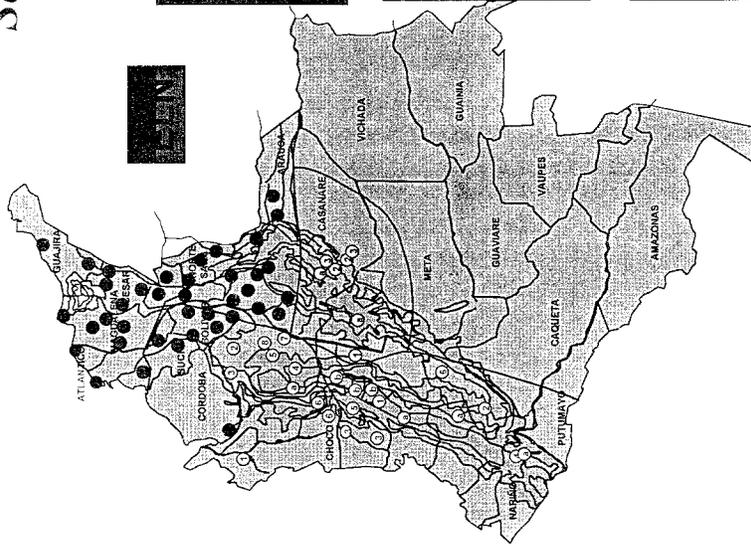
- A.B.C
- Area Cafetera
- Dario de Jesús Ramirez

NORTHWESTERN (9)

- Urban - Luis F. Giraldo
- Compañía Anóni (Mobile Unit)
- Jose Antonio Galán
- Compañero Tomás
- Carlos A. Buitrago
- Captain Mauricio
- Ernesto "Che" Guevara
- Bernardo Lopez Arroyave
- María Cano

Samper Administration (1994-1998)

5 War Fronts



NORTHERN (11)

- Urban - Miguel Enriquez
- Urban - Kaled Gómez Padrón
- Urban - Compañero "Ricardo"
- Jose Solano Sepulveda
- Seis de Diciembre
- Jaime Bateman Cayón
- Jose M. Martinez Quiroz
- Alfredo Gomez
- Francisco Javier Castaño
- Manuel Hernandez "El Boche"
- Luciano Ariza

NORTHEASTERN (12)

- Urban - Diego Cristóbal Uribe
- Urban - Resistencia Yariquíes
- Simacota Company (Mobile Unit)
- Carlos Armando Cacia Guerrero
- Capitan Parmentio
- Efraim Pabón Pabón
- Domingo Lain Sáenz
- Claudia I. Escobar
- Manuel Gustavo Chacón
- Juan F. Porras
- Guillermo Vasquez Bernal
- Camilo Torres Restrepo

NORTHWESTERN (9)

- Urban - Luis F. Giraldo
- 1. Anorí Company (Mobile Unit)
- 2. Jose Antonio Galán
- 3. Compañero Tomás
- 4. Carlos A. Buitrago
- 5. Capitan Mauricio
- 6. Ernesto "Che" Guavara
- 7. Bernardo López Arroyave
- 8. Maria Cano

SOUTHWESTERN (8)

- Urban - Onayra Montoya Henao
- Urban - Martha Elena Barón
- 1. Luis C. Cardenas
- 2. Manuel Vasquez Castaño
- 3. Benkos Bioho
- 4. Comuneros del Sur
- 5. Columna Guevarista.
- 6. La Gaitana

CENTRAL (4)

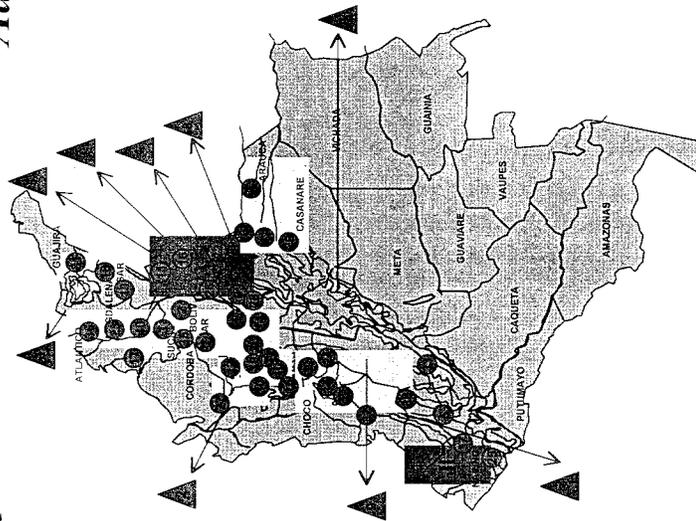
- Urban - Oscar F. Serrano
- 1. Bolcheviques del Libano
- 2. Jose David Suarez
- 3. Los Libertadores

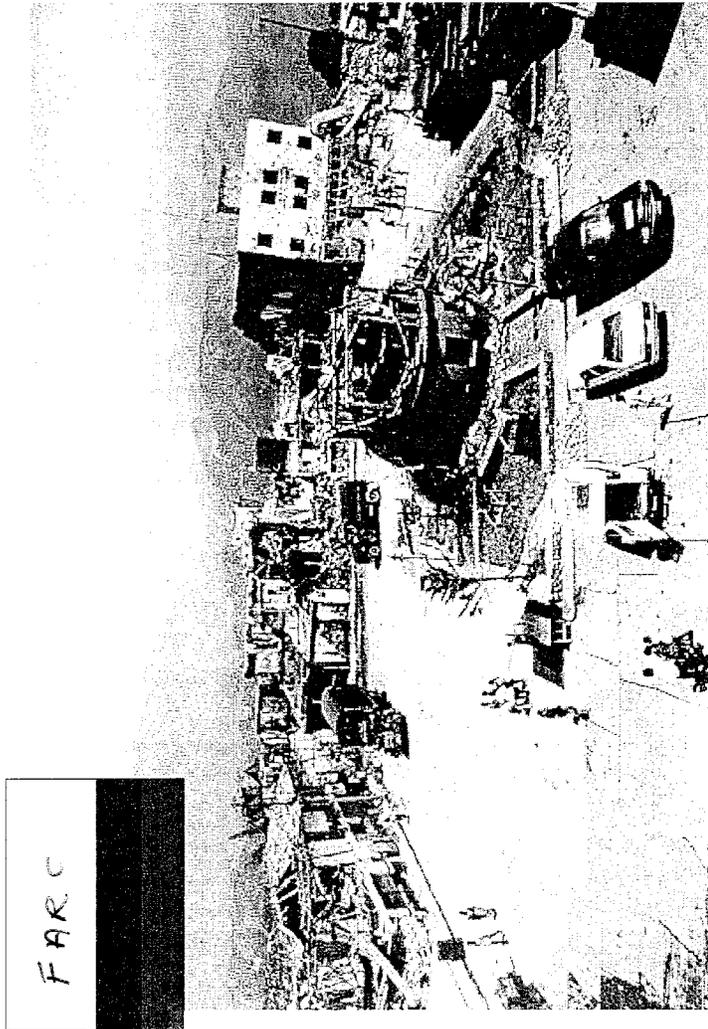
REGIONAL COMMANDS (4)

- 1. Venezuela Frontier
- 2. Southern
- 3. Middle Magdalena
- 4. Dario de Jesús Ramirez

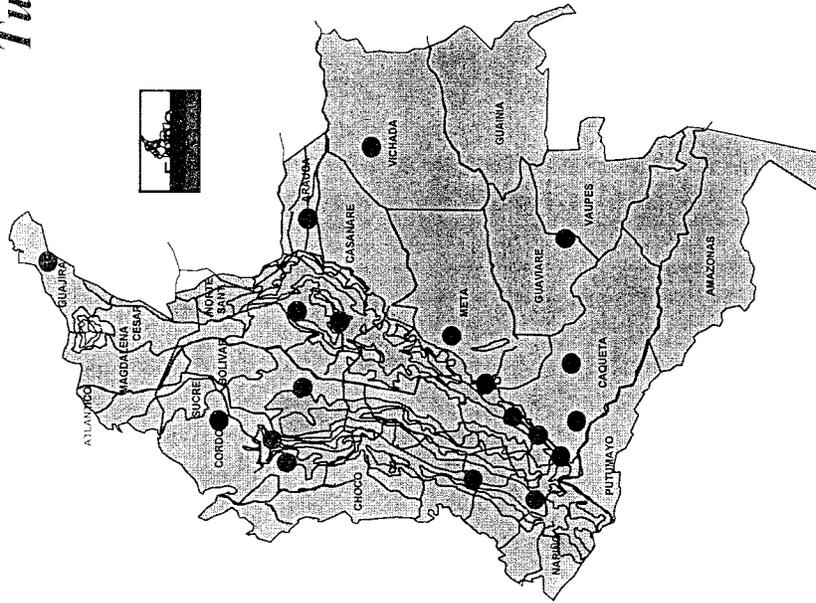


*1999 - Pastrana
Administration*





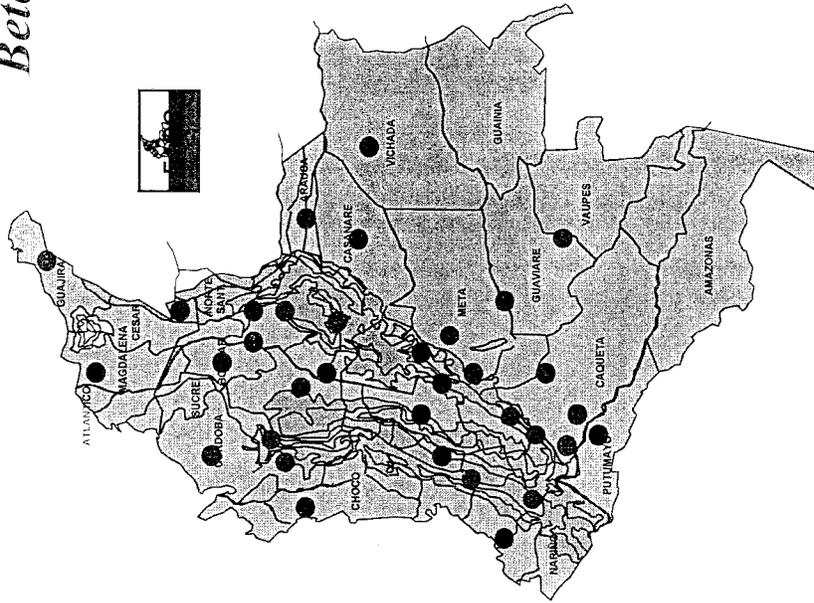
Turbay Administration (1978-1982)



Existing Fronts 8 Fronts Created

- Front 1
 - Front 2
 - Front 3
 - Front 4
 - Front 5
 - Front 6
 - Front 7
 - Front 8
 - Front 9
 - Front 10
-
- Front 11
 - Front 12
 - Front 13
 - Front 14
 - Front 15
 - Front 16
 - Front 17
 - Front 18

Betancur Administration (1982-1986)



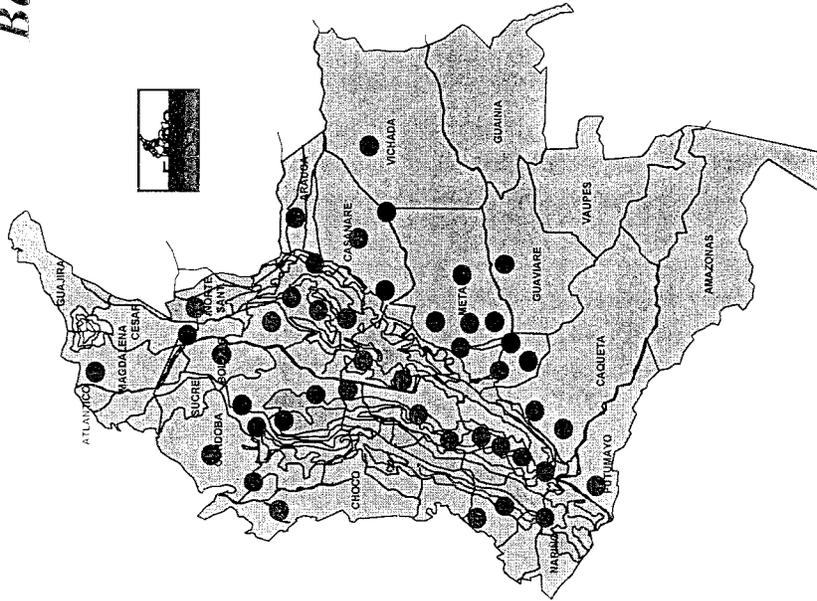
Existing Fronts

- Front 1
- Front 2
- Front 3
- Front 4
- Front 5
- Front 6
- Front 7
- Front 8
- Front 9
- Front 10
- Front 11
- Front 12
- Front 13
- Front 14
- Front 15
- Front 16
- Front 17
- Front 18

26 Fronts Created

- Front 19
- Front 20
- Front 21
- Front 22
- Front 23
- Front 24
- Front 25
- Front 26
- Front 27
- Front 28
- Front 29
- Front 30
- Front 31
- Front 32
- Front 33
- Front 34

Barco Administration (1986-1990)



Existing Fronts

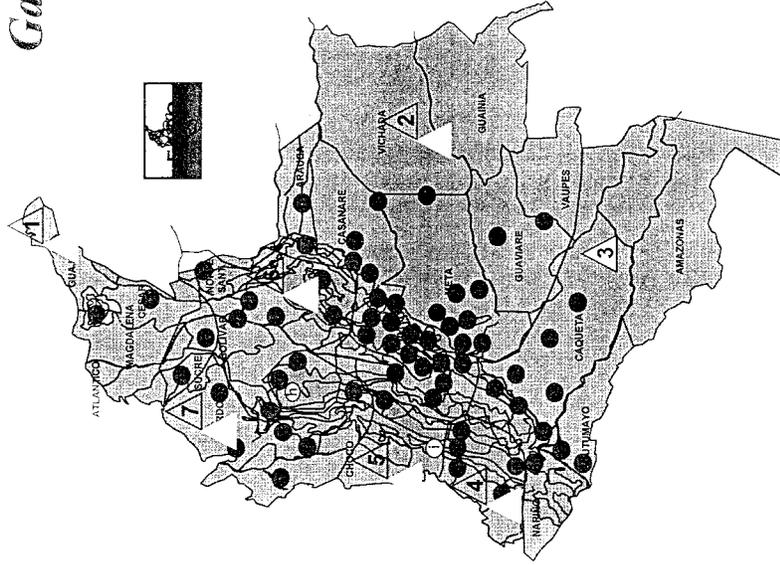
- Front 1
- Front 2
- Front 3
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- Front 7
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- Front 23
- Front 24
- Front 25

- Front 26
- Front 27
- Front 28
- Front 29
- Front 30
- Front 31
- Front 32
- Front 33
- Front 34

11 Fronts Created

- Front 35
- Front 36
- Front 37
- Front 38
- Front 39
- Front 40
- Front 41
- Front 42
- Front 43
- Front 44
- Front 45

Gaviria Administration (1990-1994)



7 Regions

68 Rural Fronts

1 Northern (5 Fronts)

2 Eastern (24 Fronts)

3 Southern (10 Fronts)

4 Western (5 Fronts)

5 Central (7 Fronts)

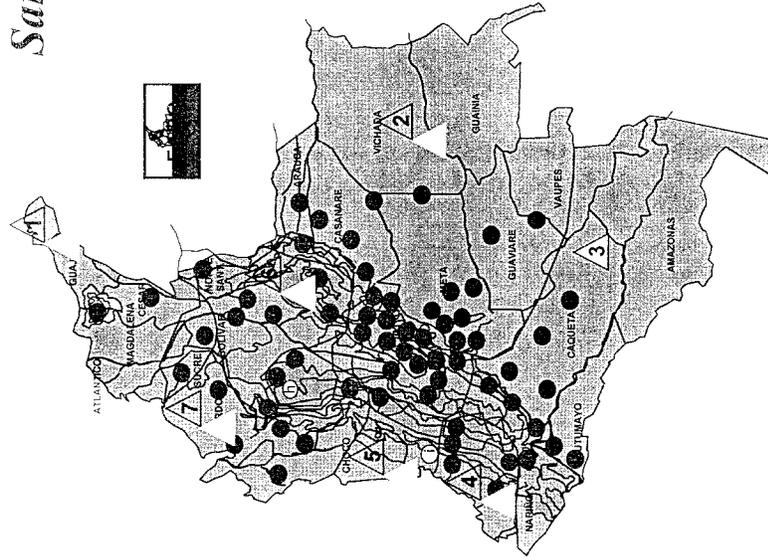
6 Middle Magdalena (8 Fronts)

7 Northwestern (8 Fronts)

7 Mobile Companies & 2 Urban Fronts

- a. J.J.R.
- b. Jacobo Arenas
- c. Teofilo Forero
- d. Manuela Beltran
- e. North
- f. Policarpa Salavarrieta
- g. Alonso Cortes
- h. Urban Front F. Jose M. Cordoba
- i. Urban Front F. Manuel Cepeda

Samper Administration (1994-1998)



7 Regions

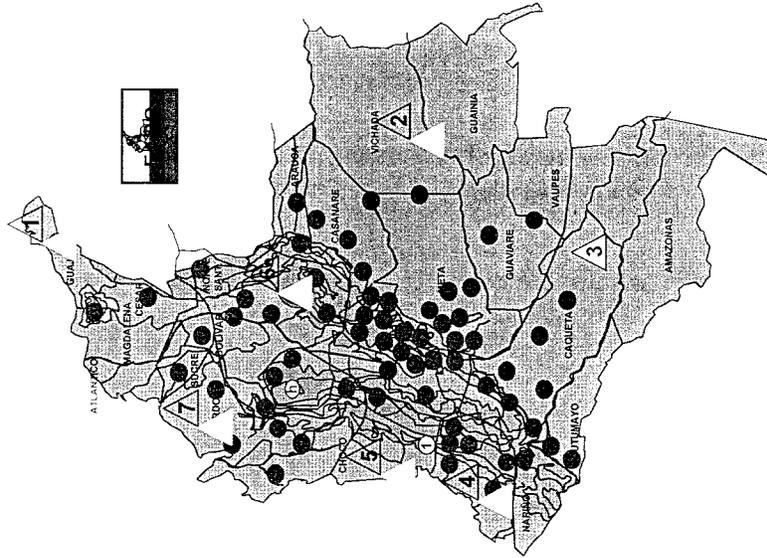
71 Rural Fronts

- 1 Northern (5 Fronts)
- 2 Eastern (24 Fronts)
- 3 Southern (12 Fronts)
- 4 Western (5 Fronts)
- 5 Central (7 Fronts)
- 6 Middle Magdalena (8 Fronts)
- 7 Northwest (10 Fronts)

7 Mobile Companies & 2 Urban Fronts

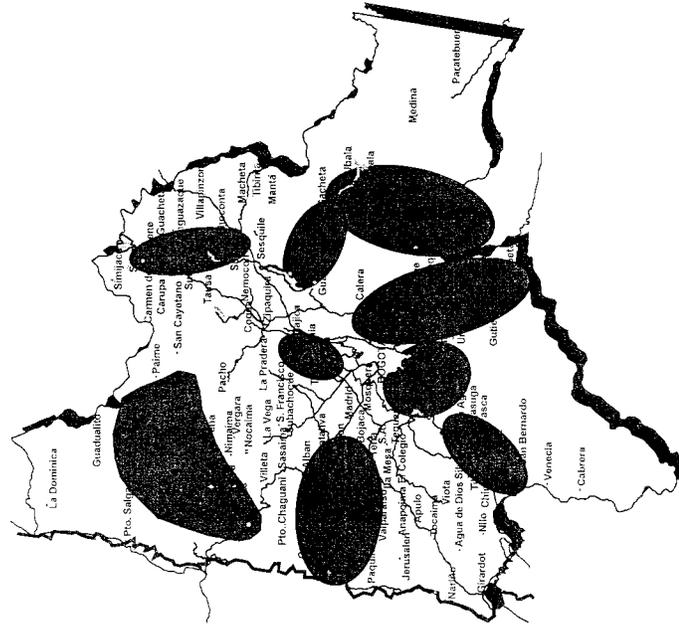
- a. J.J.R.
- b. Jacobo Arenas
- c. Teofilo Forero
- d. Manuela Beltran
- e. North
- f. Policarpa Salavarrieta
- g. Alonso Cortes
- h. Urban Front F. Jose M. Cordoba
- i. Urban Front F. Manuel Cepeda

1999 - Pastrana Administration



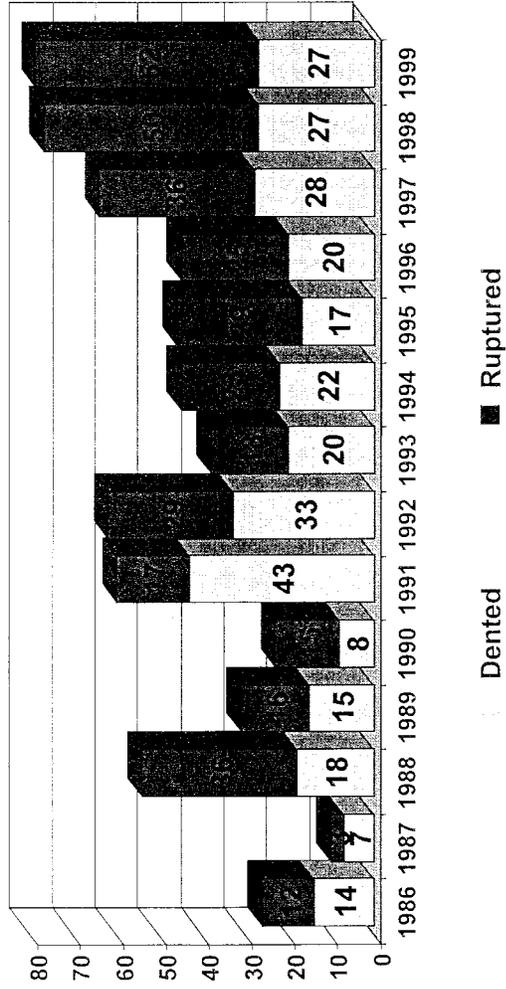
- 7 Regions
- 61 Rural Fronts
- 1 Northern (5)
- 2 Eastern (22)
- 3 Southern (9)
- 4 Western (5)
- 5 Central (4)
- 6 Middle Magdalena (8)
- 7 Northwestern (8)
- 6 Urban Fronts
- 24 Mobile Companies

*1999 - Subversive Groups
Department of Cundinamarca*

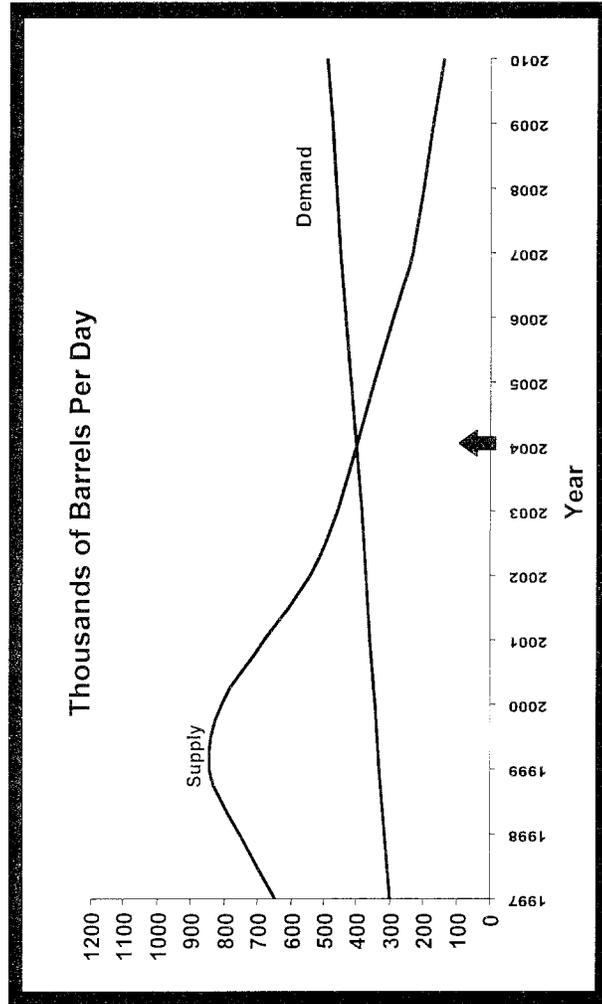


- a. Manuela Beltran (Mobile Unit)
- b. Policarpa Salavarrieta
FARC Fronts
 1. FARC 22nd
 2. FARC 42nd
 3. FARC 51st
 4. FARC 52nd
 5. FARC 53rd
 6. FARC 54th
 7. FARC 55th
- 8. Urban - Oscar F. Serrano

Pipeline Attacks (1986-1999)



Colombia's Oil - Supply and Demand



OCCIDENTAL PETROLEUM CORPORATION

10889 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90024 (310) 208-8800

Occidental de Colombia Fact Sheet

ECONOMIC RELEVANCE OF COLOMBIA'S OIL PRODUCTION

- ◆ Colombian oil is of a vital strategic importance to the United States because it reduces our dependence on oil imports from the volatile Middle East. Colombia's potential to add new production is very high because large areas of the country are unexplored.
- ◆ Occidental's 1983 discovery of the billion-barrel Caño Limon oil field transformed Colombia from a net importer of crude oil into a major oil-exporting nation.
- ◆ The Colombian government receives 85 percent of the net revenues generated by the Caño Limon project - including a 20 percent royalty on production at the wellhead distributed to local and regional jurisdictions.
- ◆ The Colombia Petroleum Association estimates that crude oil sales produced nearly \$3.2 billion in revenues for the central government in 1999.
- ◆ Unless new reserves are discovered, Colombia will become a net importer of oil by 2004 with potentially devastating economic effects.

A HISTORY OF COMMITMENT

- ◆ In 1985, Occidental completed the first permanent road linking Arauca to other parts of Colombia.
- ◆ Occidental connected the Arauca region to the country's electric system.
- ◆ Occidental constructed a bridge across the Caño de Agua Limon River eliminating a major obstacle preventing local people from selling their products in the regional and national marketplace.
- ◆ Occidental has paid over \$1 billion in royalties that have been distributed among the provincial and local governments to support investment in building new roads, hospitals, schools and other public works projects.
- ◆ Occidental has built or renovated over 30 schools in the region.
- ◆ Occidental has provided materials and equipment for the establishment of a network of 12 regional health clinics.
- ◆ Since 1986, Occidental and its partners have provided roughly \$2 million annually to local communities to support sustainable initiatives in health, education and micro-enterprise development that will directly raise living standards by means that are not dependent on oil revenues.
- ◆ Occidental has sponsored workshops and symposiums on human rights and International Humanitarian Law in the northeast part of the country under the auspices of the International Red Cross and the Roman Catholic Church.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

- ◆ If Occidental's current attempts to explore for oil in North Santander succeed in finding up to 1.4 billion barrels of reserves, it would produce an estimated \$14 billion in new revenues for Colombia – including \$4.8 billion for the regional governments.
- ◆ A discovery also would lead to the creation of an estimated 400-500 high paying, long - term jobs for Colombian citizens (Occidental's current workforce, from top to bottom, is virtually all comprised of Colombians.)
- ◆ Moreover, it would provide the means to enhance the regional infrastructure including the building of new schools, health clinics, and water purification facilities, and provide new income generating opportunities to a broad array of local contractors and subcontractors, thereby boosting living standards throughout the region.

WELL SITE BENEFITS

- ◆ The well site encompasses five separate acres.
- ◆ Occidental has voluntarily reduced the contract area by 75% including a reduction of the drilling area.
- ◆ The drill site and its area of influence are outside the expanded indigenous reservation and are located on private property.
- ◆ The site is located 1.5 miles off of the national Saravena-Cucuta Highway which is the main commercial artery in the region.
- ◆ Occidental changed the location of the road to the site to minimize the impact on the environment.
- ◆ Caño Limon- Covenas pipeline runs parallel to this highway through the area.
- ◆ The site is *not* located in the rainforest or cloud forest. Established by environmental impact analysis performed by a third party as required by the Colombian government to receive environmental license.
- ◆ The region where the well site is located is experiencing explosive growth in the cultivation of coca and heroine poppies.
- ◆ There are 169 inhabitants in the area of influence in the well; there are no indigenous people.
- ◆ In August 1999, negotiations with Colombia's Minister of Environment led to the tripling of the size of the reservations based on an U'wa-commissioned University of Javeriana study. The reservation was increased from 268 to 850 square miles. The government also set aside \$10 million to buy land from peasants living on land given to the U'wa.
- ◆ Currently, there are 3,582 U'wa living in an area 20% larger than the region of Quindio which has 560,000 inhabitants.
- ◆ Occidental was granted the environmental license for exploration in September 1999.

SUPPORT AND OPPOSITION

- ◆ The project in North Santander has received nearly universal support in Colombia – including the strong backing of President Pastrana.
- ◆ The project has been endorsed by two of Colombia's largest newspapers – *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*.
- ◆ Only two groups are intent on blocking the project - leftist guerillas who seek to undermine the country's democratically elected government and several fringe non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the U.S.

Mr. MICA. Thank you for your testimony. In fact, I thank all three of our witnesses on this final panel. I'm going to turn first to my colleague, the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Souder, for his questions.

Mr. SOUDER. I thank the chairman.

First, let me say an official hello to Ambassador Busby who had one of the great lines that I've repeated many times since it was my first trip to Colombia and he was along. I asked him whether the movie, *Clear and Present Danger*, was accurate and he said, "No, I died in the movie," which would also go for Ambassador McNamara who went through that period too. And I want to say hi to him as a fellow Domer, honorary Hoosier.

And also I wanted to make sure you knew that Andy Downs is now chief of staff to the new mayor of Ft. Wayne, which was a great honor at his young age. Because your roommate and close friend, Dr. Downs, is his son. They won the mayor race, and all of a sudden his son is chief of staff to the mayor of Ft. Wayne. It's been great. I appreciate your knowledge over the years in sharing that with me.

I also want to thank Mr. Meriage for your testimony on the oil crisis and the interrelationship with the drug issue. Because when you look at whether or not what constitutes compelling national interest for the United States when we look at this, you can argue about many things that we deal with in the world; but narcotics alone is enough for a compelling national interest.

But when you talk about our energy, and every American right now—we had the gasoline prices in Ft. Wayne go up 10 cents in 1 day last week. And everybody is more aware of the questions of energy, and when we watch our No. 1 source, which is not the Middle East, the No. 1 source is Venezuela, add that to Colombia, and you have a major amount, probably close to—my guess is around 25 percent from those two countries, because I think Venezuela is 17; and we have an energy question, not to mention Panama.

But I wanted to first ask Ambassador Busby, I know that you made some fairly strong comments about the FARC. And I wanted to know what your reaction was to the State Department in December 1998 going down to meet with the FARC in Costa Rica. As you said, they're designated terrorist organization. The State Department designated them that way. And do you think it was appropriate for our State Department to negotiate directly with somebody that they had said was a terrorist organization?

Mr. BUSBY. Let me answer the question a little differently.

You should understand that I don't have any problems in principle, or ideological hang-ups with negotiating or meeting with people on the terrorist list. In fact, I did that myself at one time. If you can accomplish something and you know what you're doing, then I don't have an ideological problem with it, on that particular thing; and I really, I hesitate to say it, but—well, let me put it this way.

I think that if you're going to do something like that, you ought to have two or three criteria that you judge its acceptability by. One, you should have a plan, a strategy, and you should understand what it is you're trying to do. You should have a clear objective and an end-game before you do it.

Second, I think you have to be well prepared for a meeting with a group like that; brief the Congress, think through the risks involved, think it through, and make sure that when you go do it, you've got everybody on board.

And third, it should be well done, well implemented. I don't have anything else to say about that particular meeting, except that I don't think that it met my three criteria.

Mr. SOUDER. Do you think it met any of the three criteria?

Mr. BUSBY. No, sir.

Mr. SOUDER. Ambassador McNamara, how do you view how our State Department should approach things with not only the FARC, but the ELN and the so-called rightist paramilitary groups too? Is that something we should be involved in, let Pastrana go? Do you have any further comments on the criteria that Ambassador Busby laid out?

Mr. McNAMARA. No, I think those are very sound criteria when one negotiates, and I have spent almost my whole career negotiating. I started with North Vietnamese and Viet Cong in Paris, went on to Moscow, negotiated with people from the Arab world as well as from Latin America and China, finished my career negotiating with Panama.

The question as to how you go into a negotiation, it seems to me that you go into a negotiation from a position of strength. The stronger party will come out of the negotiation better than the weaker party. And we and President Pastrana, I think, started down a path without having, as Ambassador Busby just said, a good, clear strategy. Without the clear strategy you're going to, A, make mistakes, and B, the stronger party, particularly if that stronger party has a good strategy, is probably going to come out better for it.

I cited in my statement that I thought that President Pastrana made a mistake in giving the FARC that zone in eastern Colombia for just coming to the negotiating table. That convinced them, and I think the negotiating session in Central America probably convinced them even more, that they had the winning hand. They were the more powerful, and therefore Pastrana had to come to them; the United States had to come to them. That psychological perception, I think, in allowing that to accrue to the FARC as both Pastrana and the administration did, was probably—not probably, it was certainly a mistake.

There's only one way to deal with these folks and that is from a position of strength.

Mr. SOUDER. I wanted to ask one other question Mr. Chairman. It is—if you want to give some additional in writing because I know we've had a long day, but one of my concerns—and both of you have been Ambassadors and held multiple other positions, as well as Ambassador to Colombia—is that I sense that we are fighting a couple of battles down there. One is we've seen this huge tide of nationalism, which you certainly saw in your Panama Canal negotiations, where they probably would have been willing to negotiate, but basically popular will is rising up. Then, when we go to get another base, we can't find anybody that will allow our military base in all of Central and South America, so we negotiate working

out with multiple use of airports and off islands and all kinds of stuff.

Clearly a meeting with President Chavez, it is not the kind of—you don't detect a really anti-American tone, even by him, about whom many people have concern; but more of how they want to do their own thing, they want to have pride. It is almost like they feel one way to assert that is kind of, once of a while, to do something to spite us.

At the same time, they're really very strong supporters of the United States. They understand our importance in this zone and they kind of think that, so how they relate to us has become a huge problem. We're seeing this tide of nationalism occur when we're seeing democracy in Colombia battled. Fujimori, President Fujimori, in Peru is looking at it and saying, hey, it is kind of teetering over there, it gives him quite frankly some questions about, he'd like to continue as President and endangering democratic principles in Peru.

Ecuador, which is right near the southern part, is certainly not the most stable democracy right now after their procedure. President Chavez has got to be looking at the north side, as we just heard about the dangers on the north border and more cultivation and whether they can control the north border. He's got to be saying, what's happening?

This question of Colombia is spreading far more than just Colombia, and I'm wondering, in the rising tide of nationalism, how we're going to deal with some of that.

If you could maybe just give us a few insights and then if you want to submit, because I think this is going to go far past and become more difficult than the Colombia we're looking at, because we're going to see this rise up all around it, which inhibits our ability to battle the drug problem which we're all having in our streets.

Mr. BUSBY. Well, I would like to comment on that. It is a very insightful and interesting question. My feeling has always been that whether you're dealing bilaterally with a country such as Colombia, or trying to put together a regional program, it is a constant intellectual exercise and struggle to find a meshing of their interests and ours.

Nobody down there is going to do something just because we ask them. That was one of the things I always kept preaching when I was in Colombia: They're not fighting narcotics for us. They're fighting narcotics because our interests mesh, and we were able to hold that together. And I think that if you look at it that way, then the onus comes back to our side.

People expect us to lead, and we should. And you've got to find a policy, both bilaterally with the individual countries and regionally, that meshes, and with a good understanding of what they want.

If you don't do that, then you are constantly battling both bilaterally and regional trying to get them to do something they don't want to do, or can't do.

Mr. MCNAMARA. I would agree with that and say it's not unlike how you put together a political coalition in the congressional district in a State or in the United States. You find out what the interests of the parties involved are, what are the common interests

and how can your coalition hold together. It may hold together say, for example, in the NATO context for 40 or 50 years on a wide variety of issues, or it may, as in the Gulf war context, hold together only for a few months and for a single issue.

In Latin America, I think that through the OAS and other institutions that we have built up, we can in fact have a long-term partnership with most of the major countries in Latin America, not an alliance, because it wouldn't quite be an alliance but a long-term partnership. And they will follow our lead. But they will follow us if we are a leader. If we are not a leader, if we are not putting out front the essential elements of our interests and our policies and asking them and consulting with them on their interest and their policies, then we are going to find out when the crisis hits we haven't done the spade work that is necessary.

You know, you can't put a coalition together and get elected to Congress in July and August of the election year. You do that 2 or 3 years before, and then when July and August and November come around, the coalition holds together. And it is not that much different in international affairs.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

Mr. MICA. Thank you. Mr. Meriage, you cited in your testimony some 700 incidents of attacks against your facilities in Colombia and some 70 people, I guess, or 70 incidents in the last year, was it?

Mr. MERIAGE. Seventy-nine.

Mr. MICA. Seventy-nine. What's been the impact on employees of Occidental?

Mr. MERIAGE. Well, the attack on the pipelines, from an employee perspective, are really the tip of the iceberg. There were discussions this morning about, you know, the economic impact of this aid package and whether a certain percentage should be put toward jobs. What our employees are confronting, and the work force out there is exclusively Colombian in the field area, is that they are regularly shaken down by both the FARC and the ELN. They are required to pay a war tax to both of the guerilla groups or they are not able to work. And that is the biggest impact that we are confronting with our employees.

Mr. MICA. Have any of them been kidnapped or killed?

Mr. MERIAGE. Yes. Over the years, we have had a number of instances where people have been both killed and kidnapped. Nothing that has happened in recent—in the last 2 years.

Mr. MICA. It also appears from some tape that we have obtained from a surveillance company that some of the private sector operations, their oil lines in particular, have been fairly effective in hiring security and also sort of monitoring and policing their pipelines. Is that left up to you, pretty much, to conduct that type of operation?

Mr. MERIAGE. The pipeline that has been attacked is owned and operated by Echo Petrol, the state oil company; and they are responsible for its maintenance and for its repair and for its protection. We are assessed a charge for that. So the protection really comes from the Colombian army that is stationed out in that area. But the pipeline is 483 miles long, and so there aren't enough troops in all of Colombia to protect that pipeline along its corridor.

Mr. MICA. Has there been any noticeable decrease in oil production as a result of these attacks? I mean, is there a direct effect on the amount of oil that is available and the market due to these recent attacks? Or is this something that isn't really measurable?

Mr. MERIAGE. It is measurable. And over the last 2 years what we have seen is a dramatic escalation in the increase of attacks. At one time, Congressman, Mr. Chairman, they had—the ELN was primarily targeting the pipeline. Within the last 3 years, the FARC and the ELN together have been attacking the pipeline, and so we have seen economic disruptions.

For the first time, really, since we have been operating that field since 1985, over the last 2 years, we have had to shut the field in completely. We have got about 500,000 barrels of storage at the field itself. When that storage is filled and the pipeline is still blocked, then we have to shut in the field. And we have experienced those incidents three times in the last 18 months.

Mr. MICA. Now, the administration has crafted a package after consultation that has military elements, police elements, and some crop eradication and alternative development elements. I will just ask each of you, if you were going to modify the package, where would you put a little bit more emphasis? Ambassador Busby.

Mr. BUSBY. I haven't had a chance to study the package. I haven't really seen it in any detail. But the preliminary sheet that I saw—

Mr. MICA. Where would you increase emphasis?

Mr. BUSBY. I question the wisdom of the number of Blackhawk helicopters that is in that package—

Mr. MICA. OK.

Mr. BUSBY [continuing]. Because of the lack of infrastructure, training, and logistics. It is a terrific machine. It is very complicated. It's high tech. But I wonder—

Mr. MICA. And where would you put those resources?

Mr. BUSBY. I would look at some different kinds of lift, different types of helicopters that could be put on the ground quicker, that could be just as effective. That is not to say you shouldn't have some Blackhawks in there, because you need them for their altitude capabilities and certain other purposes. But it just seems to me it shouldn't be the first crack out of the box unless there is a real justification for that.

The second thing is there has been a lot of discussion here about human rights. And I think Ambassador McNamara, his phrase that human rights abuses stem from the weakness of the state is right on the money. That is exactly right.

I would probably put more emphasis, more money, into infrastructure development, particularly of the judicial system, and increasing the ability, and the investigative capabilities of the state to really enforce the rule of law. Because I think that part of the reason for a lot of human rights abuses is that people are so frustrated because they know that nothing will happen to people, so they take matters into their own hand. So I was—I looked at the number, and it seemed very, very low to me.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

Ambassador McNamara.

Mr. MCNAMARA. Well, in my opening statement, I did indicate two areas where I thought more attention needed to be given. One is, indeed, the system of justice in Colombia. The judicial system is woefully weak and inadequate to the needs of the country. And I suggested that the three-legged strategy of Pastrana should be expanded to a four-legged strategy, and that fourth leg ought to be the improvement of justice.

I made it a central theme of my years as Ambassador in Colombia to strengthen that judicial system. Substantial efforts were made and I think some successes. In fact, bad as it is, it is much better than it was 10 or 15 years ago. It is still, however woefully inadequate.

The second area, and I am not so sure that in the immediate short-term that it requires huge resources. It is not something that you can just throw money at. But I think a strategy for dealing with the paramilitary organizations has got to be an early part of overall strategy for dealing with these problems.

The paramilitaries are part of the problem. They are not part of the solution. And you must strengthen the military. In fact, if you look historically, each time the military has been beggared in Colombia by one or another President, you have had a spike in the number of paramilitary forces and the amount of paramilitary activity. Each time the President, whether it was Barco or Gaviria or now Pastrana, has put resources into the military, you have a diminution of the paramilitary strength and paramilitary activity.

It's not coincidental that those two curves are in a sign-cosign relationship. When one goes up, the other goes down. When one goes down, the other goes up.

I think dealing with the paramilitary problem is something we have not—we, the United States—nor Colombia has paid enough attention to.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

Mr. MCNAMARA. If I can make one last comment.

Mr. MICA. Go ahead.

Mr. MCNAMARA. And, again, it's not resources, it's strategy. This is not a United States-Colombian problem. It is a hemispheric and a regional problem. And we really have to spend time, in answer to Mr. Souder's question, being the leader in the hemisphere, getting the other countries involved. There are a lot of countries that would get involved if they saw the leadership and responded to Colombia and United States urgings.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

Mr. Meriage.

Mr. MERIAGE. As I indicate in my previous remarks, we are seeing a serious problem emerging in the north. If you fly up in—over the area of North Santander in a helicopter, you can see the smoke flumes from the fires burning where the drug traffickers are burning off jungle. I think looking exclusively to the south and ignoring what is happening in broader areas of Colombia is a mistake.

There is another problem, too, if I—that relates to the regional issue that Ambassador McNamara alluded to. We have an operation in Ecuador that is 40 miles from the Colombian border. There is some concern that, if this push starts in the south, relentless

push in the south, what impact that would likely have upon areas close to the Ecuadorian border as well.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

I would like to thank all three of our witnesses, both for their patience and also for their participation. It has been a long day. I think we are close to setting one of our hearing records as far as time. But this is a very important topic. It is going to be probably one of the most important packages before the Congress in the next few months here, hopefully even faster than that.

We have heard a little bit today about the history of the situation, and it is unfortunate that some of you who did give us prior warning to the threat and the potential of the disruption were not heard, and the situation has dramatically deteriorated in that area. The important thing is that we learn by those mistakes and that we also address human rights, not only there, and that has been a great concern in the hearing today, but also the human rights of 15,973 Americans who lost their lives in drug-related deaths, most of those drugs coming from this area. That was in 1997. And we heard the drug czar today say 52,000 in related incidents of death.

The United States has put forces in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo, and we did have a loss of 30 American servicemen in Somalia. But we have never experienced anything domestically like what we are experiencing from the deadly substance that is pouring out of Colombia at this point.

So it is important we don't make the mistakes of the past, that we put together a good, balanced approach, that we help Colombians help themselves in that way, and also help the United States rid itself of some of the deluge of our drugs on our streets and in our communities, killing our young people and Americans across the land.

So, hopefully, this will be the beginning hearing; and we will have additional hearings with different committees. But we will leave the record open for additional comments for 2 weeks with agreement. We will submit, possibly, to you three witnesses and also additional questions.

I want to, again, thank you for your participation, for your counsel, and again ask for you to work with us in the next few weeks and months as we finalize and put this package together.

There being no further business to come before this subcommittee at this time, this subcommittee meeting is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:31 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

[Additional information submitted for the hearing record follows:]

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QUESTION FOR THE RECORD
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY AND HUMAN RESOURCES
HEARING ON: THE U.S. RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS IN COLOMBIA
15 FEBRUARY 2000
WITNESS: GENERAL WILHELM
MR. MICA Q.2

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COLOMBIAN COUNTERNARCOTICS BATTALION AIR MOBILE UNIT

Mr. Mica: Would you explain the concept of employment of the airmobile unit of the Antinarcotics Battalion. How will it be employed and how much cooperation will it receive from the Colombian National Police Airwing? Since the U.S. taxpayers are paying for this effort, it is crucial that they know what the objective of these units will be.

General Wilhelm: The Colombian Army (COLAR) Aviation Brigade is located at Toleraida and is commanded by Brigadier General Garcia. The brigade consists of two battalions - the first battalion maintains and operates 17 fixed-wing aircraft. The second battalion is a rotary wing unit currently consisting of 18 UH-1N's, 7 UH-60L's and 9 MI-17's. The 18 UH-1N's have been provided solely for support of counternarcotics operations conducted by COLAR and Colombian National Police (CNP). Specifically, they provide tactical airlift support to the Counternarcotics Battalion (CN BN). The 7 UH-60s and 9 MI-17's were purchased by the Government of Colombia and provide general aviation support for all COLAR units. The mission of the CN BN is to plan and conduct offensive ground and airmobile operations, in support of the CNP to counter the activities of narcotraffickers and the organizations that support them. The battalion is manned, trained, and equipped to conduct light infantry operations and will have integrated intelligence support provided by the Colombian Joint Intelligence Center (COJIC). With appropriate helicopter support, the CN BN is capable of rapid deployment throughout the Putamayo and Caqueta regions of southern Colombia. The COLAR

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Helicopter Battalion and the CNP Airwing will jointly support CN BN and CNP
counternarcotics operations.

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WITNESS: GENERAL WILHELM
Mr. Mica Q.3

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AIRCRAFT SUPPORT

Mr. Mica: Please explain the concept of support for the helicopters dedicated to these missions? Currently the operational readiness rates are at or below 50%. How will the rate improve and what do you sense as the change in the way things are being done currently?

General Wilhelm: The Department of State (DOS) has provided 18 UH-1N helicopters to the Colombian Army (COLAR) to support the Counternarcotics Battalion. Support for these 18 helicopters is shared between the DOS and the COLAR. The DOS funds contractor support for training, logistics, and operations. DOS contractors provide crew chief, pilot (sustainment and enhancement), and maintenance training for COLAR personnel. In the logistical area, DOS contractors provide technical expertise for ordering aircraft parts from U.S. sources (these parts are shipped from Patrick A.F.B. to Colombia then ferried to the operational sites via DOS operated C-27 cargo aircraft) and perform aircraft maintenance, side by side with their COLAR counterparts. Finally, DOS contract pilots fly operational missions as pilot in command of UH-1N aircraft with COLAR pilots serving as copilots. Currently, the DOS has 27 contracted pilots and 20 contracted maintenance personnel in place supporting the 18 COLAR UH-1N helicopters. The operational readiness rate of these helicopters is above 90%. As of 31 January 2000, they had flown 654 flight hours with a mission capable rate of 91%.

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MR. MICA Q.1

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COLOMBIAN COUNTERNARCOTICS BATTALION

Mr. Mica: With regard to the subject of U.S. training of Colombian Soldiers and Policemen who will man the Counternarcotics Battalions. General, you testified that the Antinarcotics agents of the Colombian National Police's D.A.N.T.I. Unit had also received training with the Colombian Army's first Antinarcotics Battalion. According to reports that reached Congressional staff, the Colombian National Police did not participate in the U.S. training program, however, some officers did observe the training conducted at the Colombian Army base at Tolemaida.

As anyone who has experience in these matters would recognize, the Police must receive the very same training that the Soldiers do. The same rules of engagement, the same human rights training and the same standards of conduct and performance are the bedrock of this program. The standardized training and mission performance standards must remain the same and serve as a common denominator for the conduct and performance of these security forces. Why has that not been followed thus far?

General Wilhelm: Colombian National Police (CNP) personnel fully participated in Phase III of the Counternarcotics Battalion (CN BN) workup training which included an extensive Field training Exercise (FTX) and a comprehensive Command Post Exercise (CPX). Additionally, U.S. instructors provided the same Program of Instruction (POI) training in human rights, rules of engagement, and standards of conduct to CNP and CN BN personnel. CNP personnel will be integrated into the workup training for the second and third CN BNs, which is planned for later this year.

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Questions for the Record Submitted to
 Assistant Secretary of State Peter Romero
 by Rep. Mica
 Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on Criminal Justice,
 Drug Policy and Human Resources
 February 15, 2000

Question:

1. Please submit a list of all helicopters, which have been delivered to the Colombian government from the U.S. government over the past five years (include the authorization for the delivery, the type of aircraft, the U.S. executing agent, and the Colombian recipient agency.)

Answer:

In the past five years, the Department has provided 101 helicopters to Colombia; 61 were fully operational and 40 were "hulks" for parts.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Rcvr</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Authorization for Delivery</u>
FY96	12	UH-1H	CNP	Opnl	506 (DoD)
FY96	20	UH-1H	CAF	Hulks	506 (DoD)
FY96	6	UH-1H	CNP	Opnl	"No Cost" Loan
FY97	20	UH-1H	CNP	Hulks	506 (DoD)
FY97	6	UH-1H	CNP	Opnl	"No Cost" Loan
FY98	3	BH212	CNP	Opnl	506 (DOS) signed 9/30/98
FY99	3	BH212	CNP	Opnl	"No Cost" Loan
FY99	6	HueyII	CNP	Opnl	"No Cost" Loan
FY00	4	HueyII	CNP	Opnl	"No Cost" Loan
FY00	18	UH-1N	COLAR	Opnl	"No Cost" Loan
FY00	3	UH-60	CNP	New	"No Cost" Loan *

* CNP will get 3 more UH-60s by 30 MAR 00.

NOTE: We are informed additionally by DSCA that the Colombian Military has received the following helicopters since 1995 through our Foreign Military Sales program:

<u>Year</u>	<u>CO Air Force</u>	<u>CO Army</u>
1995	2 UH-60L	
1997		7 UH-60L
1999	5 UH-60L	

Questions for the Record Submitted to
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by Rep. Mica
Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on Criminal Justice,
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February 15, 2000

Question:

2. What is the status of the upgrades of the Huey helicopters for the Colombian National Police (CNP)?

Answer:

Ten Huey-II helicopters have been delivered to the CNP to date. A contract delivery order is in place for 15 more upgrades. Projected completion is one by May 2000 and two each month thereafter through December 2000. Actual delivery in Colombia will depend in part on transportation arrangements. (Aircraft will be sent in lots rather than one at a time.)

Questions for the Record Submitted to
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by Rep. Mica
Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on Criminal Justice,
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February 15, 2000

Question:

3. What is the status of the delivery and operational status of the BlackHawk helicopters for the Colombian National Police (CNP)? How many have been delivered and how many are fully operational?

Answer:

The Department of State has delivered three UH-60L helicopters to the CNP. Three additional helicopters will be delivered by the end of March 2000. The first three aircraft are fully operational and have been operating from the CNP aviation facility at Guaymaral. The next three aircraft will be fully outfitted prior to their departure from the U.S. and will be operational from the time they arrive in Colombia.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Assistant Secretary of State Peter Romero
by Rep. Mica
Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on Criminal Justice,
Drug Policy and Human Resources
February 15, 2000

Question:

4. What is the status of refurbishing the A-37 "Dragonflies" in country?

Answer:

The A-37 Upgrade task has been to integrate a night vision imaging system (NVIS) compatible flight station (cockpit), and supporting avionics into ten Colombian and ten Peruvian A-37 aircraft. Platforms and upgrades will have a sustainment plan to cover a two-year base period and three one-year options.

In less than a year, the A-37 upgrade program has:

- 1) Installed NVIS in 10 Peruvian and 10 Colombian A-37 aircraft.
- 2) Initiated NVIS training for both countries, both ground and flight training.
- 3) Began shipping critical maintenance sustainment items.
- 4) Identified and begun kit production of cockpit and avionics modifications.
- 5) Currently purchasing Chilean A-37 aircraft as spare parts for the Colombian/Peruvian program.

- 6) Incorporated contractor logistical/maintenance officers
with the Peruvian and Colombia Air Forces.

Complete upgraded aircraft will be available by June 2000 in both Colombia and Peru and upgrades will continue at approximately two per month until all ten in each country are complete.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Assistant Secretary of State Peter Romero
by Rep. Mica
Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on Criminal Justice,
Drug Policy and Human Resources
February 15, 2000

Question:

5. Recently the subcommittee staff was briefed about enhancements to the security for the Colombian National Police forward operating bases. However, contractors have apparently not been selected yet. Please provide a status of this program and explain any delays encountered.

Answer:

The full \$8M for enhancements to the bases has been allotted to post. The Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) at Embassy Bogota has developed, in conjunction with the CNP and the Army Corps of Engineers, plans for upgrades of 16 bases and work has begun at 14 of them. Post has advised that the CNP has not yet decided whether to re-establish the base at Miraflores. On December 6 post received a USAF report regarding the use of electronic sensors and security aids at Guaymaral and Mariquita and a mobile sensor package that can be deployed and moved as necessary. Embassy personnel will now meet with CNP security officials to discuss the report and decide on the next steps to take. The estimated cost of the sensor systems is \$1.4M. The estimated cost of all current plans is \$7.6M. Of that total, approximately \$2.3M has been used to fund construction contracts and equipment purchases including concrete bunkers, security

lighting, and revetments for refueling points, observations towers, etc.

The NAS has arranged for construction at four bases to be handled under an indefinite quantity contract awarded by the Army Corps of Engineers. NAS and INL have identified an additional contract arrangement for construction at the balance of the bases and expect to have it in place within the next several weeks.

In mid-February a USAF team provided the NAS with recommendations for sensor systems and a contracting mechanisms for their installation. We anticipate ordering this equipment in the very near future.

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Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on Criminal Justice,
Drug Policy and Human Resources
February 15, 2000

Question:

6. How much of the FY-1999 counterdrug monies (designated to assist Colombia) remain unobligated?

Answer:

Approximately \$12M remains to be obligated. \$6M for operations and support of the Colombian National Police Air Wing will be used to fund the modification of two C-26 aircraft to add a surveillance capability. Non-recurring engineering work has already begun and we expect to obligate the \$6M within the next two weeks. Approximately \$4M of the \$96M for the six Blackhawk helicopters will be allotted to post for obligation in a bilateral agreement for fuel, spare parts, etc. The balance of unobligated funding is associated with several line items including the procurement and upgrade of UH-1H/1N helicopters and the A-37 upgrade program.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Assistant Secretary of State Peter Romero
by Rep. Mica
Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on Criminal Justice,
Drug Policy and Human Resources
February 15, 2000

Question:

7. Last July, General McCaffrey made a trip to Colombia and declared the situation in Colombia an "emergency." He was also quoted as saying that the situation in Colombia is "an unmitigated disaster" and a "flipping nightmare." Yet, the Administration's aid package was not submitted to the U.S. Congress until February 7, 2000 (almost seven months after General McCaffrey called the situation an emergency and four months after President Pastrana released PLAN COLOMBIA). Why did it take the Administration so long to produce a viable aid package?

Answer:

A comprehensive package would have been impossible prior to the completion of Plan Colombia. Since the release of that plan, representatives of both governments have consulted closely to develop a package that provides useful support that the Colombian Government needs to actualize Plan Colombia.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Assistant Secretary of State Peter Romero
by Rep. Mica
Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on Criminal Justice,
Drug Policy and Human Resources
February 15, 2000

Question:

8. According to new estimates included in General McCaffrey's testimony at the February 15th hearing, Colombia produced up to 520 metric tons of cocaine in 1999 (68% of the potential cocaine production in the world). However, Peru produced 175 metric tons of cocaine, which represents 23% of the potential cocaine produced in the world. Yet, the \$1B Emergency Supplemental Aid package only contains \$10M (or 1%) for interdiction operations in Peru. Similarly, Bolivia produced 70 metric tons of cocaine, which accounted for 9% of the world's cocaine supply, yet the \$1B Emergency Supplemental Aid Package only had \$2M (or 1/5 of 1%) for interdiction efforts in Bolivia. Given that these two countries produced nearly 33% of the world's cocaine last year, should not the Supplemental Aid package contain more than a mere 1.2% of the total for interdiction efforts in these two countries?

Answer:

The primary purpose of the proposed supplemental is to provide support to Colombia, but because of the transnational nature of the problems there, funds are included to reinforce counternarcotics efforts throughout the region. The package contains \$16 million of interdiction support in the second year (\$12 million for Peru and \$4 million for Bolivia). Additionally, over two years, the proposal provides \$27 million in developmental support for those two nations to help coca farmers switch to alternative sources of income. The Administration continues to support the ongoing programs in

those countries through regular appropriations of roughly \$50 million per country per year. In total, proposed support for Peru and Bolivia exceeds \$240 million over two years.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Assistant Secretary of State Peter Romero
by Rep. Mica
Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on Criminal Justice,
Drug Policy and Human Resources
February 15, 2000

Question:

9. There are many concerned Members that wonder what is the overall strategy anchoring the specifics in the Administration's Supplemental Aid Package? Allowing that the U.S. National Drug Control Strategy and PLAN COLOMBIA are macro-level policy documents, is there an underlying strategic planning document (either U.S. or Colombian) upon which the Administration's Supplemental Aid package is based?

Answer:

The key strategic planning document is the Government of Colombia's National Strategy to Strengthen the Fight against Narcotrafficking. The composition of the package has also been influenced by the U.S. government's Interdiction Planning Guidance, produced by the United States Interdiction Coordinator.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Assistant Secretary of State Peter Romero
by Rep. Mica
Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on Criminal Justice,
Drug Policy and Human Resources
February 15, 2000

Question:

10. What is the justification for the proposed 30 BlackHawk helicopters in the Supplemental Aid package? At \$14M per copy, 30 BlackHawk helicopters will cost almost \$400M (nearly half of the entire Supplemental Aid package). With an operating cost of \$2400/hour, these helicopters will be very expensive to fly. With an average lead time of 10-18 months to build one, it will likely take years to get 30 BlackHawk helicopters operating in country. Clearly, there are aircraft available, which cost a fraction to procure, cost significantly less to operate and would be available in a more timely fashion. Is it possible that another, more cost-effective platform for troop transport has been overlooked? Why doesn't the package state an air logistic need and allow an open competitive bid process to determine the best, most cost-effective platform to do the job?

Answer:

The UH-60 BlackHawk is the aircraft best suited to the requirements in Colombia. It has the added benefit of already being in service with the Colombian National Police, Army and Air Force. While lead-time is an issue, the package addresses it by providing Bell UH-1Ns as an immediate solution to Colombian air logistic requirements. These aircraft can be available within weeks of funding and can be phased into other counternarcotics uses as the UH-60s arrive in country.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Assistant Secretary of State Peter Romero
by Rep. Mica
Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on Criminal Justice,
Drug Policy and Human Resources
February 15, 2000

Question:

11. At the February 15th hearing, when speaking of the delivery of aid to Colombia proposed in the Administration's Supplemental Aid package, General McCaffrey noted that we will screw this up also unless there is a "mechanism" in place to properly execute the aid. Since the Department of State has been the principal U.S. Department responsible for the timely delivery of assistance and equipment to Colombia, what is your reaction to this criticism and the idea of an improved mechanism to get the aid down there?

Answer:

The Department of State agrees that timely delivery of assistance is important for the success of our efforts with the Government of Colombia. The mechanisms to provide efficient materiel and training support to the government of Colombia have been in place since the inception of the International Narcotics Control Assistance Program. In cases where specialized equipment or modifications are requested by the receiving Colombian agency, such as in the case of the Colombian National Police BlackHawk helicopters, there are unavoidable design and manufacturing delays. We anticipate that the majority of materiel and training to support Plan Colombia will be "off-the-shelf" and will incur no untimely delays or bureaucratic

obstacles in delivery. With respect to the Blackhawk program, we intend to use the Pentagon's DSCA to run the program.

February 15, 2000

Testimony of the Colombian American Chamber of Commerce on the proposed U.S. aid package for Colombia

The Colombian American Chamber of Commerce welcomes the opportunity to submit testimony to the U.S. House of Representatives' Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources on the proposed U.S. aid package for Colombia. Our organization and the U.S. and Colombian companies we represent strongly support the aid package, and we call for its swift passage.

The Colombian American Chamber of Commerce is one of Colombia's leading business organizations. The U.S. companies that form the core of its membership together represent roughly 80 percent of all U.S. foreign investment in Colombia, and our nearly 1,000 members generate over 20 percent of Colombia's GDP.

Colombian President Andrés Pastrana has put together a comprehensive, integrated attack on Colombia's problems. The name of this initiative is *Plan Colombia*. *Plan Colombia* will focus on four main fronts:

- (1) It will bolster Colombia's economy, including its fiscal outlook and the investment climate;
- (2) It will enhance the capacity of Colombia's security forces to establish and maintain the rule of law;
- (3) It will advance a serious peace process with armed insurgent groups; and
- (4) It will strengthen Colombia's democratic institutions, judicial system, and respect for human rights.

The Colombian American Chamber of Commerce is convinced that the U.S. aid package designed to support *Plan Colombia* will help keep drugs out of the United States while strengthening Colombia's economy and democratic institutions. Given the magnitude of the drug trafficking problem and Colombia's current economic difficulties, the people of Latin America's fourth largest country cannot bear the full burden alone.

On behalf of the hundreds of U.S. businesses that have invested in Colombia, we wish to make clear that the national interest of the United States is at stake in Colombia. Narco-traffickers in Colombia now supply about 80 percent of the cocaine and most of the heroine consumed in the United States. Narcotics money has greatly strengthened insurgent groups. The threat to Colombia's democratically elected government is real, and a coordinated response is essential.

Colombia historically has been one of the closest friends and allies of the United States, as well as a significant business partner. The size of the country in terms of population (over 40 million) and its economy (its GDP exceeds \$86 billion) makes Colombia one of the largest and most attractive markets for American investment in the Americas. There are over 120 American firms operating in Colombia, some with a history of over 80 years.

The United States is Colombia's largest and most important trading partner and source of foreign investment. Today, American companies represent nearly 40 percent of total foreign direct investment in Colombia. At nearly \$8 billion, U.S. investment contributes to the economic development of the country and provides meaningful employment as an alternative to the illegal narcotics trade for thousands of Colombians. It also contributes to the trade relationship between the two countries. Over 40 percent of international sales to and purchases from Colombia — totaling more than \$10 billion — are with the United States, which enjoys a trade surplus with Colombia.

For much of the 20th century, Colombia was recognized as one of the most economically and politically stable democracies in the Western Hemisphere, with annual average growth rates above 4 percent. It is strategically located between the Caribbean Sea to the north, the Pacific Ocean to the west, Venezuela and Brazil to the east and Ecuador and Peru to the south. It also shares land borders with Panama. Given these factors, developments in Colombia have a direct impact on the entire region.

For the past 18 months, Colombia has experienced a decline in economic activity that not only has seriously impacted our member companies, but has also reduced the ability of Colombia to continue to purchase products abroad. This has been particularly true of commercial relations with the United States. In 1999 alone, the economy showed a decline of nearly 6 percent of GDP. Imports dropped by over 30 percent. Unemployment increased to historically high levels, exceeding 20 percent in many parts of the country. The economic recession in Colombia also has had an impact on neighboring countries, especially the Andean Pact countries of Bolivia, Venezuela, Ecuador and Peru. Our members also have significant investments in these countries, either directly owned or through sister companies, which may also be impacted by a continued deterioration of the Colombian situation.

One key factor in this decline in economic activity is the growing problem of security, especially increased incidents of violence and an escalation of kidnapping that limits the distribution of legal products and services and the freedom of deploying essential technical personnel. This insecurity has reached alarming levels that not only have led to a reduction in new investment in Colombia, but also threaten to spill over into neighboring countries. There have already been reported incidents involving Panama, Ecuador and Venezuela.

The Colombian government is very conscious of these problems and has been working with the private sector as well as the United States government to deal with these issues. It is clear that the long term solution to the serious problems facing the country is economic growth and development, led by private investment, both local and foreign. Providing meaningful employment alternatives to Colombians will encourage them to avoid illegal activities, especially those related to the production of drugs.

For this investment to happen, it is essential that the key objectives of the Plan Colombia be addressed. These include a defense and justice strategy aimed at reducing the cultivation, processing and distribution of narcotics, a key contributor and source of financing for violence and insecurity; a strengthening of the Armed Forces to reinforce the political and military authority of the Government to control its territory and enforce the rule of law and human rights;

and an economic and social recovery program that would allow Colombia to manage the current economic crisis and to attract the necessary investment to address longer term employment and development needs.

A significant portion of the government's limited resources is being allocated to this program. Of the \$7.5 billion in funding needed to carry out the plan over the next few years, \$4.0 billion will be financed by the Colombian Government. However, Colombia lacks the capacity to face the current crisis alone. Additional funding sources will include the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, as well as friendly governments in Europe and Japan. However, the up-front assistance being requested from the United States is a critical first step in moving this plan forward.

Our member companies operating in Colombia are conscious of the constructive role they play in the economic development of the country, in job creation, and in generating bilateral trade and investment that benefit both countries. The approval by Congress of this foreign assistance in support of the first stage of the Plan Colombia will greatly contribute to the solution of the current problems facing the country, while at the same time helping to protect American business and political interests in Colombia and in all of Latin America.

Thank you.

